



# Woolf Orchid Culture

## Promenaea

by John Woolf

Promeneia - A Priestess of Dodonia

Promenaea ( Lindley 1843 ), a very rewarding Genus, The charming Jewels of the Brazilian forests.

Where they lie in the Orchidaceae :-

TRIBE MAXILLARIEAE

LYCASTE ALLIANCE

Anguloa, Bifrenaria, Lycaste, Neomoorea, Rudolfiella, Teuscheria, Xylobium.

MAXILLARIA ALLIANCE

Chrysocynis, Cyrtidium, Maxillaria, Mormolyca, Pityphyllum, Scuticaria, Sepalosaccus, Trigonidium.

ZYGOPETALUM ALLIANCE

Acacallis, Aganisia, Batemannia, Bollea, Cheiradenia, Chondrorhyncha, Cochleanthes, Colax, Galeottia, Huntleya, Kollensteinia, Kefersteinia, Manadenium, Neogardneria, Otostylis, Pabstia, Paradisianthus, Pescatoria, Promenaea, Stenia, Wareella, Zygopetalum, Zygosepalum.

The Species

Promenaea is a Genus of some 15 Species from the moist forests of Brazil, Pabst & Dungs placed them in three sections ;

The Promenaea rollinsonii section,  
lentiginosa, riograndensis and rollinsonii

The Promenaea xanthina section,  
acuminata, albescens, catharinensis, dusenii, fuerstenbergiana, guttata, malmquistiana, microtera, ovatiloba, paranensis, xanthina.

The Promenaea stapelioides section,  
stapelioides.

We have been line breeding the species stapelioides and xanthina for a few generations and this has resulted in some fine clones and some unusual colour variations. Also selfings have been made of as many of the species that we have been able to locate. Not enough work has been done in this area, many of the species still nigh on impossible to find in Nurseries and private collections.

Hybridizing Promenaeas are relatively easy to hybridize and will normally give plenty of viable seed, until you move into the inter generics where you can get little viable seed and some crosses produce seedlings that can be very difficult to grow. However the results can be well worth the perseverance.

It should be noted from the outset that P. stapelioides can be a difficult subject to grow, so when using as a parent avoid other slow or hard to grow parents.

You will notice, in our breeding program, we use P. stapelioides and its progeny as a base, this is due mainly to the Australian Judging System where there is a tendency to favour 'It's got to be big, round and filled-in' attitude rather than taking into consideration the Species involved in the hybrid as is done in the USA.

© 2011 Woolf Orchid Culture. Not to be reproduced without express permission from the Author.

Woolf Orchid Culture. PO BOX 6018, Toowoomba West 4350. [www.woolforchidculture.com](http://www.woolforchidculture.com)



# Woolf Orchid Culture

However with the change to the Appreciation method of Judging in Australia perhaps this will change and due recognition will be given to the attributes of the species.

In flask they seem to grow on almost any media and straight Promenaea hybrids grow very quickly, do not allow them to stagnate in flask, if they run out of nutrients and stop growing they will be more difficult to deflask. It is best to get them out of flask whilst they are still in active growth and not necessarily to the top of of the flask.

We deflask into Compots, fill pot to one third with Styrofoam pebbles with the next one third fresh sphagnum pressed in firm. Plants are carefully removed from flask, all agar washed away then the seedlings are placed on top of the sphagnum. Use a pot of similar width as the flask, we don't place any sphagnum around the seedlings. Place compot into a shady, well ventilated and moist area. Seedlings usually take root in a few days and light fertilizing can be given.

Seedlings can stay in the compots until they bloom or you can move them to single pots once they have settled down and started new growth.

## Potting Media

We have used the following mixes all with good results, the media must drain freely whilst retaining some moisture. Plants should be repotted every two years as they do not like sour potting media.

Fresh Sphagnum, Composted Bark, Styrofoam & Peat and Perlite & Peat.

## Light

Promenaeas prefer a semi-shaded area, the plants will soon let you know if they are receiving too much light, they turn light grey in colour.

