



AMERICAN ORCHID SOCIETY

HANDBOOK ON JUDGING

(Effective July 10, 2023)

PREFACE

The Handbook on Judging, hereinafter referred to as the Handbook, is the official policy statement of the AOS regarding the operation of its judging system. It is published on the AOS website and in *OrchidPro*.

Changes to the Handbook, as adopted from time to time by the JC with the approval of the Board of Trustees, are published on the AOS website and in *OrchidPro*. These changes become effective once published.

Observance of the rules stated herein is mandatory upon AOS judges as well as show officials and individual exhibitors. Failure to observe the rules may result in disqualification of judges from service, of shows from the privilege of offering AOS judging, or of exhibitors from eligibility to receive AOS awards. All judges are required to maintain continuous AOS membership, thereby maintaining access to *OrchidPro* and the current edition of the Handbook as published.

The current revision incorporates changes approved by the JC and the BOT in January-June 2023. The following substantive changes are made in this edition (date of approval in brackets):

2.2 JC meetings to follow lead of AOS semi-annual meetings re type of meeting (face to face or virtual). (20/04/2023)

3.3.1 and 3.3.2 Adjustments to JC business meetings (virtual meetings, provisions for secret ballot, timing of minute submission) (20/04/2023)

3.3.1.6 Fast track mechanism for BOT approval of personnel issues and other business items. (26/01/2023)

4.2.1, 4.2.2, 4.2.3 Changes in date of acceptance as Student/Associate/ promotion to Accredited judge based on date of recommendation by Judging Center to Board of Trustees. (26/01/2023)

4.2.4.2.(e) Requirements for senior judges to vote on personnel issues. (26-01-2023).

5.5.2.1.1(1) Ratio of associate judges on a valid judging team may not exceed 50 % accredited judges. (20-04-2023).

5.7.1 No. of outreach judgments per center per year increased up to four. (20-04-2023).

Minor changes made (as per 2.7, not requiring approval):

2.8 Update of position title

3.2.1.3.b.i Delete, instructions obsolete.

7.5.3.1.3. Petals, dropped a line.

Respectfully submitted:

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Jean Hollebone, Chair, JHTF

Table of Contents

I. AMERICAN ORCHID SOCIETY JUDGING SYSTEM	4
1.1 Mission	4
1.2 History	4
1.3 Judging Centers (locations and dates established)	5
1.4 Award Records	6
II. JUDGING COMMITTEE	7
2.1 Organization	7
2.2 Meetings	7
2.3 Duties and Responsibilities	7
2.4 Duties and Responsibilities of JC Chair	8
2.5 Judging Policy Task Force.....	8
2.6 Judging Ethics Task Force.....	8
2.7 Judging Handbook Task Force.....	8
2.8 Director of Awards and Special Projects	8
III. JUDGING CENTER COMMITTEES.....	9
3.1 Organization	9
3.2 Duties of Officers	9
3.3 Meetings	11
3.4 Qualifications and Terms of Office	13
3.5 Establishment of New Judging Centers.....	13
3.6 Criteria for Relocation of a Judging Center	15
3.7 Criteria for the Probation or Dissolution of a Judging Center	15
3.8 Center Representation at the JC.....	16
3.9 Judging Centers and Affiliated Societies	16
IV. JUDGES.....	17
4.1 Judges.....	17
4.2 Appointment and Accreditation	17
4.3 Continuing Status	22
4.4 Judging Center Assignment	22
4.5 Knowledge and Abilities	23
4.6 Responsibilities	23
4.7 Judges' Education	24
4.8 Conduct of Judges	26
4.9 Separation from Service	27

4.10 Returning to Service	27
4.11 Suspension, Termination and/or Lesser Sanctions	28
V. JUDGING PROCESS	33
5.1 Purpose of Judging	33
5.2 Judging Materials	33
5.3 Submission of Plants for Judging.....	33
5.4 Care and Disposition of Plants.....	34
5.5 Judging Practice.....	34
5.6 Judging at Orchid Shows.....	40
5.7 Outreach Judging.....	43
VI. AMERICAN ORCHID SOCIETY AWARDS.....	44
6.1 Purpose and Granting of Awards.....	44
6.2 Awards for Individual Plants (and Special Groups of Plants).....	44
6.3 Special Annual Awards	47
6.4 Awards for Display of Plants, Flowers, and Educational Material	51
VII. JUDGING CRITERIA AND POINT SCALES.....	55
7.1 Quality.....	55
7.2 Point Scales for AOS Awards - Flower Quality	59
7.3 Point Scale for AOS Awards - Other	59
7.4 Principles of Design	61
7.5 Measurement and Description	62
VIII. AN ORCHID JUDGE’S GLOSSARY	68
IX. INFORMATIONAL NOTES.....	73
9.1 Notes on the Nomenclature of Orchids	73
9.2 Notes on Registering Orchid Hybrids.....	73
9.3 Photographers' Notice: AOS Use of Official Images	73
9.4 Guidelines on Orchid Awards Photography	73

I. AMERICAN ORCHID SOCIETY JUDGING SYSTEM

(Revisions Approved April 23, 2020)

1.1 Mission

Among the goals of the American Orchid Society (AOS) are the promotion of knowledge and appreciation of orchids by the public, as well as the education of the public relative to orchids. The AOS Judging System, as implemented by this Handbook, is designed to support these goals by providing a process to its members, affiliated societies, and orchid growers everywhere (both domestic and international) by which their orchids can be evaluated and judged for AOS awards. AOS judges provide this service through regularly scheduled judging sessions at the various AOS judging centers and additional sites, at AOS-sanctioned shows, and at other AOS-sanctioned events, such as outreach judging and orchid-related symposia. This process is designed to recognize quality orchid plants and flowers, exceptional achievements in orchid cultivation, and significant advancements in breeding, hybridization, and artistic design; it also seeks to increase public awareness of the vast variety and diversity of orchid species found all over the world. All orchid growers are encouraged to take advantage of this service.

1.2 History

Founded in 1921, the judging and recognizing exceptional orchid plants and growers' skills has been an integral part of the AOS's history; the first AOS National Orchid Show was held in 1924 at which gold and silver medals were awarded. Permanent, recorded awards that would follow an outstanding plant's name were created in 1932, the AOS' eleventh year.

Each quarterly meeting, the president selected people with suitable background and experience to act informally as judges, casting votes in the manner of the Orchid Committee of the Royal Horticultural Society.

With growing membership and the affiliation of more regional societies, the demand for exhibition and evaluation spurred the AOS to expand the scope of judging, formalize the development of a permanent community of judges, and standardize its rules. To codify and distribute these rules, as well as material on staging shows and orchid nomenclature, the first edition of the Handbook was published in 1949. That year also saw the establishment of monthly exhibitions in the facilities of the Horticultural Society of New York through its cooperation with the newly created AOS Committee on Arrangements, soon called the Committee on Awards and renamed the Judging Committee in 1996. Orchids could then be brought from anywhere and be judged for AOS awards.

The First World Orchid Conference, held in Saint Louis, Missouri in 1954, brought together delegates from several orchid societies, many with existing judging programs, to establish a standard system of point scales. This concordance created a capacity to serve the orchid community with regular, monthly AOS judging somewhere in the United States each week. Joining New York as regional judging centers were Los Angeles, Miami, Oakland, and, in 1959, Honolulu so that, in the age of air express, COA Chair Helen H. Adams could report, "theoretically, no flower need blush unjudged."

As the AOS and its judging sphere grew, the JC was charged with the responsibility to manage and develop a stable, yet flexible system to ensure effective service to its constituents and allow change when appropriate. The concept of judging regions arose, each region's committee comprising its roster of certified judges. Regions were to conduct regular monthly judging at specified sites and at shows of the AOS Affiliated Societies within specified boundaries, and train and present to the JC qualified candidates for appointment as judges. The elected regional chairs came to be members of

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the JC, presenting the regions' proposals and voting in congress with members appointed by the trustees, to whom recommendations were sent for resolution.

To further consolidate varied viewpoints, the chair of the JC and membership of the working committee was to be rotated among the regions. New perspectives, in concert with established practice, could be applied to standards, techniques, and procedures as the system evolved.

And evolve it did. The AOS judging system grew tremendously through considered management by the regions, the JC, and the trustees, balancing strong opinion with care for the need for equity and common sense. From the 1960s through the mid-1990s, new centers opened, regions divided, regional boundaries were adjusted, and international jurisdictions were established, all to facilitate effective administration and extend more judging capabilities to the Affiliated Societies and exhibitors. Fifteen regions emerged, and 12 supplemental judging centers augmented some regions. Five were conveyed in the merger of the Orchid Digest Corporation and AOS judging systems in 1968.

A further step was taken in 1996 to allow even more flexibility in judging services: a restructuring of the regional concept into a community of judging centers without sharply defined boundaries, all with a representative on the JC. Existing associations of Affiliated Societies and judging centers would remain as constituted unless a group specifically applied for a change. A newly affiliating society could select a center it would support and be served by. Many of the supplemental judging centers became independent centers separate from their former regional committees. Others geographically close to their primary center were acknowledged as integral to providing an additional judging session each month, maintaining one cohesive committee of judges to serve both centers.

It was intended that, with greater emphasis on the development of the judging center committees' relationships with their Affiliated Societies, the AOS judging program could provide greater service. Through 85 years of formal AOS judging, 27 judging centers have come to operate 36 judging sites. In improving proximity and higher frequency of judging to orchidist growers who wish to have their plants judged or join the judging community, Mrs. Adam's perception of the desired direction of AOS judging has indeed blossomed.

1.3 Judging Centers (locations and dates established):

Alamo Judging Center (San Antonio, TX - 1968 - [Austin, TX - 1962])

Atlanta Judging Center (Atlanta, GA - 1973)

California-Sierra Nevada Judging Center (Sacramento CA - 2005)

Carolinas Judging Center (Raleigh, NC – 1998, Greensboro, NC – 2005)

Chicago Judging Center (Chicago, IL - 1990)

Cincinnati Judging Center (Cincinnati, OH - 1993)

Dallas Judging Center (Dallas, TX - 1968-70*, 1988)

Florida-Caribbean Judging Center (Miami, FL – 1955)

Florida North-Central Judging Centers

Tampa, FL-1966

Orlando, FL - 2003

Great Lakes Judging Center (Ann Arbor, MI - 1972)

Great Plains Judging Center (Oklahoma City, OK - 1980)

Hawaii Judging Centers

Hawaii Judging Center (Honolulu, HI-1959)

Big Island Additional Judging Site (Hilo, HI* - 1968) Hawaii

Additional Judging Site-Maui (Lahaina, HI* - 1968)

Houston Judging Center (Houston, TX - 1991)

Louisiana Judging Center (Shreveport, LA-2007, Alexandria, LA, 2021)

Mid-America Judging Center (St. Louis, MO - 1961)
Mid-Atlantic Judging Center (Philadelphia, PA - 1984)
Montreal Judging Center (Montreal, QC*** – 2020)
National Capital Judging Center (Washington, DC - 1976)
Northeast Judging Centers:
 Boylston, MA - 1996
 Morris Township, NJ – 2018 (Stamford, CT – 2012-18, Elmsford, NY- 1998-2012, White Plains, NY- 1993-98[NYC-1949-62,1971-93])
Pacific Central Judging Centers
 San Francisco, CA* - 1968
 Woodside, CA – 2019 (Oakland, CA–1955 – 2019)
Pacific Northwest Judging Center (Salem, OR** – 2006 (Tacoma, WA- 1981– [Seattle, WA-1962])
Pacific South Judging Centers
 Pacific South Judging Center (Burbank, CA-1994-[Los Angeles, CA-1955])
 Pacific South Additional Judging Site (Long Beach, CA* - 1968)
 Pacific South Additional Judging Site (San Diego, CA – 2006 – (Encinitas, CA – 2002-06))
 Pacific South Additional Judging Site (Santa Barbara, CA - 2007)
Puerto Rico Judging Center (San Juan, PR - 2013)
Rocky Mountain Judging Center (Denver, CO - 1990)
Toronto Judging Center (Toronto, ON – 1992)
West Palm Beach Judging Center (West Palm Beach, FL - 1992)
Western Canada Judging Center (Richmond, BC – 2017)

* Denotes former Orchid Digest Judging Centers

** Established as an additional site for the Pacific Northwest Judging Center in 2006, the Salem OR site became the sole site for the center in 2018 when the Seattle site closed its doors in March 2018.

*** Established as an additional site for the Toronto Judging Center in 2005, the Montreal Judging Center became an autonomous center on April 23, 2020.

1.4 Award Records

Chronological records for all the awards were published by the AOS and kept in the Register of Awards from 1932 to 1968, in 7 volumes. These records contained the name of the cultivar, the award received and the name and address of the exhibitor. Most of these awards also had some form of description of the plant or flower.

In 1969, the AOS trustees established that a picture must be added to the record and began publishing a quarterly magazine named the AOS Awards Quarterly, better known as the AQ. The AQ ceased to publish in December 2007, with Volume 38, Number 4.

In 2006, the AOS obtained digital copies of approximately 40,000 award slides that were incorporated in 2007 into a computer program named AQ Plus. This program replaced the printed AQ and was updated quarterly. In 2014, the final update to AQ Plus was produced and a new computer program, Orchids Plus, was implemented. In 2019 *OrchidPro* was introduced and has since replaced Orchids Plus.

Maintaining a continuous access to *OrchidPro*, now the official record of AOS awards, is required of all judging personnel. It serves as the primary source of reference to judges in evaluating plants and flowers, and includes the name of the awarded plant, the circumstances in which the award was granted, a description of the plant in flower, and, in most instances, an image of the awarded flower or plant.

