

The New Awards A Year Later

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In the January 1978 *Awards Quarterly*, Volume 9, Number 1, the article entitled "The New Awards — Certificate of Horticultural Merit and Certificate of Botanical Recognition" detailed the basic requirements for these two awards which went into effect on March 1, 1978. More than a year has elapsed since this time, and both judges and readers of this publication will be interested in some of the problems which have arisen during this period.

While the transition from the use of the Certificate of Botanical merit (C.B.M.) to the new and differing awards, the C.H.M. and the C.B.R., has not always been totally smooth, surprisingly few administrative difficulties appear to have been encountered — if one discounts immediately the main and crucial problem of what do the awards really mean. Minor points of difficulty experienced in almost all regions which have come to out attention here in Cambridge include the following.

- A. **Verification** — the taxonomic determination of each species or natural hybrid granted a C.H.M. or C.B.R. must be verified by the Orchid Identification Center at the Marie Selby Botanical Gardens in Sarasota, Florida or by a recognized taxonomist. Initially, it has been necessary on occasion to be lenient with this requirement. Exhibitors, receiving a C.H.M. or C.B.R. for the first time, or who were unaware of the verification requirement, have been a little startled to receive, along with their award billing, the Cambridge office reminder to send us a copy of their Orchid Identification Center verification slip. Since it is impossible for the Cambridge office to forewarn any potential exhibitor of this requirement, and since the flower in question may have faded by the time our reminder arrive, it is essential that the head judge at each regional or supplemental judging and at each show remind the recipient of a C.H.M. or C.B.R. of the verification requirement at that time. It is unfair to penalize an exhibitor due to lack of instruction from the judges. However, with repeated publication of this requirement — and with regular reminders at each judging — there should be no reason for verification not to be made in the future.
- B. **Priority** — the definition of the C.B.R. clearly states that it "may be granted only to healthy, flowering, previously unawarded species or natural hybrids deemed worthy of recognition because of rarity, novelty and educational value. This award should be granted only once to the species as a taxon..." Some discussion has arisen as to whether a species previously granted an A.M., or through the exhibitor a C.C.M., for example, could also receive a C.B.R. The answer is no, as the term "previously unawarded" includes any A.O.S. award. In instances in which a species is granted two awards at the same judging, one of which is a C.B.R., we assume that the C.B.R., of course, was the award granted first.

With the increased importation of orchid species in the last 10 years and their distribution throughout all the orchid-growing regions, the natural blooming period of a species has, on occasion, played havoc with the awarding of the

- C.B.R. Though rare, often as many as three different clones of a previously unawarded species may be granted a C.B.R. in different judging areas or different shows within the same brief period of time. As sometimes happens, the C.B.R. granted last in time may be the first to arrive in Cambridge, the first therefore to be billed and the first to be paid for. When the remaining but earlier C.B.R.'s arrive, and the chronology is noted, the Awards Registrar must rescind that first-to-arrive award, granting the C.B.R. only to the plant awarded chronologically first in time. The exhibitor involved might be heard to whisper that the “blackguard Cambridge office has done it again.” There is little one can do to alter this rare but unfortunate situation except, perhaps, for the following two suggestions: **one**, make exhibitors more aware of the fact that the C.B.R. can be granted only once to a species so that if they are necessarily disappointed at some future time by the situation described above, they will understand the reason why; and **two**, send the judging summary sheets to the Cambridge office immediately after a judging. We process these sheets immediately and, even with only two weeks' difference between the granting of a C.B.R. to two different clones of the same species, we can possibly avoid the disappointment — and embarrassment — of first granting an award to an exhibitor and then having to recall it.
- C.** Synonymy — the taxonomy of orchids is in fairly constant flux, and an orchid species may often trail a list of synonyms behind it longer than the inflorescence of *Oncidium lamelligerum*. No single individual, except perhaps a handful of well-known taxonomists, can be expected to remain current with all these changes. Hence, an occasional C.B.R. may be granted at a judging or a show to a species which ten years before had received an award under a different specific or even generic determination. Since a C.B.R. cannot be granted to a previously awarded species, no matter under which synonymous name it may have momentarily disguised itself, the need for the Orchid Identification Center verification is obvious here. The C.B.R. award may occasionally then have to be denied by the Cambridge office with due explanation to the exhibitor that his or her plant had been previously awarded under a different name.
- D.** Multiple Awarding — this phenomenon does not occur within the definition of the C.B.R. except through the understandable errors mentioned above. However, more than one C.H.M. may be granted to different clones of the same species provided that they meet the following criteria expressed within the *Handbook on Judging and Exhibition*, page 12 — “This Certificate (C.H.M) may be granted more than once if other clones have significantly different and desirable characteristics...” It is obviously important that all judges remember this distinction between the C.B.R. and the C.H.M. It is equally important, for the value of the A.O.S. awards records, that the difference between clones of the same species, previously and subsequently receiving C.H.M.'s, be clearly stated in the award description. Unfortunately, this was not always the case with the C.B.M and it is proving not to be the case with the C.H.M.

