

## 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.

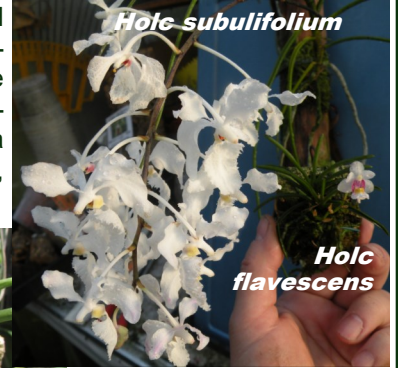
These conditions closely parallel what *Den. jenkinsii* and *Den. lindleyi* (formerly *aggregatum*) require. If you can grow these species, you can grow *Holcoglossums* too.

*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.

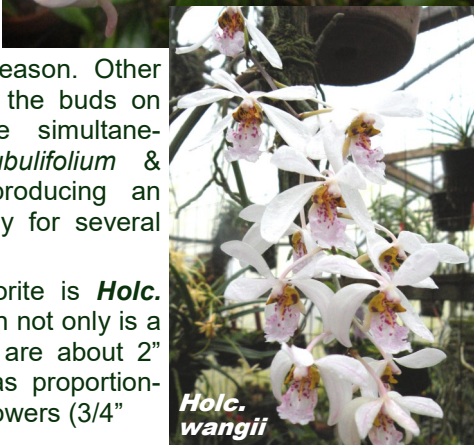
My personal favorite is *Holc. flavescens*, which not only is a miniature (plants are about 2" across), but it has proportionately very large flowers (3/4"

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.