II. JUDGING COMMITTEE

(Revised March 9, 2018)

2.1 Organization

- 1) Appointed by the Board of Trustees at their first meeting following each election, the JC is composed of the following voting members:
 - a. a chair,
 - b. the chair of each judging center, and
 - c. three to five additional members recommended by the chair and approved by the Board of Trustees.
- 2) The term of the JC chair is limited to four consecutive years.
- 3) One or more of the members may be designated by the JC chair as JC vice-chair, as well as secretary.
- 4) If a judging center's chair is unable to attend, the vice-chair shall serve as the center's voting alternate.
 - a. If both the judging center's chair and vice-chair are unable to attend, an accredited judge of the center, appointed by the chair to represent the wishes of the center, shall serve as the center's voting alternate.

2.2 Meetings

- 1) Meetings of the JC will be held regularly, following the lead of the bi-annual meetings of the Board of Trustees, e.g. face to face or virtual.
- 2) Additional meetings may be called at the discretion of the chair; they can be face-to-face, or virtual.
- 3) For all meetings, a majority of the voting members of the JC shall constitute a quorum.
 - a. Decisions shall be made by a majority vote of all members present and voting.

2.3 Duties and Responsibilities

The JC shall:

- 1) Supervise the AOS judging system under the direction of the Board of Trustees of the AOS.
- 2) Establish uniform standards for the acceptance and education of judges.
- 3) Receive from the judging centers all nominations for new candidates for judge, notification of new students accepted into the judging centers' educational programs and changes in the status of current judges, and after review of the centers' recommendations, make its independent recommendations to the Board of Trustees.
- 4) Additionally, and with the approval of the Board of Trustees, the JC may initiate any action it deems necessary for the proper and ethical administration of the judging system, including suspension or termination of a judge, as described in paragraph 4.11.
- 5) Along with designated staff of the AOS, be responsible for maintaining a current list of the judges.
- 6) Through its chair, be responsible for the day-to-day interpretation of judging rules, the enforcement and maintenance of any records necessary for efficient monitoring of the judging system.
- 7) Have the right to rescind any award which either through error or lack of knowledge was granted in violation of the rules.
- 8) Make recommendations to the Board of Trustees regarding the future development of the AOS judging system.
- 9) Be responsible, under the direction of the Board of Trustees, for biannual review and revision of the Handbook which is devoted to judging.

2.4 Duties and Responsibilities of JC Chair

The chair shall:

- 1) Preside at all meetings of the JC. In the chair's absence, the vice-chair shall preside. If both are absent, a temporary chair shall be elected by the members present.
- 2) At each biannual meeting, report to the Board of Trustees on JC activities and recommendations.
- 3) Make a report at each biannual meeting of members of the AOS.
- 4) Arrange for minutes of meetings to be sent to all JC members. The minutes shall contain a full and complete record of the meeting so members shall be able to participate in the work and decisions of the JC.
- 5) Preside at any duly called general meeting of AOS judges.
- 6) Appoint committees and task forces as defined in the Handbook, as well as ad hoc working committees of the JC when necessary.
- 7) Appoint a national education coordinator. (See paragraph 4.7.1)

2.5 Judging Policy Task Force

A subcommittee of the JC known as the Judging Policy Task Force (JPTF) shall be appointed by the chair to act as an executive task force between sessions of the JC. The chair shall head this task force. The Judging Policy Task Force shall help prepare the agenda for JC meetings, make recommendations to the JC, and make policy decisions which require immediate action. No formal action may be taken on matters pertaining to the status of judges. Decisions shall be made by a majority of the Judging Policy Task Force including the chair and shall be reviewed by the JC at its next semiannual meeting.

2.6 Judging Ethics Task Force

A Judging Ethics Task Force (JETF) shall be appointed by the JC chair. The JETF shall recommend Handbook additions or changes on any issue involving judges' ethics and submit them in its reports to the JC.

2.7 Judging Handbook Task Force

The Judging Handbook Task Force (JHTF) shall be appointed by the JC chair. The JHTF will have the authority to correct typographical, spelling, or other administrative errors without presenting them to the JC or the Board of Trustees for approval provided that the correction(s) in no way change the meaning, intent, or substance of the Handbook. Other changes to the Handbook suggested by the JHTF that change the meaning, intent, or substance of the Handbook must be approved by both the JC and the Board of Trustees.

2.8 Director of Awards and Special Projects

The Director of Awards and Special Projects is a staff position responsible for managing the logistics of the AOS awards program. This consists of receiving, recording, editing, registering, maintaining, publishing awards information on the web, and the provision of award certificates, thus providing the official recognition of awards granted in the many judging centers and the over 200 AOS sanctioned events held annually. The Director of Awards and Special Projects provides specific, award-related support to the judging system, reporting to the Judging Committee and the Board monthly. The Director of Awards and Special Projects presents a visual summary of the Special Annual Awards, announced at the spring semi-annual meeting of members.

III. JUDGING CENTER COMMITTEES

3.1 Organization

The judging system consists of 27 judging centers, and 10 additional sites, located in the United States and Canada.

- 1) Each center, including any additional sites, is under the jurisdiction of a center committee comprising all its active certified judges.
- 2) Each center committee is a subcommittee of the JC and each main center chair is a member of the JC.
- 3) Each center will have a chair, a first vice-chair, two vice-chairs for each additional site, a secretary, a treasurer, an education coordinator, and one or more photographers.
 - a) The chair, all vice-chairs and the education coordinator must be accredited judges.
 - b) The photographers need not be members of the AOS.
- 4) Centers in close geographic proximity may, by application to the JC, merge into a single center with multiple monthly judging dates in additional sites, by a vote of two-thirds of the judges serving each of the merging centers.
- 5) Center chairs and vice-chairs are elected for terms beginning January 1, following the trustees' meeting at which they are confirmed. Chairs and vice-chairs completing the term of a chair or vice chair that is being replaced, officially take office when confirmed by the trustees.

3.2 Duties of Officers

3.2.1 Chair

The chair, elected by the center committee and confirmed by the trustees, has the overall responsibility and authority for all AOS judging activities of the center. Where judging centers have multiple sites, the chair may, for reasons of convenience, operate from a preferred site and serve as presiding chair of judging at that site. The chair will:

1. Serve as a member of the JC and participate actively in JC matters as required. Enforcement of the Handbook is a shared responsibility of the center chairs and the JC.
2. Respond promptly to questionnaires or minutes of meetings from the JC.
3. At least 60 (sixty) days prior to the biannual Board of Trustees meetings noted below, provide the chair of the JC (or the chair's designee) with the following information:
 - a. For each biannual meeting of the Board of Trustees:
 - i. copies of minutes of judging center committee business meetings with all recommendations for personnel actions made by the center's committee, including the full names and addresses of the persons involved.
 - ii. copy of the center's current judge's roster in text format, including the judges' names, statuses, addresses, phone numbers, and e-mail addresses, highlighting any roster changes from previous submission.
 - b. For the Fall biannual meeting of the Board of Trustees:
 - i. recommendations of the center committee for their chair and vice-chair. *Note: If changes occur at other times, the chair of the JC should be so notified.*
 - c. For the Spring biannual meeting of the Board of Trustees:
 - i. judging center award totals, including shows in the center's jurisdiction, for

the preceding year in the prescribed format.

- ii. confirm the names of at least one sponsoring Affiliated Society for the judging center. Centers with multiple locations must confirm this information for each site.
 1. If the primary sponsoring Affiliated Society for the judging center needs to change, the following must be submitted to the chair of the Judging Committee at the time of change:
 - a. Written notice from the judging center advising the JC of the change, and
 - b. a letter from the new sponsoring society agreeing to their new role.
 4. Call and preside over business meetings of the center committee.
 5. Notify the vice-chair of any proposed absence from a meeting by the chair.
 6. Arrange for conducting and presiding at the center's monthly judging sessions.
 7. Approve, at least four months in advance, dates and application for an affiliate's show or event for which AOS-sanctioned judging is requested. When an affiliate requests approval with less than 4 months advance notice, the center chair may grant approval if the entire application is in order and the required fees have been paid.
 8. Be responsible for certifying the accuracy of entry forms and ensuring the submission of AOS awards, including accurate data entry, and uploading of award images, to the AOS no later than 60 days from the date of judging.
 9. Be responsible for ensuring compliance with the photographic process of awarded plants and the delivery of award images.
 10. Appoint a secretary and a treasurer for the center committee.
 11. Appoint, at their discretion, any committees necessary to aid in the administration of the center and the rules and responsibilities outlined in the Handbook.
 12. Be responsible for annually notifying all judging personnel within their center of the judge's responsibility to maintain continuous membership in the AOS.
 13. Appoint an Education Coordinator.

3.2.1.1 Removal of the Center Chair

In the event a center chair does not comply with the requirements of this Handbook and specifically paragraph 3.2.1, the Chair of the Judging Committee will place an item on the agenda for the next scheduled Judging Committee meeting to review the performance of the center chair. The chair in question will be invited to present their case or mitigating circumstances to the Judging Committee. After review, should the majority of the Judging Committee members, via secret ballot, determine that the center chair in question is in non-compliance, then a recommendation to the Trustees will be made to remove the center chair.

3.2.2 First Vice-Chair

The first vice-chair, elected by the center committee and confirmed by the trustees, assumes the duties of the chair in the chair's absence and performs such other duties as may be assigned by the chair. The first vice-chair represents the center at meetings of the JC in the event the center chair cannot attend.

3.2.2.1 Temporary Chair

In the absence of both the chair and first vice-chair, an accredited judge will be elected as temporary chair by the certified judges present.

3.2.3 Additional Vice-Chairs

In centers having additional judging sites, vice-chairs will be elected by the center committee and designated as chairs and vice-chairs of judging for those sites other than that for which the judging center chair assumes responsibility. They will be confirmed by the Trustees and are responsible for the operation of their designated sites and such other activities as may be assigned to those sites by their center committees.

3.2.4 Secretary

The secretary, appointed by the chair keeps minutes of all business meetings and sends copies of same to all judges serving the center. Such minutes record all votes and recommendations. The secretary sends notices of meetings and undertakes such correspondence as the chair may require. This position may be combined with that of treasurer.

3.2.5 Treasurer

The treasurer, appointed by the chair, keeps records of all receipts and disbursements of funds of the center. This position may be combined with that of secretary.

3.2.6 Education Coordinator

The education coordinator, an accredited judge appointed by the chair, is responsible for coordinating educational activities for all judges within a center in accordance with paragraph 4.7.2, Judges Education. Educational activities will be in accordance with, but not limited to, directives of the national education coordinator. The education coordinator will encourage active participation of all judges serving the center. Additional education coordinators may be appointed for additional judging sites.

3.2.7 Photographer

Appointed by the chair, the photographer takes digital images of awarded flowers and plants as specified in the requirements in paragraph 5.5.3(3). More than one photographer may be appointed.

3.3 Meetings

Regular monthly meetings will be scheduled for the judging of orchid plants and flowers; the dates of these meetings are published on the AOS website. Once the dates are published, the Center Chair will notify the Chair of the JC if the need arises to change the date, venue, or both, so that the web site reflects current, accurate information.

Centers reporting changes in venue to the Judging Committee Chair must indicate whether the change concerns establishment of a new judging center (see 3.5), additional judging sites (3.5.2.1) or relocations (3.6), as well as reporting the date(s) of the event(s) at the changed site.

The agenda at these meetings may also include discussion of judging procedures and problems, review of minutes of meetings of the JC, viewing images of recent awards from other centers, and such other educational activities as the judging center committee may determine. However, no formal action may be taken on matters pertaining to the status of judges, recommendations to the JC, or other substantive matters which are reserved for duly called business meetings.

3.3.1 Business Meetings

- 1) Each Judging Center Committee will hold a minimum of two business meetings per calendar year.
 - a) Meetings can be conducted in person or by virtual means (by tele- or video- conferencing or a hybrid mode of the two). If meetings are held virtually, voting, as described in 3.3.1.2. must be conducted:
 - i) using a software platform which must support the use of secret balloting, or
 - ii) by private mail or private chat notification to a delegated judge who tallies/releases the results (keeping individual votes in confidence).
- 2) The Judging Center Committee will hold a business meeting sufficiently in advance of each of the fall and spring meetings of the Board of Trustees to permit the minutes to reach the Chair of the Judging Committee no later than seven days prior to the BOT meeting. At this business meeting, the judging center committee will:
 - a) elect officers for the ensuing calendar year (subject to confirmation by the Board of Trustees).
 - b) review and record in the minutes the individual attendance records of each judge at judging sessions, shows, events, business meetings and educational activities during the preceding year,
 - c) consider new candidates for judge and other personnel matters, and
 - d) conduct such other business as may properly come before the meeting.
- 3) Any certified judge who has not attended the minimum number of judgments during the twelve months preceding their judging center's business meeting will be denied voting privileges on any matter at that business meeting.
- 4) A chair may not exclude a fully accredited judge from attending the personnel section of a center's business meeting, but a visiting judge may not join into the discussion unless invited to do so by the chair.
- 5) At least one other business meeting will be held each year early enough to permit the minutes of the meeting to reach the chair of JC at least 30 days prior to the spring meeting of the Board of Trustees. The agenda will include any item appropriate to the annual meeting except that officers need not be elected except to fill vacancies. If the center has additional judging sites, one of the business meetings should be held at one of those locations. Additional business meetings may be called at the discretion of the judging center chair.
- 6) Personnel recommendations once taken by a Judging Center, after securing a majority vote by email from the Judging Center Committee, may be taken to the next Board of Trustees meeting by the JC chair for action/decision.