## Air Movement

This is a must, you will save yourself a lot of dollars in Fungicide/Bactericide if you get the air movement right. Next time you visit the local park, stand under some trees and take note of the gentle breeze, this is what your plants like.

## Water

Water quality is most important, it must be good. You will need to keep the plants & surrounding area moist. If you use chelated forms of fertilizer you will not need to flush the pots as often, however, you still need to replace the air in the media with new oxygen filled air by flushing occasionally.

## Fertilizer

We fertilize with every watering, daily during Summer and every third day during the colder months depending on weather conditions. We use Chelated forms of fertilizer at one fifth the recommended rate.

## Pests

Plants should be inspected regularly for pests, especially Snails, Slugs and Mealybug, and if any are found appropriate action taken. Check with your local Nursery for the necessary treatment as products vary from State to State and Country to Country.

## Disease

The only problem we have seen is damping off of new growths, usually from incorrect culture, if a problem occurs, have it properly diagnosed and treat accordingly.

## The Hybrids so far :-

Again, there have been very few Hybrids registered, the charm, ease of culture and the spectacular sight of



# Woolf Orchid Culture

specimen plants in 5 inch pots carrying over 50 blooms, makes one wonder why there have been so few Hybrids made.

Chameleon ( Limelight x guttata )  
Colmaniana ( xanthina x Crawshayana )  
Crawshayana ( xanthina x stapelioides )  
Dinah Albright ( Norman Gaunt x stapelioides )  
Florafest Cheetah ( Samsu x stapelioides )  
Florafest Gold ( Samsu x xanthina )  
Florafest Sparkler ( Samsu x Colmaniana )  
Kiwi Small World ( Norman Gaunt x Crawshayana )  
Limelight ( ovatiloba x stapelioides )  
Meadow Gold ( Limelight x xanthina )  
Norman Gaunt ( Crawshayana x stapelioides )  
Samsu ( Crawshayana xi rollinsonii )  
Winelight ( Limelight x stapelioides )

The following are but a few in the pipeline as seedlings & flasks :-

6757 Promenaea Colmaniana x stapelioides  
6315 Promenaea Norman Gaunt (Crawshayana 'A' x stapelioides )  
7300 Promenaea Crawshayana 'E' x Florafest Sparkler 'Pepper Pot'  
6756 Promenaea Dinah Albright x Colmaniana  
6755 Promenaea Dinah Albright x same  
6754 Promenaea Dinah Albright x stapelioides "WC'  
5255 Promenaea Florafest Cheetah ( Samsu x stapelioides)  
7297 Promenaea Florafest Cheetah x stapelioides 'MM'  
7299 Promenaea Florafest Sparkler 'Lime' x Crawshayana 'E'  
6191 Promenaea Kiwi Small World (Norman Gaunt x Crawshayana)  
7295 Promenaea Norman Gaunt 'Black Lip' x stapelioides '2692'  
6668 Promenaea Norman Gaunt x Dinah Albright 'Very Colourful'  
7294 Promenaea Norman Gaunt x Florafest Cheetah  
6319 Promenaea Samsu 'Issy' x Crawshayana 'B'  
6378 Promenaea Samsu x (xanthina x Norman Gaunt )  
6029 Promenaea stapelioides 'Florafest' x 'Yong Gee'  
7356 Promenaea stapelioides 'MM' x 'Crees'  
6193 Promenaea xanthina 'Hynes' x 'Reis'  
6313 Promenaea xanthina - Norman Gaunt 'a' x stapelioides  
6314 Promenaea xanthina - Norman Gaunt 'e' x Samsu 'Dark Lip'  
7301 Promenaea xanthina x ( xanthina x Norman Gaunt )

Intergeneric Hybrids.

