



# Woolf Orchid Culture

## The Cool Growing Australian Dendrobiums

*by John Woolf*

All the parents of this group come from the Dendrocoryne section and they grow along the Great Dividing Range from Cape York in north Queensland to South-west of Sydney in New South Wales.

Although I have listed the main Species used in hybridisation, one must not forget the special qualities of the other Species within this group. Of all the parents, the Dendrobium tetragonum complex has produced the most exciting progeny - fantastic colours and combinations of colours. Den. tetragonum combines well with all the other sections of Dendrobium, Latourea, Phalaenanthe, Spatula etc. passing on it's spectacular shape, size and large open labellum to the progeny. Den. speciosum with it's strong many flowered racemes must be introduced into the breeding somewhere along the line to produce the required spike habit needed to display the beauty of the colourful blooms, strong, upright and many flowered.

With so many varieties and the large number of good clones available as parent material, one must know the good and bad attributes and whether these attributes are dominant or recessive. One needs a huge stud collection to have a good base for breeding as many clones have individual qualities such as shape, colour, size, number of flowers per raceme and number of racemes per pseudobulb.

Those I have listed below are a good base, as well as many others that may be used as the need arises, and no good breeding plant should be discarded as 'I've finished with that one ', because when the seedlings flower, and they are rippers, your friends want some too and you can't remake the cross.

The points one is looking for and to improve on are :-

- (1) Floriferousness - This is what Aussie Dendrobes are all about
- (2) Strong racemes - it's no good having large colourful blooms if they don't display themselves properly
- (3) Colour - There are a multitude of superb colours and combinations of colours
- (4) Multi Growth - Making specimen size plants quickly
- (5) Lasting quality of blooms - Many of the species have flowers that do not last more than a week, even less in hot weather. By careful selection of the parents lasting qualities can be vastly improved, incorporating the Latourea, Phalaenanthe and Spatula sections into the Dendrocoryne is also beneficial ( see our article on The Hot/Cold Mix )

In all Genera there are those Species and Hybrid Grexes that stand out as good parents, here are some with my choice of their best progeny.

IN THE SPECIES we have,

Den. falcorostrum - colour white, is a compact grower with exceptional texture and substance, floriferousness, is fragrant and has the ability to allow and enhance colour transmission. It's only bad fault is the weak raceme habit of many clones, seek out the clones with strong upright racemes.



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My choice of progeny Den. Aussie Bonanza, Bardo Rose, Peter, Star of Gold and Warrambool.

Den. fleckeri - colours from yellow through to orange shades, is not a good grower however does not pass this on unless mated with another with the same fault.

My choice, Den. Aussie Dream, Eureka, Golden Glory, Peter and Sunglow.

Den. jonesii ( Syn. Den. ruppianum) - Colour white, is a robust grower with good flower count per raceme, glistening texture, can enhance colour and one can use to extend the flowering season as it is a late spring flowerer.

My choice, Den. Ella Victoria Leaney, Eureka and Kungara.

Den. kingianum - colours white, white with purple labellum, pink, mauve to deep plum and spotted. Compact grower with robust multiple shoots making specimen sized plants quickly that produce an amazing abundance of flowers.

My choice, Den. Ellen, Gillian Leaney, Kathryn Banks, King Wong, Rutherford Surprise, Yondi Brolga, Zeppelin and Zip.

Den speciosum complex - colours from white, cream, yellow to gold, varieties include capricornicum, curvicaule, grandiflorum, hillii, pedunculatum and speciosum. The variety dictates as to the size of growth and flowers and the time the progeny will take to bloom, plants are robust and have strong many flowered racemes.

My choice, Den. Clarrie Wuth, Essie Banks, Graham Hewitt, Hilda Poxon, Star of Riverdene and Sunglow.

Den. tetragonum complex - colours from apple green with white labellum through spotted to heavily edged clones with pink/red labellums. A somewhat straggly grower that adds floriferousness, huge size, large labellums and it's exquisite 'spider-like' shape to progeny.

My choice, Den. Aussie Ira, Ellen, Hilda Poxon, Ku-Ring-Gai, Pauline Rankin, Sunstar and Yondi Dreamtime.

## IN THE HYBRIDS

Den. Aussie Ira (Den. Ellen x Den. tetragonum) - colour green with dark brown edging and markings with solid red labellum.

My choice, Den. Aussie Ember (x Peter), Aussie Ruby (x Hilda Poxon), Jesmond Dazzler (x Sunglow)

Den. Bardo Rose (Den. falcorostrum x Den. kingianum) - colour glistening white, pinks and an occasional red/purple.

My choice, Den. (Bardo Rose x Ellen), Blushing Rose (x Xsuffusum), Kingrose (xkingianum)

Den. Xdelicatum (Den. speciosum x Den. kingianum) - white through pinks to red/purple with an occasional creamy yellow.