For example, the species *Angraecum scottianum* has received a C.B.M. and a C.H.M. The C.B.M. was granted to the clone ‘Willow Pond’ on August 18, 1971. The C.H.M. was granted to the clone ‘Louise’ on ‘September 11, 1978. *Angraecum scottianum* ‘Louise’, CHM/AOS is pictured in this article. The award

description for *Angraecum scottianum* 'Willow Pond', CBM/AOS reads: "Two flowers, two buds on two spikes; a terete-leaved Madagascan species; semi-dwarf; broad-lipped flowers with four- and five-eighths-inch nectarines; flowers white with orange tinge on nectarines. Natural spread of flower 1&5/8 inches..." The award description for *Angraecum scottianum* 'Louise', CHM/AOS reads: "Two pure china white, waxy-surfaced flowers with 15.0-cm spurs. Natural spread 7.0 cm..." Even though two different awards are involved, the connection between the old C.B.M. and the new C.H.M. is not only evident, it has been alluded to within the published description of the C.H.M. within the brief phrase "it would seem redundant to grant a C.H.M. to a clone already awarded a C.B.M." Two different clones are involved here, but nowhere in the later award description is there any statement as to the "significantly different and desirable characteristics" which the 'Louise' clone possesses in comparison to the previously awarded 'Willow Pond' clone. This lack of tie-in is noted only in hopes in granting future C.H.M.'s to different clones of the same species, the requirement covering this multiple awarding will be noted and defined within the award description. A similar situation exists with the published awards to various clones of *Odontoglossum bicktoniense*. For example, the award description of *Odontoglossum bicktoniense forma album variety sulphureum* 'Rita', CHM/AOS, pictured here, does not convey that clone's distinction from other alba forms or normally colored clones. In this respect, the record of C.B.M. and C.H.M. awards becomes of limited use to future judges.

- E. The Record** — if there has been one term which has surfaced since the C.B.R., it is the phrase "the record." Although there is nothing in the description of either the C.H.M. or the C.B.R., which states directly or otherwise that the purpose of either award is "to get this new species on the record," this argument is often heard around the judging table. What does it mean?

The basic argument insists that it is somehow crucial that every previously unawarded species be placed within the "written record" for posterity. Which written record? In point of fact, a detailed botanical record of each species finally granted its C.B.R. already exists in the literature, as there can be no verification, and hence no award, without this botanical record. The focus of argument then shifts to our awards record and its purpose. This purpose is defined within the definition of the award itself: the species; should be granted a C.B.R. only if it possesses "rarity, novelty and educational value." Need it be pointed out that all three qualities are required, not just one? Hence, viewing a species for the first time should not be, in itself, sufficient justification for granting a C.B.R. Only when a species is felt to possess all three characteristics stated above "to a degree deemed worthy of recognition," should it then be placed "on the record." Clearly, not every species — perhaps not even the majority — could fulfill what is implied by the three terms.

- 1. Rarity** — what is rare in one man's eyes may be commonplace to another's. Does the term mean rarity in cultivation? Or does the term consider those species rare anywhere in their natural habitat? The term, unfortunately, remains undefined. In what way would *Lycaste*

longiscapa ‘Green Giant’, CBR/AOS, pictured here, fulfill this requirement?

2. **Novelty** — the two basic definitions of this difficult word are new and/or unusual. Would not “new” to cultivation indicate “rarity” in cultivation? Even if “new to science,” it would not, however, necessarily mean “rarity” in nature. The term “rarity” should be approached with due caution. By definition an “unusual” object differs from the norm. Could we suppose that an alba form such as *Odontoglossum bictoniense* forma *album* variety *sulphureum* might fulfill this definition, or perhaps *Pleurothallis setosa* ‘Casper von Herzog-Magnus’, CBR/AOS with its large, hairy flowers and small plant in a genus known primarily for the reverse characteristics; or even *Drymoanthus minutus* ‘Malke’, CBR/AOS whose description points out that “the tiny, monopodial, Australian plant has a total volume of flowers equivalent to ½ the total volume of the plant,” an unusual quality in any orchid.
3. **Educational Value** — this is the term upon which we all occasionally founder. What can possibly be meant by educational value when, in fact, every time we see, observe and compare a “new” species to others with which we are familiar, we are educating ourselves. Does not every plant therefore possess educational value? Is it possible however to think of intrinsic educational value as being that quality within a species which distinguishes itself from other species within its genus in such a way as to add to the botanical and horticultural knowledge of the genus as a whole? Thus it is not just a question of the species being rare or novel but of its being, also, instructively different. A possible example exists within the description of *Barbosella circinata* ‘Fox Den’, CBR/AOS, unfortunately not pictured here, in which, in a genus of resupinate flowers, this species was remarkable to the judges for “being doubly resupinate, the ovary coiled around the base of the flower...” Here is a valid and thoughtful attempt to define the quality of educational value in a species being granted a C.B.R.

It will be necessary to undertake future discussions as the evolution of these two interesting awards, involving 17 judging centers and over 400 judging personnel, proceeds through trial and error to define ever more concretely the aesthetics of the C.H.M. and C.B.R. In the meantime, if you could, how would you “rejudge” the lovely species *Constantia cipoensis* ‘Greentree’, CBM/AOS.