3.3.1.1 Notice of Meeting and Requirements for Quorums and Passing of Motions

- 1) Written notice or an email notice of a business meeting will be sent to all members of the judging center committee at least 10 days prior to the meeting.
- 2) Determination of Voting Rights
 - a) Judges with voting rights
 - i) All certified judges in good standing are eligible to vote on general business matters of the center.
 - ii) Only accredited judges in good standing are eligible to vote on personnel matters.
 - b) Judges without voting rights include:
 - i) Senior judges (except as noted in 4.2.4),
 - ii) Emeritus judges (except those who have fulfilled all attendance requirements for certified judges, as noted in 4.2.5),
 - iii) Judges on a leave-of-absence,

- iv) Judges who have returned from a leave-of-absence of more than one year,
 - v) Judges under suspension,
 - vi) Judges who have not fulfilled all attendance requirements during the preceding twelve months, and
 - vii) For one year from the date of transfer (date approved by the trustees) judges who have transferred between centers.
- c) Abstentions and ballots invalidly cast will not be counted either for or against a motion, or for determining the total number of votes cast.
- 3) Definition of Quorums
- a) Only judges with voting rights will be counted in determining quorums or in calculating the results of votes.
 - b) A quorum for general business, including the election of the center chair and vice-chair, consists of more than 50 percent of the certified judges of the center who have voting rights. Passage of motions for general business requires a simple majority vote.
 - c) A quorum for personnel business consists of more than 50 percent of the accredited judges of the center who have voting rights.
 - i) The appointment or termination of student judges requires a simple majority vote.
 - ii) The approval of all other personnel matters involving a change in judges' status requires a two-thirds majority vote. Additionally, the vote must represent a simple majority of all of the accredited judges with voting rights at the center.

3.3.1.2 Voting Procedures

- 1) Voting on the election of the center chair and vice-chair will be by secret ballot except that when a single candidate for an office is nominated, a motion to elect by acclamation is acceptable.
- 2) Voting on all other matters affecting the status of judges will be by secret ballot.
- 3) Judges with a conflict of interest must abstain from the discussion and from voting on the matter involving their conflict of interest.
- 4) Senior judges, emeritus judges and judges on leave may participate in all discussions but will abstain on those issues on which they have a conflict of interest.
- 5) The chair or a majority of the voting assembly may call upon any judge to give their comments on any issue.
- 6) The numbers of abstentions and invalidly marked ballots will be announced when the results of the vote are reported. No absentee or proxy voting will be allowed.

3.3.1.3 Minutes

- 1) Written minutes will be prepared to record actions taken at all business and personnel meetings. The following items must be recorded:
 - a) The names of the judges present, as well as their eligibility to vote.
 - b) The establishment of quorum numbers, and certification by the center committee chair of quorum being met.
 - c) The number of affirmative, negative, and abstaining votes related to each action of the judging center committee.
- 2) Copies of the minutes detailing actions on personnel matters will only be shared with the accredited members of the judging center committee and the JC chair.
- 3) A copy of the minutes will be forwarded to the chair of the JC by the judging center chair no less than 30 days prior to the Trustees meeting so that personnel recommendations and other items of business may be included on the agenda for the next meeting of the JC.

3.4 Qualifications and Terms of Office

- 1) Only accredited judges are eligible for election as chair, first vice-chair, and vice-chairs. When they have served effectively, additional terms of service are desirable; however, the judging center chair may not serve more than five years without waiting a minimum of two years before being eligible for re-election.
- 2) Other officers are eligible for service without limit on the number of terms served.

3.5 Establishment of New Judging Centers

A new judging center may be established only when the following conditions are met:

- 1) There must be convincing evidence that the establishment of a new judging center will improve service to the orchid growers in the area.
- 2) There must be a sufficient number of certified judges willing to serve the proposed center to ensure the proper conduct of judging activities.
- 3) The establishment of a new center will not have any serious adverse effect upon existing centers.
- 4) There will be sufficient plant material of potential award quality and a sufficient number of exhibitors to warrant providing AOS judging.
- 5) The Affiliated Societies in the area to be served must be willing to provide financial and administrative support for the operation of the proposed center.

3.5.1 Procedures for Establishment

Application for the establishment of a new judging center will follow these procedures:

- 1) A sponsoring group, including one or more Affiliated Societies, will make application in writing to the chair of the JC, with copies of the application to the chairs of any judging centers affected by the change.
- 2) The following documentation will accompany the application:
 - a) A letter typed on the letterhead of the sponsoring society, signed by the chief executive officer, indicating that the request for the new center has been approved by a vote of the membership.
 - b) Letters of approval and promised support from the judges willing to serve the proposed center.
 - c) Names of proposed officers for the center.
 - d) Details on the site of the proposed center, including accessibility, facilities, methods of financing, etc.
 - e) Proposed dates and time of judging.
 - f) An analysis of the AOS membership that the new center would serve.
 - g) The proposed starting date, which must be at least six months following the date of application.
 - h) Such other information as may be pertinent.
- 3) Any AOS trustee in the area will be fully informed of the interest in and the developments behind the application so that the trustee may offer additional information to the JC and the Board of Trustees.
- 4) The application will be carefully considered by the JC, which will seek the opinions of the center committees primarily concerned with the application and will take such steps as it deems necessary to acquire additional information needed to make recommendations to the Board of Trustees.
- 5) If approved by the Board of Trustees, the new center will be authorized to operate on a six-month trial basis, after which its performance will be reviewed by the JC. If found satisfactory, the JC will recommend the new center continue to operate on a trial basis for an additional 12-month period, after which it will again be reviewed before being placed on permanent status.

3.5.2 Additional Judging Sites*

[Top of the Document](#)

Additional judging sites may be established by the Board of Trustees as branch sites to provide additional sources of judging service.

- 1) Procedure for establishment of such sites is the same as for establishment of new judging centers.
- 2) In addition, the proposal must pass by a two-thirds vote of the judges within the proposed additional site as well as by a majority vote of the entire center committee.
- 3) Vice-chairs will be elected by the center committee and designated as chair and vice-chair of the sites other than that for which the center chair assumes responsibility. They will be responsible for the operation of their designated sites and other activities as may be assigned by the center committee.
- 4) Additional sites may be granted full judging center status by meeting the following conditions:
 - a) The additional site must have been in continuous operation for at least one year after having been placed on permanent additional status.
 - b) At least two-thirds of the certified judges serving in the additional site must approve, by a secret ballot, the request for change to full judging center status.
 - c) Application for change to full judging center status will be made in writing to the chair of the JC with copies to the chair of the center where the additional site is located and the chairs of any other additional sites of the parent center. This application will contain the result of the vote of the certified judges serving in the additional site, the proposed name of the new center and the Affiliated Societies willing to support and be served by the new center. The JC must approve the application for recommendation to the Board of Trustees.
 - d) If approved by the Board of Trustees, the additional site will begin operation as an independent center on January 1 of the year following the approval by the trustees.

*Note: Since the Trustees recognized the Northeast Judging Center and the Florida North Central Judging Center as centers with extra judging sites and dates prior to implementation of these Handbook changes, these Centers will continue to be accepted as currently defined and will be exempt from these changes.

3.6 Criteria for Relocation of a Judging Center

- 1) There must be convincing evidence that the present judging centers cannot adequately serve the needs of the orchid growers in the area.
- 2) There must be a sufficient number of certified judges willing to serve the proposed center to ensure the proper conduct of judging activity.
- 3) With the exception of the center being relocated, such relocation will not have any adverse effect upon other existing centers.
- 4) There should be sufficient plant material of potential award quality and sufficient number of exhibitors to warrant relocating the center.
- 5) The Affiliated Societies in the area to be served must be willing to provide financial and administrative support for the operation of the proposed center.
- 6) A request by a majority of the certified judges at the involved center, recommendation by the JC and approval by the AOS Board of Trustees are necessary for relocation.
- 7) If approved by the AOS Board of Trustees, the new center will be authorized to operate on a six-month trial basis, after which its performance will be reviewed by the JC. If found satisfactory, the JC will recommend its continuance for an additional 12-month period after which it will again be reviewed before being granted permanent status.

3.7 Criteria for the Probation or Dissolution of a Judging Center:

- 1) A Center may be placed on probation for a period of time or dissolved for either of the following

reasons at the discretion of the JC and Trustees:

- a) Withdrawal of sponsorship by Affiliated Societies and inability to obtain new sponsorship.
 - b) Failure to fulfill the obligations and responsibilities of a judging center described in paragraphs 3.1, 3.2, 3.3 and 3.4 of the Handbook.
- 2) The JC, by a two-thirds vote, or the JC chair upon approval by the AOS president, may place a judging center on probationary status for a period of time to be determined by the JC.
 - 3) The chair of the JC will notify the chair of the center in question in writing, citing the reasons for, and the duration of, the probation.
 - 4) During the probationary period, the center will have an opportunity to appeal or correct its deficiencies.
 - a) To return to good standing, the center must document that the deficiencies noted by the JC have been addressed and/or corrected. Documentation must be provided in the format required by the original notification from the chair of the JC.
 - b) Failure to correct the deficiencies within the prescribed time constitutes grounds for dissolution of the center.
 - 5) A vote to return a judging center to good standing requires the concurrence of two-thirds of the members of the JC voting and a majority vote of the AOS Board of Trustees.
 - 6) Dissolution requires either the concurrence of two-thirds of the members of the JC voting and a majority vote of the AOS Board of Trustees, or a request for dissolution by two-thirds of the certified judges at the involved center plus the concurrence of a majority of the JC and the AOS Board of Trustees.

3.8 Center Representation at the JC

- 1) Representation of a center at the JC is vital to the administration of the judging system. All centers will be represented by their chair (or vice-chair as alternate) at each JC meeting.
- 2) The center's representative must vote in a manner that he or she believes reflects the opinions of a majority of the judges of their center. Any comments or discussion at the JC meeting by the center's representative which do not reflect such an opinion must be so identified.
- 3) If both the chair and vice-chair are unable to attend, an accredited judge of the center, appointed by the chair to represent the wishes of the center, will serve as the center's voting alternate.
- 4) If a center is not represented by its chair, vice-chair, or appointed alternate at two consecutive JC meetings and the absences are not excused; the center will forfeit its representation until such time as a new chair is elected.

3.9 Judging Centers and Affiliated Societies

- 1) Affiliated Societies in the area served by a judging center must provide financial and administrative support for the operation of the center.
- 2) AOS approval of judging at shows, events, or as outreach (both domestic and international) must be obtained from the society's center.
- 3) Affiliated Societies may change the center serving them by proposing a transfer to and being approved by the chair of the new center, and notification of the former center. If the new center's chair disapproves, the decision may be appealed to the JC.
- 4) New societies requesting affiliation with the AOS will indicate the judging center they intend to support and be served by in their application for affiliation.
- 5) Affiliated societies may provide financial and administrative support for more than one center. In such instances, co-center support of AOS sanctioned shows would be possible.

IV. JUDGES

4.1 Judges

AOS judges are volunteers appointed by the Board of Trustees to facilitate the judging system's service to the Society's members and the orchid growing public. A judge's certification is a conditional, revocable privilege maintained by the judge's strict adherence to the system's rules and regulations as detailed in this Handbook and any of its future iterations. This privilege is limited to participation in any AOS-sanctioned judging event; no other benefit is implied or granted except at the discretion of the Judging Committee (hereafter referred to as the 'JC') and the Board of Trustees. The following classes of judge are recognized:

- Student
- Associate
- Accredited
- Senior
- Emeritus
- Retired
- Retired Emeritus

As a group, associate, accredited, senior, and emeritus judges are known as certified judges. As a group, retired and retired emeritus judges are known as inactive judges.

4.2 Appointment and Accreditation

- 1) All judges, including student judges, are appointed, promoted, or terminated by the Board of Trustees upon recommendation of the JC. The JC in turn acts upon recommendations of the judging center committees, upon provisions within this Handbook, or as it deems necessary for the proper and ethical administration of the judging system.
- 2) Upon appointment by the Board of Trustees, all judges are required to sign an appointment acceptance agreement provided by the AOS, in the form approved by the JC.
- 3) Once appointed, and as part of remaining in good standing, all student and certified judges are required to maintain continuous membership in the AOS. Should their membership lapse, all student and certified judges are required to pay for and make whole any period of membership missed due to said lapse to return to good standing.
- 4) A judge must be permitted to participate in any AOS-sanctioned judging activity (wherever held).

4.2.1 Student Judge

- 1) Any person aspiring to become an AOS judge and fulfilling the requirements thereof, regardless of their place(s) of residence, may apply to any center for appointment as student judge and, upon satisfactory completion of the requirements as provided in this chapter, ultimately may become an accredited judge.
- 2) A student judge is required to participate in the judging center's educational program. The duration of the student period of the program is a minimum of three years and a maximum of five years following the date of the recommendation of their appointment by the local Judging Center. This period expires at the end of the tenth regular business meeting of the local Judging Center following their appointment.
- 3) Beginning at the end of the minimum student period of three years, and upon demonstration of satisfactory completion of this part of their education, a student is eligible for consideration for

promotion to associate judge status.

- 4) If a student judge fails to be promoted at the end of five years of service in this grade, the student will no longer be permitted to judge and will be terminated as a student judge.
- 5) A student who resigns may reapply to any judging center committee for reappointment as a student. Any previous time served will not be reinstated.
- 6) An equivalent of associate or accredited judge in good standing from another orchid judging system, may apply for admission to a judging center in the AOS judging system, describing their training, judging experience and skills, including references.
 - a). Applicants may refer to section 4.2.1.1 for student requirements and section 4.5 for required knowledge and abilities, against which they will be assessed by the welcoming judging center for their proficiency and competence. Use of the student application form on the website is recommended. These applicants will be specifically identified in the center minutes sent to the JC and Board of Trustees for action.
 - b). The local judging center will review the information provided and, if approved, a training plan will be developed by the center in consultation with the applicant to fill gaps in knowledge and experience.
 - c). After being accepted as a student as detailed above and, in this Handbook, and fully participating a minimum of one year under the existing student judging requirements, the student may be recommended by their local center for promotion to associate judge.
 - d). After serving a minimum of one year and fully participating as an associate judge, the center may recommend promotion to certified, accredited.

