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by Dana Larsen and Volcano (13 Jun, 2005)

Breeding experiments with the ultimate camouflage strain

In 1999 *Cannabis Culture* reported on a strange new strain of marijuana (CC#19, [Grow Down Under](#)), which had a very different appearance and growth pattern than normal pot. We were introduced to this strain by Mr Ayers, who had come across it as an outdoor grower in Australia. He reported that although it lacked in potency, the strain was incredibly hardy and frost-resistant, and unrecognizable as cannabis without close examination (CC#27, [Aussie mutant update](#)).

The structure is quite different than regular cannabis. There are no fan leaves, all leaves are quite small with an irregular distribution of stamens. The plant grows more like a shrub, without the typical candelabra shape of most cannabis.



We dubbed this new variety Australian Bastard Cannabis (ABC), and we gave away many seeds to interested breeders, as well as giving away a large batch of ABC x Flo. We hoped that inspired breeders would find a way to combine the potency of the Flo with the camouflage and hardiness of the

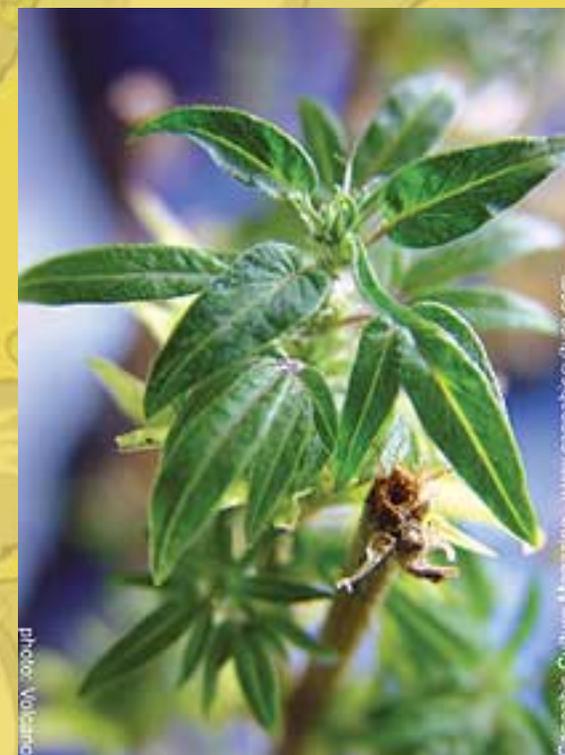


Photo: Volcano

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ABC.

We received feedback from readers who claimed to have encountered this strain before. One Australian grower told us that the ABC was known as Mutant, and that some thought it might be a "colchicine polyploid experiment gone wrong."

Colchicine is a mutagen which is used to produce strange polyploid effects, and so could possibly explain the plant's odd leaf structure and characteristics.

Of the many ABC x Flo crosses which we distributed, the vast majority lost the ABC look. Some breeders reported that the ABC x Flo had the Flo appearance and potency, but nevertheless seemed hardier than the straight Flo, indicating that some of the ABC toughness had been passed on to the cross.

One local horticulturalist named "Volcano" grew out some of our last batch of ABC x Flo seeds. He germinated the seeds in a greenhouse in BC during March. "I germinated at 70°F (21°C) between two plates on moistened paper towels. I placed the plates on top of a florescent fixture to provide bottom heat, and checked every day to ensure the paper towels stayed moist and to supply fresh air to seedlings. The seeds had all germinated in seven to ten days.

"Once the root hairs showed, I planted them using Sunshine Mix #4. I started all the seedlings in 4 inch pots, and the first leaves showed up in about 10 days."

Volcano said the first set of leaves looked identical to regular cannabis, and it wasn't until the first true leaves appeared that differences became evident. "Those leaves came out completely unlike the serrated leaf," said Volcano. "In fact, there are no serrated edges on these leaves. They are darker green, shiny and succulent looking - they usually got no larger than two inches."





Volcano reported that the plants grew quickly, requiring re-potting as they increased in size. "A cannabis-like smell was evident when leaves were rubbed," he added. "On April 1, I put the plants into a 4' x 8' cold frame outdoors. I watered with collected rain water and used organic compost teas used as fertilizer.

"The males flowered early, some before the end of July," reported Volcano. "The females were compact with short internodes. They were heavily branched with many leaves. The buds formed differently on each plant, but they were all very resinous with cannabis-like buds. But nevertheless, the mature plant does not look like cannabis."

The plants reach an average height of about three feet. "With fuller exposure to sunlight, they would have gotten much bigger," added Volcano.

The plants were harvested in November, trimmed and hung to dry. "I got an approximate yield of three dry ounces per plant," said Volcano, "and I was also able to harvest seeds for next year!"

Volcano shared his ABC x Flo harvest with the gang at CC. The buds smoked clean, with a light, spicy flavor. The high was Sativa-like, soaring and euphoric, stronger than we had expected. This is definitely a strain worthy of further experimentation and breeding. With further effort, ABC could become the ultimate camouflage strain of the new millennium!

- Background illustration by Gary Wintle

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