



# Woolf Orchid Culture

## Australian Native Dendrobium

By John Woolf

Australian native orchid hybridizing is at present going through an exciting phase within the Dendrobium, Sarcochilus and terrestrials. Their popularity, both locally & internationally, is enjoying a tremendous increase. Much more attention is being given to our native orchids by Australian breeders, not only in creating beautiful new hybrids, but also in improving the quality of our species with line breeding.

At Florafest we pride ourselves on our program of artificial propagation of species orchids from all areas of the world and the improvement of these by line breeding. An extensive breeding program of Dendrobium and Sarcochilus is in progress using our 35 years of experience and with the assistance of our many friends throughout Australia.

### The 'Equacool' Australian Dendrobium Orchid Hybrids.

The term Equacool (Hot - Cold) in this instance refers to the hybrids between the hot (tropical) growing Phalaenathe, Latourea & Spatulata Dendrobiums and the cold (cool - intermediate) growing Dendrocoryne Dendrobiums.

The qualities one is hoping to gain from using the hot growing group are:

1. Longevity of blooms.
2. Longer racemes with more blooms.
3. Larger blooms.
4. Different colours - brighter contrasts.
5. Longer flowering period.

The qualities one is hoping to gain from using the Dendrocoryne group are:

1. Multiple growth habit - quicker specimen plants.
2. Shorter, more compact growth.
3. Intensity of flower colour.
4. Ability to survive and grow in cooler temperatures.
5. Multiple spiking and the ability to bloom several times per year.

The main criteria we look for when choosing parents are:

1. Good strong growing plants.
2. Multiple growth habits.
3. Multiple spiking.
4. Strong upright racemes.
5. Large, well spaced blooms.
6. Strong even colours.
7. Blooms of good substance & quality.
8. Short blooming time from flask.
9. Ability to bloom several times per year.
10. Tolerance to temperature extremes.

### Some of the Hot growing Dendrobium Species:

Den. bigibbum var. bigibbum. The smallest of the group for flower size with medium sized growth. Blooms are usually very round, well filled in and slightly recurved and produced in Autumn (Fall).

Den. bigibbum var. superbum. Plants can be up to 1 metre tall with long sprays of light to deep mauve blooms. Blooms are produced in Autumn (Fall) and line bred clones are of excellent shape.

Den. bigibbum var. compactum. Pseudobulbs are usually over 30-40cm. tall and much thicker than the other varieties. The large purple blooms are produced in mid to late Summer and again the line bred clones are of excellent shape and colour.



# Woolf Orchid Culture

Den. affine. (Syn. Den. dicuphum). Compact plants produce long racemes of white blooms with black-purple at the base of the labellum and petals. Blooms open successively over a long period. (Autumn to Spring)

Den. trilamellatum (Complex including Den. johannis. Den. semi-fuscum) Compact plants with strong upright racemes of yellow gold through to rich chocolate blooms. Usually of excellent Spatulata type shape.

Den. canaliculatum (Complex including Den. carronii, Den. foelschii) Small to compact plants, very floriferous. Racemes in colours of white and yellow through to dark orange and brown. Spring flowering.

Den. discolor. (Syn. undulatum) Very tall pseudobulbs with long racemes of gold to chocolate blooms, petals upright, twisted and reflexing backwards. Spring to Summer flowering.

There are others worth using, however the above are those most used in hybridizing at present.

## **Some of the Cold (Cool to Intermediate) Growers.**

Den. speciosum var. capricornicum. From central Queensland, compact plants with pseudobulbs close together, many flowered upright racemes of white to cream blooms. Winter to early Spring flowers.

Den. speciosum var. curvicaule. North Queensland, semi compact plants. Profuse blooming racemes of cream to yellow well spaced blooms.

Den. speciosum var. pedunculatum. Small to compact plants with upright racemes of white to cream blooms. Spring flowers.

Den. speciosum var. grandiflorum. Tall growing plants with long arching racemes of yellow to dark gold very large blooms. Spring flowers.

Den. speciosum var. speciosum. Medium sized plants, very floriferous, upright to arching racemes of white to golden yellow blooms well spaced along the raceme. Spring flowers.

Den. tetragonum. Small blooms, greenish yellow to tan with golden brown edges. South East Queensland to Southern New South Wales. Winter flowering.

Den. tetragonum var hayesianum. Large spidery green blooms with white labellum. North Queensland. Spring flowers.

Den. tetragonum var giganteum. Large spidery blooms with colours from cream to deep brown with various degrees of spotting. Very large labellum. North Queensland. Winter - Spring flowers.

Den. melaleucaphilum (Syn. Den. tetragonum) Very floriferous and well coloured. Flowers with a green to yellow background heavily marked around the edges with honey brown to dark brown. Usually with a large labellum. Spring flowers.

Den. jonesii var. magnificum. (Syn. Den. ruppianum) Compact plants carrying medium size racemes of large white blooms usually well spaced. Spring flowers.

Den. falcorostrum. Compact plants carrying short racemes of medium to large crystal white blooms. Difficult to grow and bloom in warm areas. Spring flowers.

Den. kingianum. Very robust compact plants. Many upright racemes of well spaced and shapely blooms. Colours range from white, white - purple labellum, pink, mauve to deep beetroot purple. Spring flowers.

Den. fleckeri. Compact plants with slender pseudobulbs. A very slow growing plant carrying very short racemes of two or three orange to reddish orange blooms with large furry labellums. Spring flowers.

Again there are many others. Some such as Den. agrostophyllum are producing excellent progeny.