My choice, Den. Aussie Sandy (x Aussie Mist), Delicate Ellen (x Ellen), Delicate Falcon (x falcorostrum), Gillian Leaney (x kingianum) and Ku-Ring-Gai (x tetragonum).



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Den. Ellen (Den. kingianum x tetragonum) - colours white, green, pink, purple some plain colours others heavily splashed and spotted, some with the pink to mauve labellum.

My choice, Den. Aussie Charm (x Gillian Leaney), Aussie Ira (x tetragonum), Aussie Victory (x Sunglow), Dot Sheen (x Aussie Bonanza), Graham Hewitt (x speciosum), Gai-Ellen (x Ku-Ring-Gai), Red River (x Tweed) and Warrambool (x falcorostrum).

Den. Eureka (fleckeri x jonesii Syn. ruppianum) - colour cream the gold/orange.

My choice Den. Aussie Magic (x Hilda Poxon), Golden Dorn (x Nunkumbil), Lynette Banks (x speciosum) and Nunkumbil (x tetragonum).

Den. Gillian Leaney (Den. Xdelicatum x kingianum) - colours white, white with purple labellum through pinks to purples.

My choice. Den. Aussie Quest (x Graham Hewitt), Bicentennial Blush (x Kim), Bicentennial Rose (x kingianum), Gillieston (x Ku-Ring-Gai) and Gillieston Aura (x Aussie Ira).

Den. Graham Hewitt (Den. Ellen x speciosum) - colours white, cream, green edged and overlaid in a variety of colours, some with the red or purple labellums.

My choice, Den. Pinterry (x Ellen), Hewitt Glow (x Wonga) and Hewitt Sun (x Sunglow).

Den. Hastings (Den. fleckeri x kingianum) - colours white, cream, biscuit, peach to pinks.

My choice, Den. Aussie Spice (x falcorostrum), Peach Glow (x Golden Fleck) and Rutherford Supreme (x Wonga).

Den. Hilda Poxon (Den. speciosum x Den. tetragonum) - colours cream, yellow to gold some with varying degrees of dark spotting and a few with the pink to red labellum.

My choice, Den. Aussie Ruby (Aussie Ira), Essie Banks (x speciosum), Kim Heinze (x Blushing Star), Pauline Rankin (x tetragonum), Telekon (x kingianum) and Warrior (x Ku-Ring-Gai).

Den. Ku-Ring-Gai (Den. Xdelicatum x tetragonum) - colours cream, yellow to green with dark edging and markings, some with the mauve to purple labellum.

My choice, Den. Gai-Ellen (x Ellen), Gillieston (x Gillian Leaney), Gold Vista (x falcorostrum), Regal Affair (x Ku-Ring-Gai), Warrior (x Hilda Poxon) and Zip (x kingianum).

Den. Nunkumbil (Den. Eureka x Den. tetragonum) - colours cream, yellow, gold to orange.

My choice, Den. Golden Dorn (x Eureka) and Specibil (x speciosum).

Den. Peter (Den. falcorostrum x Den. fleckeri) - colours cream to gold.

My choice, Den. Aussie Ember (x Aussie Ira), Aussie Treat (x Ellen), Kim (x kingianum), Tweed (x Sunglow) and Yondi Gold (x Peach Glow).

Den. Star of Gold (Den. falcorostrum x Den. tetragonum) - colours cream to gold with varying degrees of colour on the centre half of the segments.

My choice, Den. Carawah (x Sunglow), Star of Dawn (x kingianum), Star of Riverdene (x speciosum) and Yondi Pioneer (x Aussie Bonanza).



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Den. Sunglow ( Den. fleckeri x Den. speciosum) - colour cream, yellow to orange.

My choice, Den. Aussie Victory (x Ellen), Gulginii (x kingianum), Jesmond Dazzler (x Aussie Ira), Jesmond Glitter (x Zip), Sunstar (x tetragonum) and Tweed (x Peter).

Den. Wonga ( Den. Hastings x Den. speciosum) - colours white, cream, yellow, peach/ apricot to pinks.

My choice, Den. Ellewong (x Ellen), Hewitt Glow (x Graham Hewitt), Karen Nair (x Jamie Upton), King Wong (x kingianum) and Rutherford Supreme (x Hastings).

Den. Zip ( Den. kingianum x Den. Ku-Ring-Gai) - colours white to cream with dark purple edging and splashing, some with the purple labellum.

My choice, Den. Jesmond Glitter (x Sunglow), Lisa Turner (x speciosum), Rutherford Blushing Bride (x Gillian Leaney) and Zeppelin (x Ellen).

There are many other fine Grexes that are of excellent quality and have clones with features that make them desirable both as competition and breeding plants, however I can not cover them all in the space available so I have concentrated on those that I feel have the most to offer. I do hope that I have given you a small insight into our very colourful Aussie Dendrobates, and perhaps aroused a desire to encourage you to grow a few or to increase your existing collection.

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