There has not been a great amount done in this area either, there have been a few hybrids made in the following Grexes,

Alangreatwoodara ( Colax x Promenaea x Zygopetalum )  
Kanzera ( Promenaea x Chondrorhyncha x Zygopetalum )  
Masonara ( Promenaea x Aganisia x Batemanniana x Colax x Otostylis x  
Zygopetalum x Zygosepalum )  
Propetalum ( Promenaea x Zygopetalum )  
Prolax ( Promenaea x Colax )  
Promenantes ( Cochleanthes x Promenaea )



# Woolf Orchid Culture

Here we are using Propetalum Mathina extensively, it is a good grower and blooms freely throughout the year. It is also interesting to note that the short raceme of the Promenaea does not dominate with 3-5 large blooms carried above the foliage, the blooms being a biscuit colour with darker spotting. This, we hope, when combined with P. stapelioides will produce reds & oranges and with P. xanthina produce golds and improve the shape whilst retaining the length of spike.

Some of these intergeneric crosses seem to grow well in flask, such as Hamelwellsara June x P. stapelioides, but once deflasked are very loathe to grow, out of around 100 seedlings deflasked only about 5 survived, let's hope they are all FCC's.

The following crosses are coming on as seedlings:-

5356 Alangreatwoodara Alan - Zygopetalum Perrenoudii x Promenaea Samsu  
6008 Hamelwellsara June '35' x Promenaea stapelioides  
6758 Promenaea Crawshayana 'A' x Zygopetalum Artur Elle 'Essendon' AM-AD/AOC  
7298 Promenaea Florafest Cheetah x Zygocolax Elfin Jade 'Purple Heat'  
5355 Promenaea stapelioides x Zygopetalum Titanic 'June' HCC AOC  
6884 Promenaea rollinsonii var. williamsonii x Zygocolax Elfin Jade  
6895 Propetalum Mathina x Promenaea stapelioides  
6896 Propetalum Mathina x Promenaea Crawshayana  
7302 Propetalum Mathina x Promenaea xanthina 'Reis'

PROMENAEA crosses 2000 (seedpods)

Promenaea stapelioides 'MM' x Florafest Cheetah  
Promenaea stapelioides 'MM' x Samsu  
Promenaea stapelioides 'MM' x Zygopetalum Artur Elle 'Essendon'  
Promenaea stapelioides 'MM' x stapelioides 'WC'  
Promenaea stapelioides 'FF' x Florafest Cheetah  
Promenaea stapelioides 'WC' x Norman Gaunt 'Goliath'  
Promenaea stapelioides 'WC' x Dinah Albright 'Jeannie'  
Promenaea Florafest Cheetah x Florafest Cheetah  
Promenaea Florafest Cheetah x stapelioides 'MM'  
Promenaea Florafest Cheetah x stapelioides  
Promenaea Florafest Cheetah x Norman Gaunt 'Leopard'  
Promenaea Florafest Cheetah x stapelioides 'WC'  
Promenaea Florafest Cheetah x stapelioides 'FF'  
Promenaea Samsu x Florafest Cheetah  
Promenaea Samsu x stapelioides 'MM'  
Promenaea Norman Gaunt 'Goliath' x stapelioides 'MM'  
Promenaea Norman Gaunt 'Lamington' x stapelioides 'MM'  
Promenaea Norman Gaunt 'Leopard' x Florafest Cheetah 'Spots'  
Promenaea Dinah Albright x stapelioides  
Promenaea Dinah Albright x Dinah Albright 'Flares'  
Promenaea Florafest Gold 'Old Gold' x Dinah Albright 'Jeannie'  
Propetalum Mathina x Promenaea Florafest Sparkler 'Very Spotted'  
Propetalum Mathina x Promenaea Florafest Sparkler 'Pepper Pot'  
Propetalum Mathina x Promenaea Dinah Albright 'Jeannie'  
Propetalum Mathina x Promenaea Crawshayana 'Speckled Lime'  
Propetalum Mathina x Promenaea Florafest Sparkler 'Green Gold'  
Propetalum Mathina x Promenaea stapelioides 'MM'



# Woolf Orchid Culture

Propetalum Mathina x Promenaea Florafest Gold  
Propetalum Mathina x Colax jugosus

Have you read Dr. Benjamin Berliner's great article in the December 1999 issue of "Orchids" ?

I would like to thank Dr. Benjamin and Skippy Berliner for their assistance and for sharing their love of these super little Orchids with us.

Good Growing,  
John T Woolf