4.2.1.1 Selection Procedure

- 1) Student judges are selected to meet the requirements of the AOS and not to serve their personal ambitions.
 - a) Knowledge of orchids and competence in evaluating them are indispensable qualities in a judge; equally important is the judge's behavior in applying this knowledge.
 - b) Personal integrity must be beyond question and a judge must work effectively and harmoniously as a member of a team.
- 2) Responsibility for the selection and education of student judges is delegated to the judging center committees.
 - a) Education is to be in compliance with any nationally set standards put in place by the JC.
 - b) The number of student judges is not mandated; each center selects sufficient candidates to meet its long-term needs, taking into account turnover of personnel and the long process by which a student becomes a fully accredited judge.
- 3) Following the receipt of an application, the judging center chair will arrange for the candidate to be interviewed by a committee of accredited judges. This interview will give the candidate an opportunity to ask and answer questions and to elaborate on material contained in the application.
- 4) The judging center committee may prescribe additional steps in reaching a decision about an applicant.
- 5) The judging center committee will make a timely decision and notify the applicant in writing as to whether they will be putting the applicant's name forward to the JC and the AOS Board of Trustees. Any candidate who fails to gain acceptance may reapply at any time and, at its discretion, the center committee may dispense with the interview or other evaluative steps.
- 6) The judging center committee decision concerning acceptance of a potential candidate into the student judge educational program is conditional pending the approval of the application by the JC and the appointment of the applicant as a student judge by the AOS Board of Trustees.

4.2.1.2 Qualifications

Candidates for student judge must:

[Top of the Document](#)

- 1) Have a demonstrated significant commitment to orchids and orchidology, including their cultivation and exhibition.
- 2) Have a broad interest in orchids beyond those directly related to judging, e.g., orchid conservation, developments in research, education of the public on orchids, etc. Concentrated experience in a specific area such as hybridization or photography, though advantageous, does not overcome the need for the candidate to meet all other necessary qualifications.
- 3) Be eager to expand their knowledge. The essential quality at the point of selection is the applicant's capacity and desire to learn.
- 4) Be able to make independent judgments and to maintain a point of view in a collegial and cooperative manner.
- 5) Maintain high standards of personal integrity and ethics and avoid any conduct which could be construed as unethical by an observer. They must recognize that their actions reflect upon the judging system and the AOS, and that they themselves will be evaluated by their appearance, demeanor, and competence.
- 6) Be committed to the judging system and to its orderly evolution. Their criticisms should be constructive and aimed at improving the equity and uniformity of the judging process.
- 7) Maintain continuous membership in the AOS, thereby ensuring access to *OrchidPro*.
- 8) Be able to meet the requirements of the judging system with respect to available time, language skills, ability to travel, physical and mental fitness, and participation in educational and judging activities.
- 9) Pass a color perception screening test as prescribed by the AOS before their application is acted upon by the judging center committee.

4.2.1.3 Application

- 1) The written application from candidates for student judge must include:
 - a) complete name and contact information, including:
 - i) full address with postal code,
 - ii) e-mail address(es), and
 - iii) telephone numbers (i.e., home, work, mobile, fax).
 - b) Evidence of passing a color-perception test.
 - c) The names and addresses of two or more persons who have knowledge of the applicant's interest in orchids, growing experience, etc.
 - d) Applicant's signature and date
- 2) In addition, the applicant must address the following questions and statements in enough detail to permit thorough evaluation of their qualifications.
 - a) Have they previously applied for appointment as student judge or served as an AOS judge? If yes, explain briefly, including prior center of service.
 - b) How long have they been a member of the AOS?
 - c) Describe their experience in growing orchids (length of time, types grown, facilities used, size of collection, etc.).
 - d) Describe their participation in orchid societies of which they are currently or have been a member.
 - e) Have they exhibited in orchid shows? How extensively?
 - f) Describe their participation in orchid shows other than as an exhibitor.
 - g) Have they attended or participated in activities of their judging center's committee such as judging sessions or educational courses? Explain.
 - h) Describe their orchid library in general (books, periodicals, photographs, etc.). On a separate sheet, list books and periodicals in their personal library.
 - i) Have they explored *OrchidPro*, a feature of their AOS membership and integral to the judging program? If yes, for how long have they been using it?
 - j) Describe any feature of their regular work or hobbies which would enhance their knowledge of

orchids or their ability to evaluate them.

- k) Describe any other educational activities related to orchids in which they have engaged.
- l) Why do they want to become an orchid judge?
- m) What do they regard as their strongest qualification for serving?
- n) Do they understand and agree to meet the requirements for serving as judge as specified in the Handbook on Judging, specifically the requirements for time and travel?

4.2.2 Promotion to Associate Judge

- 1) Candidates for associate judge:
 - a) must have served as a student judge for a minimum of three years determined by the sixth regular semi-annual business meeting following the date of recommendation for their appointment by their Judging Center.
 - b) must have made sufficient progress in their knowledge and understanding of judging, and
 - c) must be nominated by one or more accredited judges for consideration by the judging center committee.
- 2) The judging center committee will vote on the student judges they propose for promotion at the center committee business meeting prior to the trustees meeting at which the judges will be eligible for promotion.
- 3) If the judging center committee fails to approve a nomination for promotion to associate judge, the candidate will be provided with a written statement that they may be reconsidered at a subsequent business meeting.
- 4) If a student judge fails to be promoted to associate status at the end of five years of service as a student judge, they will no longer be permitted to judge, and will be terminated as judge. The five years of service will be dated from the date of recommendation for their appointment as a student by their judging center and will expire at the end of the tenth trustees' meeting following that approval.

4.2.3 Promotion to Accredited Judge

- 1) Candidates for accredited judge:
 - a) must have served a minimum of three years as an associate judge, determined by the sixth regular semi-annual business meeting following the recommendation of their appointment as an associate judge by their Judging Center.
 - b) must have completed the education for associate judges and have demonstrated competence in judging, and
 - c) must be nominated by one or more accredited judges for consideration by the judging center committee.
- 2) Judging center committees will vote on the judges they propose for promotion at the center committee business meeting prior to the trustees meeting at which the judges will be eligible for promotion.
- 3) If the judging center committee fails to approve a nomination for promotion to accredited judge, the candidate will be provided with a written statement that they may be reconsidered at a subsequent business meeting.
- 4) If an associate judge fails to be promoted to accredited status at the end of five years of service as an associate judge, they will no longer be permitted to judge, and will be terminated as judge. The five years of service will be dated from the trustees' approval of the associate judge and will expire at the end of the tenth trustees' meeting following that approval.

4.2.4 Senior Judge

- 1) Senior judge status may be conferred upon an accredited judge in good standing who has served a

minimum of 10 (ten) years as a certified judge but is unable to fulfill the total attendance and judging requirements.

- a) Any accredited judge may request from the center committee a change in status to senior judge; such change may also be initiated by the judging center's committee. Justification for the change must be detailed in writing by the judging center chair and accompany the recommendation to the JC.
 - b) If deemed appropriate, the timing requirement may be waived by the JC.
- 2) A senior judge:
- a) is expected to participate in judging functions whenever possible but will no longer be required to fulfill the total annual judging requirements.
 - b) will not have to attend required educational events but is encouraged to attend educational opportunities to maintain their judging knowledge and abilities.
 - c) may serve as an AOS judging chair at AOS-sanctioned orchid shows within the jurisdiction of their judging center,
 - d) may attend judging center business meetings, but will not be counted in determining a quorum,
 - e) may not vote except in the case of selecting the center's recommendations for special annual awards, and,
 - f) who has met requirements for an accredited judge (eight judgments, twelve educational hours) in the previous year, may be allowed full voting privileges for that year (without change of senior status).
- 3) The status of each senior judge will be reviewed annually by the judging center committee.
- a) If the judge fails to participate annually in at least one monthly judging of the center or at least one AOS sanctioned show within the area served by the center, the judging center committee may recommend that the senior judge resign, be suspended, or be terminated.
 - b) Senior judges will be included in the Judges List as long as they remain continuous members of the AOS.
- 4) If the circumstances prompting the initial appointment as senior judge no longer exist, the judge may request from the center committee a return to accredited judge status.
- a) If approved by the center committee, justification for the return must be detailed in writing by the judging center chair and accompany the recommendation to the JC.
 - b) Upon return, the judge may not vote in business meetings, except in the case of selecting the center's recommendations for special annual awards, until they have served one year after the date of the return as accepted by the AOS Board of Trustees.

4.2.5 Judge Emeritus

- 1) The highest honor the AOS can bestow on a judge, the status 'Judge Emeritus' may not be requested by a judge; it may only be initiated by the judging center committee, by the JC, or by the AOS Board of Trustees.
 - a) A minimum of 20 years of outstanding service as a certified judge is the prime consideration, including long-term participation in judging activities beyond simply maintaining frequent attendance.
 - b) A judge's demeanor and record of participation must have been consistent with the highest standards of the AOS, and the judge's associates must consider the judge in every way to be worthy of this honor.
 - c) A statement of qualifications, including years of service, offices held in connection with judging, and any other judging activity engaged in beyond that normally required of a judge must accompany the recommendation. Non-judging activities in the AOS should also be included when appropriate. Other information may be requested by the JC at its discretion.
 - d) If deemed appropriate, the time requirement may be waived by the JC.
- 2) A judge emeritus:
 - a) may (but will no longer be required to) participate in judging at judging center sessions or

shows,

- b) will not have to attend required educational events, but is encouraged to participate in educational opportunities to maintain their judging knowledge and abilities,
 - c) may serve as an AOS judging chair at AOS-sanctioned orchid shows,
 - d) may attend business meetings, but will not be counted in determining a quorum, and
 - e) except in the case of selecting the center's recommendations for special annual awards, may not vote on other business matters of the center unless all attendance requirements for accredited judges are met; if attendance requirements are met then full voting rights are retained. Judges emeriti will be included in the Judges List as long as they remain members of the AOS.
- 3) Failure to maintain membership in the AOS will result in an automatic shift in status to Retired Judge Emeritus.

4.2.6 Retired Judge

- 1) Retirement is a special status which may be conferred upon an accredited judge who has served satisfactorily for a minimum of five years as a certified judge but for reasons acceptable to the JC is unable to continue to serve.

4.2.7 Judges List

A Judges List will be maintained and will contain each judge's name, status as a judge, mailing address, e-mail address, and telephone number where they can be reached.

4.3 Continuing Status

An accredited judge is appointed for an indefinite period. Student and associate judges may be considered for promotion after three years in their level and, if they fail to achieve promotion, may be reconsidered at a subsequent business meeting. A judge may at any time be suspended or terminated for cause, as set forth in paragraph 4.9.3.1, or automatically, as set forth in paragraph 4.9.3.2.

4.4 Judging Center Assignment

- 1) All certified and student judges will be assigned to serve the center of his or her choice.
- 2) If for any reason a certified judge wishes to transfer to another judging center, application for transfer will be made to the chairs of the two judging centers involved.
 - a) If approved, the transfer will take place upon notification by the former center's chair to the JC chair. Notice of the transfer and its effective date will be recorded in the JC agenda.
 - b) In the event that there is an ethical issue involving the transferring judge, the issue must be resolved before the transfer occurs.
 - c) If either chair disapproves a request for transfer, the decision may be appealed to the JC.
- 3) A student judge may transfer only upon approval first by their original center committee and then by the desired center committee in duly called business meetings.
 - a) Release and acceptance will be based upon favorable evaluation of the student's performance and apparent potential for positive contributions to the judging system, including background, educational participation, judging practice, and general conduct.
 - b) If approved, the transfer will take place upon notification of the JC chair by both center chairs.
 - c) Denial of a student's request for transfer by either center committee may be appealed once and reconsidered at that center's next regular business meeting.
- 4) Any transfer will be accompanied by authenticated records of service at the prior judging center, signed by the center chair.
 - a) If a student or associate judge has accumulated substantial credit at their original judging center, the new judging center committee will evaluate their records to prevent unnecessary

duplication of previous service.

- b) Associate judges and students should note that success or failure in a transfer will not extend the five-year period limit for promotion. Accordingly, a transfer should be applied for at a time that will provide the new center committee adequate time to evaluate the judge's performance prior to the end of that period.
- c) Certified judges transferring between judging centers will not be permitted to vote in general business meetings for one year from the date of transfer as approved by the new center's chair and recorded via the JC report and will not be counted in determining business meeting quorum requirements.

4.5 Knowledge and Abilities

An AOS judge is a person considered by the trustees to be qualified to pass critical judgments upon the merits and demerits of orchid species and hybrids. Owing to the great size of the orchid family, it is not possible for any one judge to possess a comprehensive knowledge of all genera species, and hybrids, but the following requirements are basic:

- 1) A judge must have a thorough knowledge of the orchid species and hybrids most commonly grown and a general knowledge of the species and hybrids of the lesser-known genera.
- 2) A judge must have an understanding of the potential limits of the species involved in hybridization, the achievement of the hybridizer, and the effects of polyploidy.
- 3) A judge must keep abreast of the developments in hybridizing, judging, growing, and all other phases of orchid activity that might affect one's capacity as a judge.
- 4) A judge must have knowledge of arrangement and composition in reference to the evaluation of group exhibits and displays.
- 5) A judge must have a general knowledge of historic and current orchid literature.
- 6) A judge must be able to organize knowledge quickly, effectively, and objectively, recognizing personal preferences and prejudices, and must not be unduly influenced by them.
- 7) A judge must be able to formulate an independent opinion in the presence of other judges and, conversely, be able to recognize the merits of the opinions of other judges.
- 8) A judge must have no abnormality in color perception. An AOS color-perception test or a statement from an appropriately certified vision professional may be required to establish this fact.
- 9) A judge should be able to travel and participate in judging activities in areas other than the judging center they serve.
- 10) A judge must possess sufficient command of the English language so that they can:
 - a) understand the Handbook on Judging and *OrchidPro*,
 - b) understand and write descriptions,
 - c) make and understand comments being made about any plant, and
 - d) respond to questions.