# Woolf Orchid Culture

## Some Natural Hybrids:

Den. x delicatum (Den. speciosum x Den. kingianum) Medium size plants with upright racemes of well spaced and shapely blooms. Colours from white to pinks and purples. Spring flowers.

Den. x gracillimum. (Den. speciosum x Den. gracilicaule). Tall plants carrying profuse racemes of yellow to gold blooms. Spring flowers.

Den. x superbians. (Den. bigibbum x Den. discolor) Very tall plants carrying long racemes of mauve to purple long lasting blooms. Various flowering times.

## RECOMMENDED HYBRIDS FOR EQUACOOOL BREEDING.

There are many hybrids that may be used for further Equacool breeding.  
My selection is:

### HOT

David Baver (phalaenopsis x johannis)  
Judy Leroy (affine x canaliculatum)  
Minnie (caronnii x johannis)  
Minnie Pearl (canaliculatum x bigibbum)  
Rosy Tips (phalaenopsis x canaliculatum)

### COLD

Allyn Star (x gracillimum x tetragonum)  
Aussie Child (Aussie Spectrum x Hilda Poxon)  
Aussie Ira (Ellen x tetragonum)  
Aussie Quest (Gillian Leaney x Hilda Poxon)  
Aussie Victory (Ellen x Sunglow)  
Bicentennial Blush (Gillian Leaney x Kim)  
Brellan (Ellen x Peach Glow)  
Clarrie Wuth (Sunstar x speciosum)  
Delicate Flacon (x delicatum x falcorostrum)  
Dot Sheen (Aussie Bonanza x Ellen)  
Ellen (kingianum x tetragonum)  
Emma (Gillian Leaney x tetragonum)  
Essie Banks (Hilda Poxon x speciosum)  
Eureka (jonesii x fleckeri)  
Gillian Leaney (x delicatum x kingianum)  
Graham Hewitt (speciosum x Ellen)  
Gulginni (kingianum x Sunglow)  
Hewitt Sun (Graham Hewitt x Sunglow)  
Hilda Poxon (speciosum x tetragonum)  
John Upton (Ellen x Kim)  
Karen Nair (Jamie Upton x Wonga)  
Ku-Ring-Gai (x delicatum x tetragonum)  
Lynette Banks (Eureka x speciosum)  
Northmead (Ku-Ring-Gai x speciosum)  
Peter (falcorostrum x tetragonum)  
Pinterry (Ellen x Graham Hewitt)  
Red River (Ellen x Tweed)



# Woolf Orchid Culture

Regal Affair (Ku-Ring-Gai x tetragonum)  
Star of Riverdene (speciosum x Star of Gold)  
Sunglow (fleckeri x speciosum)  
Sunstar (Sunglow x tetragonum)  
Tweed (Peter x Sunglow)  
Warrior (Hilda Poxon x Ku-Ring-Gai)  
Wonga (Hastings x speciosum)  
Zip (kingianum x Ku-Ring-Gai)

## HOT/COLD

Anne's Rainbow Surprise (Colonial Surprise x speciosum)  
Aussie Angel (Aussie Ira x bigibbum)  
Berry (kingianum x Rosy Tips)  
Brinawa (bigibbum x Hilda Poxon)  
Brinawa Charm (kingianum x Peewee)  
Brolga (Hilda Poxon x Peewee)  
Colonial Campio (Aussie Angel x Hilda Poxon)  
Colonial Maid (bigibbum x falcorostrum)  
Colonial Surprise (Aussie Angel x Aussie Ira)  
Dainty Gem (Jombock x kingianum)  
Duke (Judy Leroy x tetragonum)  
Elegant Heart (Peewee x speciosum)  
Jombock (Colin x Judy Leroy)  
Jonathon's Glory (Colonial Surprise x Kingrose)  
Lorikeet (Ellen x Peewee)  
Maron (affine x tetragonum)  
Memoria Lloyd Bradford (speciosum x canaliculatum)  
Native Gold (speciosum x trilamellatum)  
Our Native (speciosum x johannis)  
Peewee (bigibbum x tetragonum)  
Pink Ballerina (agrostophyllum x bigibbum)  
Pink Ice (Eureka x bigibbum)  
Reg Burns (fleckeri x affine)  
Rosella (Peewee x tetragonum)  
Sarah Jane (Elegant Heart x jonesii)  
Silver Eye (Bright Spark x Peewee)  
Suzanne (phalaenopsis x tetragonum)  
Tegan's Delite (fleckeri x Peewee)  
Warringah (speciosum x bigibbum)

As you can see there is plenty of material to use as well as many others not listed here. As mentioned before, this is an exciting time for breeders of our Australian orchid hybrids and we haven't even looked at the Australasian types where there are unlimited avenues to follow.

The only major problem still to be resolved is the confusion between Den. Peewee & Den. Suzanne, where the ANOS Council has recommended that these be treated as synonyms even though Den Suzanne has as its parent Den. phalaenopsis which is definitely not an Australian native species.



# Woolf Orchid Culture

## CULTURE

### GROUP 1 - Hot Growers

Minimum temperature of 12-15°C. Strong light with 30-50% shade. Fertilize regularly and keep moist during growing period and drier and rest during Winter.

### GROUP 2 - Equacool (Intermediate) Growers

Minimum temperature of 6-8°C. Strong light with 40-50% shade. Fertilize regularly and keep moist during growing period and drier and rest during Winter.

### GROUP 3 - Cold (Cool) Growers

Minimum temperature of 2-4°C. Medium light with 50-70% shade. Fertilize regularly and keep moist all year.

***John Woolf, 1996***