

## Holcoglossum

I have collected intergeneric Vandaceous hybrids for many years. A couple of really interesting plants turned out to have a *Holcoglossum* species as one of the parents, which brought this somewhat unusual genus to my attention.

Plant sizes range from moderate to true miniature. Most of the +/-20 species come from southern China, with some species extending into Burma, Thailand, Vietnam, Laos and/or Cambodia. A single species (*Holc. quasipinifolium*) also appears in Taiwan.

These *Vanda* relatives have terete foliage, which reflects that they grow in regions, where there is limited precipitation part of the year. They should be grown mounted, or in small baskets\*\*. If growing in a net pot or basket, hang it at a slant, so that the plant can hang over the edge.

\*\* *A small basket with sphagnum/bark mix will help hold moisture around the roots during the growing season, but also facilitate drying out during the 'dry season'.*

Their habitat is in deciduous mountain forests, where they grow in moderate shade cover in spring & summer, while temperatures are intermediate to warm and the humidity is high. When the forest is leafless in the fall & winter, they receive full sun light, while the temperatures fall into the 40's (nights can drop into the 30's).

In terms of cultivation, this translates into:

**Spring & Summer:** Moderate (Cattleya level) light, plenty of water & regular fertilizer. Intermediate temperature is fine.

**Fall & Winter:** Brighter (the leaves come off the trees), cooler, and less water. Little fertilizer till the spring.

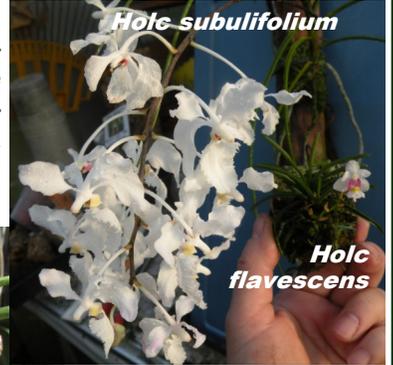
These conditions closely parallel what *Den. jenkinsii* and *Den. lindleyi* (formerly *aggregatum*) require. If you can grow these species, you can grow *Holcoglossums* too.

*Holc. kimballianum* is probably the species most commonly found in private collections, it is easily recognized by the boldly colored lip.

Some species are sequentially blooming (*Holc. kimballianum* & *flavescens*), with a long blooming season. Other species open all the buds on the inflorescence simultaneously (*Holc. subulifolium* & *Holc. wangii*), producing an impressive display for several weeks.

My personal favorite is *Holc. flavescens*, which not only is a miniature (plants are about 2" across), but it has proportionately very large flowers (3/4"

NS), which are full and well proportioned compared with most of the other *Holcoglossum* species. Shown next to a larger species to the right, and in a close-up below.



There has been a good deal of intergeneric breeding with other plants in the Vandaceous group, which has created some very attractive and moderately

sized plants. Mostly these hybrids are based on *Holc. kimballianum* and *Holc. amesianum*, but recently there has been some work done with *Holc. flavescens* also.



**Holcostylis M S Sunlight** (*Holc. flavescens* x *Rhy. gigantea*) in a 3" net pot. Plant is approx. 6" across.