4.6 Responsibilities

To be in good standing and retain status as a student or certified judge, a judge must:

- 1) Maintain a continuous membership in the AOS.
 - a) A judge forfeits their standing as a judge if their AOS membership lapses.
 - b) To return to good standing, all judges are required to pay for and make whole any period of membership or subscription missed due to said lapse.
- 2) Fulfill their judging requirements as outlined in this Handbook. For student, associate, and accredited judges this means:
 - a) participating in at least eight judgments in their assigned judging center, of which at least four must be at monthly judging sessions, during the twelve-month period directly preceding each business meeting.
 - b) Any judge who has not met the minimum number of judgments at the assigned center during the

[Top of the Document](#)

twelve months preceding the center's current business meeting will be denied voting privileges on any matter at that meeting.

- i) Written notice to the judge in question notifying them of their ineligibility to vote, including the statistics of their attendance from the prior twelve months leading to the decision and information on how to correct their attendance prior to the center's next business meeting, will be sent by the judging center chair; a copy of this notice will be submitted to the chair of the JC.
 - c) Additionally, any judge who has not made a concerted effort between business meetings to discuss and clear with their judging center chair any sustained need to not attend the minimum number of judgments within the assigned center will be subject to potential sanctions, suspension, or termination as described below in section 4.11.
- 3) Attend each biannual business meeting and any duly called business meeting of the judging center committee unless excused by the judging center chair. Disciplinary action will be invoked if a judge has two or more consecutive unexcused absences. Excused absences will be limited to no more than two in a row; further consecutive absences are considered unexcused.
 - 4) Participate annually in no less than 12 hours of scheduled educational sessions.
 - 5) Maintain the qualifications, knowledge, abilities, and standards of conduct required in the Handbook.
 - 6) Cooperate fully with the chair of judging and the captain of their judging team in completing the routine duties of their assignment such as signing forms, describing, and measuring flowers, and remaining with the team until excused.
 - 7) Express themselves clearly in evaluating a flower, plant, or exhibit, avoiding both passive acceptance and aggressive rejection of the opinions of the other judges.

In addition, each judge is strongly encouraged to make an effort each year to judge at one or more AOS-sanctioned judging activities outside the area served by their judging center.

- 1) Full credit will be given for said judgments upon confirmation of participation from the chair of judging at that event.
- 2) Once confirmed, and if necessary, a judge may petition their center chair for up to two out-of-center judgments to be counted as follows:
 - a) towards meeting the minimum number of judgments, excluding the four required in-center monthly judgments, for maintaining their status as a judge, or
 - b) towards meeting the minimum of 12 hours of judges' education as outlined below in 4.7.3(5).

4.7 Judges' Education

The changing nature of orchids due to hybridization and introduction of new species requires that all judges pursue educational opportunities at all times.

4.7.1 National Education Coordinator

The JC chair will appoint a national education coordinator who will assist and advise the judging centers' education coordinators and maintain liaison with the JC. Their purpose is to coordinate education to assure uniformity of judging practices throughout the judging system. The National Education Coordinator may recommend changes in educational practices and issue education bulletins as needed, subject to approval by the JC.

4.7.2 Judging Center Education Coordinator

Each judging center chair will appoint an accredited judge as the education coordinator to implement an educational program for all assigned student and certified judges in the center's jurisdiction. Additional

judges' education coordinators may be appointed in additional judging sites by the additional site chair. The education coordinator will manage the instructional program and evaluate the progress of the group of student judges as a whole, revising the program when necessary to better the result.

4.7.3 Educational Programs

- 1) Each center, including its additional judging sites, will offer not less than 12 hours of scheduled educational programming each year. These may be provided in conjunction with monthly center judgments, or as partial-day, full day, or multiple day education seminars.
- 2) Judges must notify the center chair or the education coordinator whether or not they plan to attend the scheduled seminars.
 - a) All judges are expected to attend their own center's educational seminars.
 - b) They may substitute other programs that fulfill the criteria for acceptable continuing education for judges.
- 3) The judging center education coordinator will maintain records of all judges' participation in educational programming.
 - a) It is the responsibility of judges to inform their judging center's education coordinator of their participation in any out-of-center educational programs which substitute for, or augment, their requirements.
- 4) Judging centers in close geographic proximity are strongly encouraged to conduct periodic joint seminars or workshops in support of judges' education.
- 5) Acceptable categories of continuing education programs for judges include but are not limited to:
 - a) Academic courses of study pertaining directly to orchids given by accredited institutions.
 - b) Independent formal lectures/seminars by acknowledged authorities in the field of orchids presented at regional, national, or international meetings.
 - c) Educational lectures/seminars (both in-person and online) sponsored by the judge's assigned center,
 - d) Educational lectures/seminars (both in-person and online) sponsored by judging centers other than the judge's assigned center.
 - e) Other researched presentations by judges at their centers.
 - f) The showing with commentary of award images that are sorted or collated with a specific educational purpose in mind (e.g., current trends in yellow *Cattleya* awards, newly recognized species in the Pleurothallid Alliance, recent trends in CCM awards, etc.)
 - g) Presentations prepared and given by accredited judges pertaining to judging.
 - h) Judging seminars and webinars (both in-person and online) sponsored at the national or international level.
 - i) Out-of-Center Judgings.
 - j) Additional categories can be approved by the center chair or education coordinator.

4.7.3.1 Student Judges' Educational Program

- 1) Student judges are apprentice judges working with, and learning from, certified judges on the judging floor, in judging seminars, and through specialized individual study assignments. The education coordinator or an alternate will evaluate each student's strengths and weaknesses on a regular basis and assign study accordingly. The education coordinator may recommend whether or not student judges be continued, promoted, or terminated by the judging center committee.
- 2) Each student judge will be assigned at least two accredited judges to serve as advisers or counselors throughout the educational period, the purpose being to provide two-way liaison between the student judge and certified judges of the center in dealing with observed strengths and weaknesses/areas for growth. Advisers are responsible for the student judge's progress.
- 3) Student judge advisers will provide early orientation for student judges on formal judging practices on such subjects as point scoring, judging floor procedures, and judges' ethics preliminary to more extensive education in these subjects.

- 4) A regular testing and evaluation program may be conducted during the student educational process, the results of which may be recorded in each student's personnel records and may become a part of the student judge's credentials for promotion or transfer between centers.
- 5) It is intended that the opportunity be available for students to address proper and relevant questions to judges.
- 6) All student judges are expected to represent the American Orchid Society in a creditable manner at all judging sessions; they will periodically exhibit and participate in sanctioned shows and exhibitions.
- 7) Student judges recommended for termination may appeal to the judging center committee as a whole if they feel they have been unfairly evaluated.

4.8 Conduct of Judges

While serving as an AOS judge, judges will always act by word and deed in a manner which will maintain the standards of AOS judging on the highest level and reflect credit upon the judging activities and upon themselves. They will conduct themselves in a manner which will never bring their or the system's integrity into question. Serving as an AOS judge includes but is not limited to AOS judging, orchid show ribbon judging, pre- and post-judging activities such as judges' meals at an orchid show, preview parties and banquets, and other activities in which they officially represent AOS.

In addition, all AOS judges will:

- 1) Refrain, while serving as a judge, from making personal comments about a flower, plant, exhibit, or orchid grower that do not relate to the judging in progress and which might, if repeated to the exhibitor, be considered gratuitous or derogatory and bring into question the deportment of the judge.
- 2) Disqualify themselves from judging a plant, flower, or exhibit if their impartiality could be questioned.
- 3) Avoid making demeaning comments publicly concerning other judges, judging team support personnel, orchid plants, orchid exhibits, exhibitors, or the American Orchid Society. Negative comments during open judging are often appropriate but should not be demeaning.
- 4) Not publicly make a slanderous or malicious remark about another judge.
- 5) Avoid using sexual analogies and comments (jocular or not) when publicly discussing plants or people.
- 6) Avoid aggressive, persistent, or recurrent attempts to influence other judges in awarding or not awarding a plant.
- 7) Conduct themselves in a calm and rational manner, which will permit the harmonious resolution of differing viewpoints and judgments.
- 8) Avoid scoring an entry either excessively high or low, the sole intent of which is to inflate the point count spread and thereby force the rejection of same entry.
- 9) Not be under the influence of alcohol or drugs while judging.
- 10) Dress appropriately when judging at an orchid show, thus showing respect for the event being judged.
- 11) Neither be paid nor have to pay for the opportunity to participate in AOS award judging at any AOS-sanctioned activity.
- 12) Not accept reimbursement in excess of actual cost for expenses related to show judging (transportation, lodging, and meals.)
- 13) Make a reasonable attempt to comply with the requirements for clearing their provisional awards.
- 14) Pay for purchased orchid plants, award fees, taxonomic plant identification charges, and delinquent provisional award fees.
- 15) Not steal orchid plants, pollen, or tissue.
- 16) Not be involved in sales transactions in the judging area during ribbon or AOS judging.

- 17) Not falsify a grex, clonal name, or hybrid parentage.
- 18) Not "buy" or "sell" an award as the reward for influencing or attempting to influence the granting of that award.
- 19) Not disclose privileged information, as discussed in executive session, of the center committee or the American Orchid Society prior to official notification or distribution, including, but not limited to, personnel matters.
- 20) Notify the sponsoring organization if they are unable to fulfill orchid related commitments (judging orchid shows, lecturing at an orchid society, etc.).
- 21) Disqualify themselves from participation in all personnel matters involving any judge with whom they have a relationship that might in any way be construed as interfering with impartially. Members of the same family, household, or commercial establishment must be recused from any such participation and not be present during the deliberation and voting.

4.9 Separation from Service

4.9.1 Leave of Absence

- 1) A judge in good standing who is unable to fulfill their judging duties may make written application to the judging center chair for the center committee to grant a leave of absence for a maximum of two consecutive years. If the request is approved, the judging center committee will notify the JC of the reason for the leave and its effective starting and ending dates. No action is required by the JC.
- 2) The names of judges granted leaves of absence will be carried on the Judges List.
- 3) Judges on leave may judge; however:
 - a) they may not serve as an AOS judging chair at AOS-sanctioned orchid shows,
 - b) they may not vote in business meetings until they have served one year at their judging center after the effective ending date of the leave as determined by the center committee, and
 - c) they will not be counted in determining the business meeting quorum requirements.
- 4) The leave of absence of a student or an associate judge does not extend the five-year termination rule.

4.9.2 Resignation of a Judge

- 1) A judge who wishes to resign will submit a written notice to the judging center committee, which will in turn notify the JC of the resignation.

4.9.3 Retirement of a Judge

- 1) The judge must submit a written request for retirement to the judging center committee. If the request is rejected, the judge may submit the request directly to the JC. This procedure is not to be confused with termination, suspension, or resignation.
- 2) A retired judge will no longer participate in AOS judging or judging center meetings. Their name will be retained on the judges list and will indicate their status as a retired/inactive judge.

4.10 Returning to Service

- 1) A certified judge who has retired or resigned may apply to any judging center to reenter the judging system after a minimum waiting period of one year from the time the request to retire or notice of resignation was tendered to the JC chair.
 - a) A two-thirds majority of the accredited judges at the next scheduled business meeting of the judging center committee of the center to which the judge has applied must recommend approval of the reentry request,

- i) If the request is approved, it is then forwarded to the JC for its recommendation and then to the Board of Trustees for its decision.
 - (1) If the total duration of time that has passed since the judge's retirement or resignation does not exceed two years, reentry may be made at the same level as when the judge resigned.
 - (2) If the total duration of time that has passed since the judge's retirement or resignation is greater than two years, then the following scenarios will be used to determine the level at which the judge may return. However, if the former judge has continued to participate in activities relevant to AOS judging, and these activities are properly documented by the judging center committee and deemed appropriate by the JC and the Board of Trustees, a waiver of the level at which a retired judge must reenter may be requested.
 - (a) If approved and the total duration of time that has passed since the judge's retirement or resignation is between two and five years then reentry must be made at the associate judge level for a period to be determined by the judging center committee, but not to be less than one period between biannual trustees' meetings.
 - (b) If approved and the total duration of duration of time that has passed since the judge's retirement or resignation is greater than five years, then the judge may be required to reenter at the student level to reestablish judging abilities for at least one period between biannual trustees' meetings. The judge would then proceed through the process described above in 4.2.3 to be promoted through associate judge and returned to accredited judge status.
- ii) If the request for reentry is denied, the judge may petition the JC for assistance in mediating the situation.

4.11 Suspension, Termination and/or Lesser Sanctions

- 1) A certified judge may be suspended, terminated, and/or subject to lesser sanctions either for cause, or automatically.
- 2) Written and signed complaints from any source alleging unethical behavior of AOS judges must be submitted simultaneously for review to the judge's center chair and the JC chair, and will be considered confidential.
- 3) A charge leading to suspension, termination, or lesser sanctions for cause, or a procedure for automatic suspension or termination may be initiated by a judge's center committee or by the JC chair.
 - a. If initiated by the JC chair, information concerning the charges will be referred promptly to the affected judge's center chair who will then follow the procedures set forth in this Handbook as appropriate.
 - b. If an alleged incident occurs at another judging center's event, the chair of that center will promptly refer information concerning the charges to the affected judge's center chair who will then follow the procedures set forth in the Handbook, as appropriate.
- 4) Suspension of a certified judge results in the temporary cessation of all responsibilities and privileges of being an AOS judge.
 - a. The certified judge will be prohibited from participating in any AOS judging activity; however, they will be encouraged to attend center committee meetings, educational or teaching sessions, and judging sessions as an observer.
 - b. The suspension can last for up to one year.
 - c. Multiple infractions will not result in concurrent suspensions.
- 5) Suspension does not preclude the possibility of subsequent termination.
 - a. The time an associate judge spends under suspension will extend the five-year maximum time in service rule.
- 6) Termination of a certified judge will result in the permanent cessation of all responsibilities and

privileges of being an AOS judge.

4.11.1 A judge may elect to resign without prejudice at any time during the suspension or termination process; such action will terminate the pending procedure.

