

***Drosera* 'Helen'**

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Origins

This cultivar is of hybrid origin. The plant resulted from a cross between *Drosera cuneifolia* (originally from Reading University) and *Drosera ramentacea*. *Drosera cuneifolia* was the seed parent, and was emasculated to prevent self-pollination.

Characteristics

There was some variability in the seedlings resulting from the original cross, both in form and vigour. Leaf shape in the seedlings varied, from spatulate in some, through to more linear in others. *Drosera* 'Helen' has linear leaves more like the *ramentacea* parent, although young plants can appear to have more spatulate leaves (see Photo 2), and the cross has distinctive hairy petioles.

Mature plants grow upwards and form a stem clothed with the remains of older leaves (see Photo 1). Mature rosettes get to approximately 10 cm diameter. Flowers are produced on thin, wiry stems which are not self-supporting, and flowers are fairly typical *Drosera* mauve and up to 3cm diameter (see Photo 3).

This particular individual named as 'Helen' was selected due to its robust nature compared to its siblings, as well as a lack of dormancy. In my greenhouse conditions it grows all year round without any winter or summer dormancy period (Note that in my greenhouse *Drosera capensis* normally goes completely dormant during winter).

Cultivation

The cultivar 'Helen' grows well in a variety of common compost mixes. I have grown it in both sphagnum-based mixes as well as my normal moorland gold: perlite mix. The plant quite happily tolerates full sun all day with no shading, with temperatures in the range of 5-35°C. The cultivar reproduces easily from root cuttings.

To preserve the unique characteristics of the plant, *Drosera* 'Helen' should only be propagated vegetatively.

Etymology

The cultivar is proposed as *Drosera* 'Helen', named after my mother.

Photos



1 Mature plant



2 Juvenile plant



3 Flower