4.11.2 Suspension and/or Termination for Cause

- 1) Grounds for suspension and/or termination for cause will include:-
 - a) lack of participation in judging sessions, business meetings or educational activities as required.
 - b) inadequacy as a judge.
 - c) unprofessional behavior or a violation of a standard of conduct as detailed in section 4.8 of this handbook.
- 2) If a charge is made of lack of participation in judging sessions, business meetings or educational activities it will be investigated by the judging center chair. In determining whether the charge is well-founded and with merit, the chair will consider whether or not the judge has been given sufficient notice of their deficiencies with a proper opportunity to correct them.
- 3) If a charge is made of inadequacy as a judge, or unprofessional behavior or a violation of a standard of conduct by a judge, it will be investigated promptly by the judging center chair, with or without the assistance of a special ad hoc committee appointed by the center chair, to determine if the charge appears to be well-founded and with merit. All known facts of the charge must be investigated and reviewed. The investigation will include, but not be limited to, interviewing individuals or witnesses, and requesting and reviewing any documents or materials that are relevant to the case. Interviewing the judge involved is discretionary.
- 4) In the event a charge affects judges throughout the judging program and/or the whole of the American Orchid Society and its interests, the judging center committee will not have jurisdiction over this matter. In such instance, the AOS Board of Trustees, or a task force it designates, will be the appropriate forum to deal with the issue.
- 5) In the event any charge involves the judging center chair, the chair will be disqualified from performing any of the functions cited herein. Those functions will then be performed by the first vice-chair of the judging center.
 - a) If both the chair and the first vice-chair are involved, the JC chair will perform those functions or will appoint another accredited judge from that judging center committee to do so.
- 6) If a charge is determined to be well-founded and with merit by the investigation, it, together with the chair's and/or ad hoc committee's findings, and any supporting documentation and recommendations, will be presented at the next duly called business meeting of the judging center committee. If a two-thirds majority of the accredited judges at that meeting finds that the charge is substantiated by the facts, the following steps will be taken:
 - a) The judging center chair will advise the affected judge of the charge in a clearly written statement mailed to the judge's last address known to the judging center chair.
 - b) Such notice will inform the judge that the charge and the question of the suspension or termination will be on the agenda of business to be conducted at the next duly scheduled business meeting or at a special business meeting called by the Chair for that purpose.
 - c) Such notice will also advise that the judge may appear in person together with a reasonable number of witnesses on their behalf, but without counsel, to challenge such action or that they may submit a written statement in opposition to the proposed action.
 - i) The judge must submit such statement and/or request the right to appear in person with the names of any witnesses to the Center chair at least ten days prior to such meeting.
 - ii) A failure to submit such statement or a list of witnesses within the time prescribed will constitute a waiver of the right to submit a statement or to produce witnesses on his behalf at such meeting.
 - d) At the meeting scheduled or called for such purpose:
 - i) The voting procedures and requirements in paragraph 3.3.1.2 will be followed and fulfilled

- at all meetings held pursuant to this section.
- ii) The judging center committee may vote to recommend suspension and/or termination of the judge. A recommendation for suspension will include the length of time of the suspension, which can commence immediately if the judging center committee so determines.
 - iii) The judging center committee will also have the authority to recommend termination, preceded by immediate temporary suspension, until the termination is approved by the Board of Trustees.
 - iv) If a two-thirds majority of the accredited judges recommend suspension and/or termination, the center chair will forward the recommendation to the JC chair, together with the statement of charges, a record of the proceedings, a summary of the judge's oral statement or a copy of their written statement, if any, and the final ballot count.
 - v) The recommendation of the judging center committee will be considered privileged information, not to be disclosed other than to necessarily affected persons, until acted upon by the Board of Trustees.
- 7) A judge recommended for suspension and/or termination under this procedure will be notified by the JC chair that a recommendation for suspension or termination has been received by the JC and will be placed on the agenda for consideration at the next scheduled meeting of the JC.
 - a) The affected judge will have the right to submit a written challenge to the recommendation of the judging center committee and/or the right to appear in person at such meeting. Submission of such a protest and/or a notice of intent to appear will be filed by the judge with the JC Chair at least ten days prior to such meeting. Failure to do either within this time period will constitute a waiver of that right. If the judge appears in person at that meeting of the JC, they will not be permitted to have counsel present or to present witnesses.
 - 8) The JC chair or a majority of the members of the JC may appoint an ad hoc task force to evaluate the charges and to report its recommendation at the next meeting of the JC.
 - a) In the event the affected judge's suspension had already commenced, the suspension will continue during the interval between meetings.
 - 9) If the JC concludes not to sustain the recommendation of the judging center committee or decides to return the matter to that committee for further action, the judge and the judging center chair will be so notified.
 - a) In the event that the judge's suspension had commenced earlier, it will end immediately; however, this does not preclude the possibility of subsequent suspension or termination as described above.
 - 10) If the JC concurs by a majority vote with the recommendation of the judging center committee, it will recommend to the Board of Trustees that the judge's service be suspended or terminated.
 - a) In the event the judge's suspension had commenced prior to this ruling, the time already spent will count toward the total length of the suspension.
 - 11) After a majority vote by the Board of Trustees, the AOS will notify the judge, the judging center chair, and the JC chair of the Board's decision.

4.11.3 Automatic Suspension, Termination, and Other Disciplinary Actions

- 1) Grounds for automatic suspension or termination include:
 - a) Failure of an AOS judge to maintain AOS membership, except as noted for judges emeriti,
 - b) Failure of an AOS judge to execute and deliver such waivers as may be required by the JC,
 - c) Failure of an AOS judge to pay for awards,
 - d) Failure of an AOS judge to make a reasonable effort to clear their provisional awards, and
 - e) Failure of a student or Associate judge to be promoted at the end of five years of service in their respective level.
- 2) In each instance outlined in (1) (a) through (c) above:
 - a) An initial notice or invoice (as appropriate) will be sent to the judge.

- b) If the judge has not executed the required waiver or paid required fees within 30 days from the due date of the notice or invoice, a second notice or invoice will be sent via certified mail with return receipt requested.
 - c) The second notice will state that if full payment or the signed waiver is not received within 60 days from the date of the notice the judge will be placed automatically on suspension for a period of 60 days. This notice will also inform the judge that if they are ultimately placed on suspension, the judge may not judge, present plants and/or cut flowers for AOS judging.
 - d) At the end of the 60-day suspension if the payment or waiver has not been received, the judge will be permanently terminated as an AOS judge.
 - i) A copy of this notice will be sent to the center chair, who will acknowledge receipt of the notice and will insert a copy of it in the judge's personnel file.
 - ii) A copy of this notice will also be sent to the JC chair.
- 3) If a judge has not made a reasonable effort to comply with the requirements for clearing their provisional award within six months of the granting of the award, or at the end of any extension granted by the center chair, the award will be nullified by the center chair and the Director of Awards and Special Projects will be notified.
- a) The Director of Awards and Special Projects will immediately place the judge's name on the delinquent exhibitors list.
 - b) The judge will be charged a fee to cover the administrative costs incurred by the AOS for processing the provisional award.
 - c) Upon payment, the judge's name will be removed from the delinquent list and all judging privileges reinstated.
 - d) The AOS will use the same process and actions as outlined in (2) above to notify the judge of the administrative charge and the punitive actions which will be instituted should payment not be received.
 - e) In the event that a judge has an ownership interest in a commercial company that has not made a reasonable effort to comply with the requirements of clearing its provisional awards an identical process will be followed.
- 4) A student judge will be automatically terminated if they fail to be promoted at the end of five years of service in this level,
- 5) An associate judge will be automatically terminated if they fail to be promoted at the end of five years of service in this level.
- 6) In the event that any of the failures discussed involve the judging center chair, the chair will be disqualified from performing the functions cited in those paragraphs. Those functions will then be performed by the first vice-chair of the judging center.
- a) If both the chair and the first vice-chair are involved, the JC chair will perform those functions or will appoint another accredited judge from that judging center committee to do so.
- 7) In the event a center chair does not comply with the requirements of this Handbook, the JC chair will place an item on the agenda for the next scheduled JC meeting to review the performance of the center chair.
- a) The chair in question will be invited to present their case or mitigating circumstances to the JC.
 - b) After review, should the majority of the JC members, via secret ballot, determine that the center chair in question is in non-compliance then a recommendation to the Trustees will be made to remove the center chair.

4.11.4 Lesser Sanctions

- 1) On occasion lesser sanctions may be appropriate. The center chair has full responsibility and authority for the center's judging activities, including implementation of lesser sanctions. Some examples of these include:
 - a) Talking with the affected judge
 - b) Sending a letter of concern

- c) Sending a letter of warning
 - d) Sending a letter of reprimand
- 2) As is true of any disciplinary action, such sanctions should be well documented and a copy should be filed in the judge's personnel file kept in the center, and a copy forwarded to the JC chair. A lesser sanction should not be considered a precursor or a requirement for possible future discipline.
 - 3) The JC chair will also have the authority to talk with the affected judge(s) and to initiate a letter of concern or a letter of warning, which will be sent to both the affected judge as well as his center chair, with a requirement that the letter carry the same weight as any comparable disciplinary action initiated from the center. In the case of a JC chair-initiated action, the center and the judge will be expected to keep the JC chair apprised of corrective actions.
 - 4) After three years, if no further disciplinary actions are necessary and the judge's performance is deemed adequate the affected judge may submit a written request to the center judging committee and/or to the JC that the letter be removed from the judge's personnel file.

V. JUDGING PROCESS

5.1 Purpose of Judging

The purpose of AOS judging whether at the judging centers or at AOS-sanctioned shows and events, is to provide a service to members of the AOS, its Affiliated Societies and to orchid growers in general, by which their orchids may be evaluated and judged for AOS awards at any time of the year. This is a volunteer activity, for which there is no remuneration. Any grower of orchids is invited to participate and there shall be no entry fee charged. Dates and details of monthly judgments and of AOS-sanctioned orchid shows and events are published regularly on the AOS website, www.aos.org, and in *ORCHIDS, The Bulletin of the American Orchid Society*. Any certified AOS judge must be allowed to participate in AOS award judging at any AOS-sanctioned judging activity. No payment shall be charged for this privilege. This shall not necessarily exempt a judge from payment of other registration fees at shows, seminars, or other functions.

5.2 Judging Materials

The judging center committee shall maintain a permanent supply of judging materials necessary for its use. These include:

- 1) Access to the current version of *OrchidPro*, either via the web-based or computer-based program.
- 2) Any reference texts that the center committee may be able to secure.
- 3) A copy of the latest edition of the Handbook on Orchid Nomenclature and Registration published by the International Orchid Commission.
- 4) Entry forms, score sheets, award stickers, etc., and storage in which to keep them.
- 5) An eight - or 10-power lens (loupe) for examining small flowers.

5.3 Submission of Plants for Judging

- 1) Except where the exhibitor has clearly indicated before the judging that the entry is not to be AOS judged, submission of plant material (either blooming plants or cut flowers) shall be considered valid evidence of the exhibitor's acceptance of the rules pertaining to the judging. All plants or flowers submitted at a monthly judging session or exhibited at an AOS-sanctioned show/event shall be considered as candidates for an award. The exhibitor is obligated to accept and pay the fee for any award granted. An exhibitor may not specify what award will be accepted.
- 2) Plants may be entered by the owner in person, by someone else on their behalf, or submitted by mail. Plants and flowers must be accompanied by sufficient information for them to be properly judged, i.e.
 - a) complete species or hybrid name,
 - b) the cross (if a hybrid),
 - c) the cultivar names of the parents (if known),
 - d) the variety (if a species),
 - e) the proposed cultivar name,
 - f) the name, full address, phone number and email of the exhibitor, and
 - g) other pertinent data such as previous awards.

Lack of such information may constitute cause for the elimination of the entry from consideration.

- 3) The plant or flower must bear no grower or owner identification since anonymity in terms of ownership provides greater objectivity. All entries shall be submitted at the expense of the exhibitor. International exhibitors must arrange in advance for customs declaration and delivery

from port of entry.

- 4) Plants should be entered in the most presentable condition possible. Pots should be clean or covered, and dead pseudobulbs and leaves removed. Leaves should be clean but not treated to produce an artificial shine. Inflorescences may be staked to permit them to appear to best advantage, but staking should be as unobtrusive as possible and may be removed temporarily during judging if the judging team feels this is necessary to evaluate the inflorescence. Additional staking or artificial supports needed while a plant is being transported should be removed before the plant is entered.
- 5) Cotton, Styrofoam wedges or other material may be used on a developing inflorescence to encourage the buds to develop naturally. Attempts to manipulate flower parts after the flower has opened are usually self-defeating because of damage to the flower. An inflorescence may be disqualified by judges if it is evident that an attempt has been made to force a flower mechanically to a more desirable conformation.
- 6) All plants and cut flowers will be judged as individuals unless agreement is made in advance for judging them as a group. At the time of judging, flowers shall be in perfect condition unless the judges are unanimous in deciding that the unfavorable condition is an unavoidable accident of shipping or handling and is in no way confusing to their conception of its quality. Plants showing signs of obvious disease or infestation by pests shall not be judged; however, the presence of a few insects on a plant or in its potting medium, not adversely affecting flower quality, is not sufficient reason to disqualify a plant from receiving a quality award.
- 7) At any time before judging has started, the chair of judging may advise an exhibitor that the flowers they propose to submit are not in proper condition to warrant judging at this time. The inflorescence may be withdrawn, will not be considered to have been judged, and may be submitted for consideration at a subsequent judging session or show. Once an inflorescence has been judged, it cannot be judged again on the same flowering; however, successive flowering or branching inflorescences may be resubmitted for judging consideration if previously considered flowers are no longer present. When cut flowers are submitted the entire inflorescence, in one piece, must be available to the judges.

5.4 Care and Disposition of Plants

- 1) All possible care shall be given entries unaccompanied by the owner, but neither the AOS nor any judging center committee shall be liable for loss. All entries, personal property, etc., shall be at the risk of the exhibitor, and the AOS shall not be liable for loss and damage by theft, fire, water, accident, or any cause whatsoever. Should a meeting not be held for any cause, no exhibitor shall have any claim on the AOS or its officers for loss, damage, interest, or compensation; nor does the AOS have responsibility for flowers delayed in delivery past the time of judging.
- 2) Flowers sent in or not accompanied by the owners shall be disposed of by the chair of judging. They shall not be sold or otherwise disposed of for profit nor given to those present except with the express permission of the owner. Flowers that receive awards must be made available immediately for photographic records.
- 3) Cut flowers will not be reshipped to the owner. When plants are shipped it shall be the responsibility of the owner and/or shipper to arrange for their return. The chair of judging is not responsible either for the mechanics or the expense of returning plants or flowers. No judging center committee shall be held responsible if plants are returned with flowers in damaged condition or with pollen missing.

5.5 Judging Practice

5.5.1 Definitions

- 1) "Entry" is the means by which an inflorescence, plant, or other form of exhibit is brought to the attention of the judges for their consideration. Within a show two forms of entry exist - show entry

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forms and official AOS judging entry forms. The two should not be confused. Unless the exhibitor has purposefully posted the entry as "not for AOS judging", any entry in an AOS judged show will be deemed to have been presented for nomination for AOS judging:

- a) whether or not it possesses an official AOS judging entry form or
 - b) whether or not it is entered via a show entry form for show ribbon or show trophy consideration.
- 2) "Nomination" is the initial phase in the judging process in which one or more judges request that an entry on display at an AOS-sanction judging event be set aside for more thorough evaluation by an assigned team of judges.
 - 3) "Screening" is the phase in the judging process in which, through verbal discussion or written ballot by an assigned judging team, an entry is considered for scoring by the team. Screening out, or elimination from consideration for scoring, must be by unanimous agreement of the judges on the team. A single request to score shall require that the team judge the entry. An entry that has been screened out has been judged and may not be submitted to another team.
 - 4) "Scoring" is the final phase of judging in which an entry, not screened out, is considered for a specific type of award through the use of the appropriate method as described in this Handbook. Once scored and granted an award, or scored and rejected for an award, an entry may not be submitted to a second team for further consideration except as provided in paragraph 5.5.2.1 (5).

5.5.2 Judging - General Rules

- 1) AOS awards are to be granted only in accordance with the rules in this Handbook or as amended from time to time. All participating judges must be certified AOS judges in good standing.
- 2) One or more clerks may be appointed to assist the judges.
- 3) Only judges, student judges, and essential clerical assistants may actively participate in the judging process; however, the public shall be allowed to be present in the room to witness the process. The chair of judging may require any visitor to leave if they disrupt the normal process of judging.
- 4) Smoking is prohibited during the judging process.
- 5) No sales transactions shall be conducted in the judging area during AOS judging.
- 6) No judge shall judge their own entry or that of any establishment with which they may be connected in any way, except that membership in an orchid society shall not in itself constitute a conflict of interest. A judge may disqualify himself/herself at any time.
- 7) An entry which is misrepresented, which is not in conformity with the rules, or which is accompanied by inaccurate or inadequate information (including notices of previous awards) may be disqualified by the judges. Reasons for disqualification shall be recorded on the entry form or in other official records of the show.
- 8) If any team of judges disqualifies itself, the chair may appoint a new team.
- 9) Each individual plant that receives an award shall bear a cultivar name to identify the specific clone, except when an award is made to a cross, such as the Award of Quality or the Award of Distinction. Newly assigned cultivar names shall not exceed a total length of 24 characters. After the owner of the awarded plant has corroborated the cultivar name when remitting payment of the fee for the award to AOS, the cultivar name may not be changed by the owner or any subsequent owner of the plant or any division thereof. Plants bearing cultivar names prior to being granted an award shall not be given different cultivar names after receiving an award.
- 10) After judging closes at a show or judging session, any plant in flower or cut flower shall be ineligible for consideration of the same inflorescence at any subsequent show or judging session except as provided in paragraph 5.3 (7) with respect to an immature or successively flowering inflorescence.
- 11) The awarded plant or flower must be made available for photography immediately after the judging while it is still in prime condition. Top quality digital photography is the goal. The AOS is not required to use inferior or improperly identified images.

5.5.2.1 Judging - Procedure

- 1) A plant or exhibit nominated for further evaluation shall be assigned by the chair of judging to a team of at least three certified judges, no more than 50% of which shall be associate judges. However, when practicable, judging teams should comprise five or more members. The captain of the judging team may be any certified judge. From the standpoint of validity of awards, there is no distinction between associate and accredited judges.
- 2) An alternate method, judging by committee of the whole, may be used whereby all judges present, except those disqualifying themselves and a properly constituted reserve team, may screen and score an entry; all rules regarding judging procedure must be observed. The reserve team may listen to but not participate in the discussion and judging of the entry.
- 3) Whenever feasible, two or more members of the same family, household or of the same commercial establishment should not be assigned to the same team, unless when judging by committee as a whole.
- 4) Each judge shall independently score the entry.
- 5) When scoring is completed, the captain of the team shall calculate the average score based on all scores submitted; no scores shall be deleted.
 - a) If any score is unduly out of line the judges may discuss the factors involved, and any judge may adjust their score in the light of further reflection.
 - b) If the difference between individual scores exceeds six points (e.g., the difference between 75 and 81 points equals six points; the difference between 75 and 82 points exceeds six points), each judge shall be asked to rescore the entry.
 - c) If the individual scores still exceed a difference of six points, the chair of judging shall appoint a new team, which, at the discretion of the chair of judging, may consult with the original team.
 - d) Where judging is by committee of the whole, the entry shall be referred to the reserve team; then, if they elect to do so, they may score the entry independently.
 - e) If the difference of scores again exceeds six points after consideration by the second team, the entry shall be considered judged and eliminated.
 - f) Scores from the two teams may not be averaged to produce a common score.
- 6) Taxonomic verification is required for all previously unawarded species and natural hybrids, and all first awards to taxonomically described varietal forms of otherwise recognized species, no matter what award is granted. Taxonomic verification need not be presented prior to an award's being granted; if previously obtained and presented by the exhibitor, it may be used as reference when the plant is judged. Awards will be held in a provisional status until formal identification/confirmation by the Species Identification Task Force (SITF) is complete. Once an award has been cleared it will be allowed to stand, regardless of subsequent name changes resulting from taxonomic changes or award challenges.
- 7) If any certified judge on the judging floor questions the identity of a species or natural hybrid considered for any award, then the award will be held in a provisional status until identification is complete.
- 8) An entry must be judged as it is when the judge sees it, not what it was the day before or what it may be tomorrow.
- 9) A new plant or flower should not be considered to have extra value because it is a novelty but should be judged on its merits.
- 10) The point scales in paragraphs 7.2 and 7.3 must be used when scoring, and no award for which scoring is required shall be made for less than 75 points. The official score shall be the average of the scores of the members of the judging team with fractions being adjusted to the nearest whole number. The benefit of one-half point goes to the next highest number.
- 11) No quality award, excluding a cultural award which goes to the grower, shall be granted to a previously awarded cultivar unless the new flowering is notably superior to that under any previous award.
- 12) More than one award may be given to a plant or flower by the same judging team, e.g., if a

particularly well-grown plant possesses flowers of outstanding quality, an Award of Merit could be awarded to the plant and a Certificate of Cultural Excellence or Certificate of Cultural Merit to its owner.

- 13) A species or natural hybrid shall not receive a CBR and a CHM at the same judging.
- 14) In essence, the AOS Trustees accepted the position of the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) that it is not the responsibility of the AOS to enforce USFWS regulations; hence, our judges may judge plants presented to them without seeking documentation. However, this does not absolve exhibitors of the responsibility of following current restrictions, having appropriate documentation for their plants, or obeying the law. The AOS neither promotes nor condones the illegal importation of plants or the importation of plants on protected lists.
- 15) The decisions of the judges shall be final.

5.5.2.2 Taxonomic Verification and the Species Identification Task Force (SITF)

- 1) Under the responsibility of the JC, the SITF is a team of volunteers with an interest in species and taxonomy committed to correctly identifying species awarded by the AOS judging system in a timely manner. The team consists of a chair and selected members who as a group research and reach a consensus on the correct names of specimens submitted. They will use their own resources but if necessary will contact others in the orchid community who can assist with correct identification.
- 2) The hope of the SITF is to do the identifications based on photographs and information obtained from the specimen, eliminating the need to ship plant material. Doing identifications this way requires more information than provided by one award slide and one short description. The SITF asks that whoever submits a specimen to the SITF for identification provide extra photographs and measurements, using the forms and guidelines the SITF provides, and using the Descriptive Terminology found under 'Resources' in *OrchidPro* if the terms are unfamiliar.

5.5.3 Recording the Results of Judging

- 1) For each award made, the following steps are necessary:
 - a) An entry form in triplicate shall be prepared in proper English, providing a description of the flower with exact measurements and other data as required, including the cultivar name, and the owner's name, address, phone number and email address.
 - b) The original entry form with sticker indicating the nature of the award shall be given to the exhibitor and one copy shall be submitted to the chair of judging or designated administrative chair; the additional copy may be used to support the judging center's processes.
 - c) In the case of previously unawarded species or natural hybrids, or unregistered hybrids, the exhibitor shall be notified by the chair of judging at that event of the procedure for obtaining taxonomic verification through the SITF or hybrid registration information of the awarded plant.
 - d) All score sheets must be signed by the judges and retained by the judging center committee or designated administrative chair until the award is published in *OrchidPro*.
- 2) All information from the judging session, including date, place, judges present, photographer information, number of plant entries, and all pertinent information on the awarded plant(s), including full description, measurements, cultivar name(s), names of judges who awarded the plant, and exhibitor information shall be entered into the online JC Program and submitted for review and approval by the Director of Awards and Special Projects.
- 3) The required digital images, properly labeled with the judging entry number of each awarded entry, shall be submitted to the appropriate center chair or designee, preferably within 14 days from the date of judging.
 - i) By so doing, each photographer who agrees to take the official images of awarded orchid flowers, plants, and other entries gives permission to the AOS to use the submitted images for the Society's purposes and programs.
 - ii) In the event that images are lost or inadvertently destroyed and are not received by AOS,

the chair of the JC may waive the image requirement to avoid nullifying the award. In such an instance, a comment shall be added to the award description concerning the absence of the images.

- iii) Images of poor quality or incorrect images will not be published and will not affect the status of the award.
- 4) Awards will be processed only after both the award's data and images are received by AOS.

5.5.3.1 Provisional Awards

- 1) All AOS awards which cannot be certified for publication pending:
- a) Registration of awarded hybrid grex,
 - b) Taxonomic verification of previously unawarded species, subspecies, variety, or natural hybrid; or
 - c) Hybrid identification

shall be classified as provisional awards. In addition, species or hybrids not identified to the satisfaction of the judging team may also be given provisional awards. In the case of a contested hybrid grex, the identification process described in paragraph 5.5.4(7)(c)(1) will be followed.

- 2) If more than one award is granted to a plant or flower at the same judging session, and one of the awards requires taxonomic verification, then all awards are provisional awards.
- 3) The records of all provisional awards given at AOS-sanctioned shows and judging centers shall be forwarded to and maintained by the chair or designated administrative chair of the judging center in which the award was granted.
- 4) All awards, including those of provisional status, will be entered into the JC program within 60 days of granting the award.
- 5) The status of the provisional award will be tracked by the chair or designated administrative chair of the judging center in which the award was granted until:
- a) the exhibitor fulfills all conditions of the pending provisional award, or
 - b) the award is nullified.
- 6) The conditions for clearing pending provisional awards are as follows:
- a) Registration of a hybrid grex with the International Orchid Register of the Royal Horticultural Society must occur within six months of the date the award was granted. Proof of registration must be provided to the chair of the judging center in which the award was granted.
 - b) Submission of a previously unawarded species, subspecies, variety, or natural hybrid, or of a species or natural hybrid whose identity is being questioned, to the SITF must occur within sixty days of the date the award was granted.
 - i) Once the plant's identity has been confirmed by the SITF the award record will be updated to reflect the confirmation.
 - (1) If the confirmation agrees with the original submission the award will continue for further processing.
 - (2) If the confirmation is not in agreement with the original submission, the SITF's determination will be referred to the team who originally granted the award. The team will then determine whether the plant may be considered for another award or if the award must be nullified.
- 7) When an exhibitor has fully met the conditions for clearing a pending provisional award, the chair of the center holding the records of the award will remove the provisional status and complete the entry for the AOS to process and bill for the required award fee(s).
Provisional awards shall not be published in *OrchidPro* or be represented in trade as AOS awarded plants until certified for publication by the AOS.
- 8) After a provisional award is six months old, the chair or designated administrative chair of the judging center granting the award shall contact the exhibitor(s) receiving the award to determine what is being done to clear the award. If no reasonable effort is being made, the award shall be

nullified, the Director of Awards and Special Projects notified, and a fee based on the current AOS award fee schedule assessed to cover the costs incurred in processing the provisional award. Plants and cut flowers entered for judging by the exhibitor shall not be accepted in any AOS sanctioned show or judging center until the fee is paid in full to the AOS.

5.5.4 Action by the American Orchid Society

- 1) A fee will be charged by the AOS to each exhibitor who is granted an award to be applied against the administrative costs of processing the award. No certificate shall be issued until the award fee is paid.
- 2) The Director of Awards and Special Projects shall bill each exhibitor for award fees after it has been determined that all requirements for certification are met. The invoice shall include notice that award fees are due and payable within 30 days from the date of billing.
- 3) A second invoice shall be made to each exhibitor who fails to pay a required award fee within 30 days from the original billing date. In addition to the information contained in the original invoice, the second invoice shall include a notice that:
 - a) The pending award will be nullified if the fee payment is not received within 30 calendar days of the date of the second invoice.
 - b) Plants and cut flowers entered for judging by any exhibitors in arrears for failure to pay award fees shall not be accepted for AOS judging at any AOS-sanctioned show, event, or judging center until the award fee and any other administrative costs incurred are paid to the AOS.
 - c) A judge who is delinquent in payment of award fees shall not be permitted to judge until the delinquent award fee and any other administrative costs incurred are paid in full, and they shall be subject to automatic suspension or termination as described in paragraph 4.9.4.2(1) and (2).
- 4) A list of delinquent exhibitors will be periodically distributed to the center chairs by the Director of Awards and Special Projects. If an exhibitor on the list chooses to exhibit plants at an AOS-sanctioned event/show, each plant or group of plants so exhibited must be marked "Not for AOS judging".
- 5) In the event that the judge has an ownership interest in a commercial company that is deficient in payment of an award fee or not compliant with the requirements for clearing a provisional award, an identical process will be followed as described in paragraphs 4.9.4.2(1) and (2).
- 6) An award which, either through error or lack of knowledge, is granted in violation of the rules, may be nullified by the AOS, or rescinded by the JC.
- 7) Procedure for contested identifications of awarded hybrids and cultivars:
 - a) The grex, species or cultivar identification of an awarded plant can be contested by an accredited judge in writing to the Director of Awards and Special Projects. The challenge shall disclose fully the judge's rationale and sources and divulge any interest in either the plant or the outcome of the challenge.
 - b) An award may be challenged for up to five (5) years following the award's appearance in the Awards Quarterly, AQ Plus, OrchidsPlus, or *OrchidPro*. A challenge to an award older than five (5) years will be considered at the discretion of the Chair of the JC.
 - c) Challenged awards will be referred to the Species Identification Task Force (SITF) which shall do the following:
 - i) For a contested hybrid grex or any cultivar, select and survey a panel of specialists in the genus for opinion as to the accuracy of identification.
 - ii) For a contested species identification, review the award's background:
 - (1) if taxonomic identification had been by the SITF or a recognized specialist in that genus, the identification shall stand.
 - (2) If identification had been by a generalist, or the plant had not been formally identified by the SITF, the SITF can require that a flower specimen or award slide, if sufficiently diagnostic, of the contested plant be sent to the SITF. If the identification by the SITF is different, it shall supersede that of a generalist and the award record shall be corrected

or the award rescinded.

- iii) Survey results and SITF recommendation shall be reported to the JC which shall independently render a decision to let stand, correct, or rescind an award to a contested plant. A CBR shall be rescinded when a prior CBR has been given to the taxon as corrected. A CHM shall be rescinded when the cultivar cannot be distinguished as different in character from a cultivar with a prior CHM.
- d) A paid award fee shall be refunded in the event of rescission.
- 8) A flower award made to a cultivar which has previously received a higher award shall be nullified by the Director of Awards and Special Projects.
- 9) An award which is not accompanied by an adequate description of the flower and plant may be nullified by the Director of Awards and Special Projects.

5.6 Judging at Orchid Shows

- 1) AOS judging at orchid shows refers only to judging by certified, senior, and emeritus judges for AOS awards according to the same rules that apply at monthly judging sessions. AOS award judging is independent of general judging of the show. Any certified, senior, or emeritus judge must be permitted to judge even if an invitation has not been extended to the judge. An organization must be affiliated with AOS to request AOS judging.
- 2) Occasionally an orchid show receives major support from two AOS judging centers, either of which could be the center of jurisdiction. In such instances the host society can obtain co-center judging support. This requires that the host society:
 - a) Provide financial and administrative support for operation of both centers.
 - b) Include both centers in its application for AOS judging of the specific show in question. The chairs of both centers must agree that significant support from each center is anticipated and should attest to this by signing the show application.
 - c) Designate which center would handle the administrative responsibilities of the show including submitting the show data and awards to AOS and following up any provisional awards. The show statistics would also be credited to this center. Generally, the center that traditionally had been responsible for the show would be so designated.
 - d) Judges from both centers of a co-center supported AOS show shall receive full credit for participating in a show within the area served by the judges' own center ("in-center judging").

5.6.1 American Orchid Society Sanction of a Show or Event

An Affiliated Society wishing AOS judging at a show or event must, in this order:

- 1) Appoint an accredited judge, not necessarily from the center of jurisdiction, or a senior or emeritus judge from the center of jurisdiction, to be approved by the chair of the center of jurisdiction to serve as chair of AOS judging of the show (See paragraph 3.9). The judge should be asked to serve and consulted well in advance of six months before the show. Associate judges and judges on leave may not serve as an AOS judging chair at AOS-sanctioned orchid shows.
- 2) Secure commitments to judge from at least four other certified judges, of which at least three are accredited. A master list of American Orchid Society judges is maintained by the AOS; a copy of that list may be obtained from the center chair. Judges need not be from the center of jurisdiction. All proposed judges must be in good standing with the AOS; at minimum, good standing requires of a judge that all AOS membership fees be paid and current through the proposed date of the show or event.
- 3) Having secured a proposed chair of AOS judging and at least four other judges, submit a request for a show date to the local center chair or designated administrative chair, in writing or via email, at least four months prior to the proposed show date. When an affiliate requests approval with less than 4 months advance notice, the center chair may grant approval if the show papers are in order and the required fees have been paid.

- 4) If the date is approved, the center chair, or designated administrative chair, will send either hard copy or electronic show approval packet, which includes application form, photographic requirements, and other essential information to the show chair, including a declaration that the society has access to the current version of *OrchidPro* available for the use of its show committee and agrees to abide by the rules for AOS judging as set forth in the Handbook.
- 5) Once the application form is completed, it must be forwarded to the center chair or designated administrative chair.
- 6) The approved application, signed by the center chair or designated administrative chair, will then be forwarded to the AOS by the Center Chair or designated administrative chair.
- 7) The required fees, for the judging supplies and the show trophy, if desired, must be submitted either to the center chair or designated administrative chair, or directly to the AOS, as directed by the center chair or designated administrative chair. When all applications have been submitted and all fees paid, the AOS will notify the center chair or designated administrative chair and the Show Chair of completion.
- 8) Ribbon Judging: Neither the AOS Judging Committee nor AOS judges regulate ribbon judging at Shows. AOS judging centers can offer support at AOS-sanctioned shows with general (ribbon) judging. As with AOS award judging, it is part of their ongoing effort to engage AOS-affiliated orchid societies and the orchid growing public with orchid judging. This support, both practical and educational, is only available with the understanding of the following conditions:
 - a) Ribbon judgments are in addition to the regularly scheduled and published monthly judgments and AOS-sanctioned orchid shows/events occurring within the judging center and may not be used to replace said judgments.
 - b) No application process and requirements as described throughout section 5.6 (Judging at Orchid Shows or Events) apply. No quorum of accredited judges is required.
 - c) Judges may accept leadership of a team of other accredited judges, students, and society volunteers in ribbon judging, and should use the occasion as a teaching opportunity. Judges must be respectful, supportive, and educational in their interactions with team members. This is an excellent opportunity to briefly present the AOS judging program and to invite interested individuals to consider joining.
 - d) Ribbon judgments will not be publicized either in ORCHIDS magazine or online at www.aos.org. The publicizing of these events is the sole responsibility of the sponsoring orchid society.
 - e) Participation by AOS judges in general (ribbon) judging is intended to use their experience and expertise to guide orchid society members in conducting a less formal judging process. This support includes but is not limited to assessing the accuracy of the Show Schedule and plant entries, discussion of qualities that determine the granting of ribbons, and answering questions that arise from the public during the judging process.
 - f) AOS judges should encourage members of the society and public to express their opinions and must refrain from dominating the judging process.
 - g) General (ribbon) judging does not apply nor contribute to any show statistics or AOS award recognition.

5.6.1.1 Requirements

- 1) For a show to qualify it must be open to the public (not necessarily without charge) and open to all exhibitors who agree to comply with the rules established by the show committee and insofar as space allows. If ribbon judging is to be performed by specifically invited persons, scheduling must allow reasonable access time to the show, prior to AOS judging, for AOS judges to consider their selection for the AOS show trophy and plant nominations for further evaluation.
- 2) In requesting AOS judging, the show committee obligates itself to have available at least one computer with the latest edition of *OrchidPro*. It would be best if there were a computer to support each judging team. This may be the Society's own computer, or they may arrange for one or more

judges to bring a computer with the latest edition of *OrchidPro*.

- 3) In requesting AOS judging, the show committee obligates itself to assume responsibility for engaging the services of a competent photographer at the show's expense to provide the required digital images and to inform the photographer who takes the official award images that, by so doing, permission is given to the AOS to use the submitted images for its purposes and programs. The show committee may not charge the exhibitor of an awarded plant a fee to recoup photography or other expenses, nor shall donations for such be implied as mandatory or expected.
- 4) The show committee is not required to arrange its show-dates to avoid conflict with other shows, local or distant, although it may be a worthwhile consideration. The primary responsibility for securing adequate AOS personnel to serve the show's AOS-judging needs on any date rests with the show committee.
- 5) International Affiliated Societies wishing AOS judging at a show must follow the same rules and regulations as USA affiliated societies. The show committee is required to appoint an accredited judge approved by the chair of the center of jurisdiction to serve as chair of AOS judging of the show. An AOS accredited national judge may serve in his country as chair of AOS judging if the chair of the center of jurisdiction approves. All paperwork shall go through the center of jurisdiction (See paragraph 3.9).

5.6.2 Judging Supplies for an AOS-Sanctioned Orchid Show or Event

The judging supplies for AOS-sanctioned orchid shows and events include the following:

- 1) Entry forms.
- 2) Ballots for the AOS show trophy.
- 3) Score sheets for all point scales.
- 4) Award seals for all types of awards.
- 5) Awards photography guidelines, SITF measurement forms and information sheets and other ancillary material.

5.6.3 Chair of Judging Activities

It is necessary for the show to have a chair of judging activities. As a member of the show committee, they are responsible for seeing that the committee takes timely action with regard to securing AOS sanction of the show.

5.6.4 Chair of AOS Judging

The chair of AOS judging has the following responsibilities:

- 1) Organize and assign the teams of judges, designating one member as captain of each team.
- 2) Provide an attendance sheet for all judges, student judges, and show photographer to sign. Signatures must be legible to assure attendance credit.
- 3) Make sure that all awarded flowers and plants have been thoroughly researched, measured, described, and photographed as required.
- 4) Complete, sign, and return all judging data and forms to the approving judging center chair for review and tracking.
- 5) Require all judges to perform in a professional and collegial manner.

5.6.4.1 Decision of AOS Judging Chair is Final

Any questions about the judging process or the decisions of the judging teams shall be raised with the show chair and the chair of AOS judging before the termination of the judging session. The decision of the chair of AOS judging shall be final.

5.7 Outreach Judging

Beginning in 2013, AOS judging centers began offering AOS-sanctioned outreach judgments as part of their ongoing commitment to engaging the AOS-affiliated orchid societies and the orchid growing public with the process of orchid judging. This service, both practical and educational, is only available to 1) AOS-affiliated orchid societies or 2) orchid societies looking to be affiliated with the AOS. Outreach judgments are provided with the understanding of the following conditions:

- 1) Outreach judgments are in addition to the regularly scheduled and published monthly judgments and AOS-sanctioned orchid shows/events occurring within the judging center and cannot be used to replace, or supplement said judgments. An Affiliated Society may sponsor **up to four** outreach judgments per year.
- 2) The application process and requirements are identical to the ones described throughout section 5.6 (Judging at Orchid Shows or Events) with the following exceptions:
 - a) The 'Application for an AOS-Sanctioned Outreach Judging' may be submitted up to 2 months prior to the event date
 - b) No application fee shall be charged for outreach judgments.
- 3) No AOS Show Trophy may be requested or awarded at outreach judgments.
- 4) Outreach judgments will not be publicized either in *Orchids* or online at www.aos.org. The publicizing of these events is the sole responsibility of the sponsoring orchid society.

VI. AMERICAN ORCHID SOCIETY AWARDS

6.1 Purpose and Granting of Awards

AOS awards are designed to encourage and to recognize meritorious achievement in all fields of orchid endeavor. To accomplish this, awards are granted to individual persons, individual orchid plants, groups of orchid plants, cut flowers, and orchid arrangements, all in accordance with established rules. Wherever the granting of such awards is determined by use of point scores, the appropriate point scale shall be used. Awards granted to individual plants are made to a particular cultivar, which must be designated by a permanent cultivar name and the award (or highest award if there are two or more), although only the originally judged portion receives a certificate. Though a cultivar name is required for an award, the Certificate of Cultural Excellence or Certificate of Cultural Merit are awarded to the exhibitor of the plant and do not become a part of the plant's historic record. Therefore, divisions of the cultivar bear the cultivar name but not the designation of CCE or CCM.

Awards are granted either by the Board of Trustees, in the case of the Special Annual Awards, or by AOS judges in all other cases except the Certificate of Meritorious Arrangement.

Awards may be made only in accordance with the rules in this Handbook in the following situations:

- (1) At the 27 AOS-approved judging centers, and their 11 additional sites.
- (2) At AOS-sanctioned shows and events of Affiliated Societies.
- (3) At regional or international orchid congresses and conferences, if the event or show is sanctioned by the AOS; and
- (4) At overseas shows sanctioned by the AOS in which AOS judges conduct the award judging.

6.1.1 Accepted Authorities

The American Orchid Society accepts the Plants of the World online (<https://powo.science.kew.org>), (formerly *World Checklist of Selected Plant Families*) (<https://wcsp.science.kew.org>) as its primary source of validly published and recognized orchid species nomenclature, including subspecies, forms, and varieties. Names below the level of species (formas and varieties) synonymized by the checklist are still used for award purposes as long as that name is validly published, *and* a set of clear distinguishing features can be determined. For instance, awards to *Cattleya trianae* f. *alba* are published because a clear determination can be made that the plant in question fits the circumscription of the taxa. For horticultural variants for which there is no validly published taxonomic name, the distinguishing feature should be included in the cultivar name such as *Cattleya trianae* 'Blue Giant'. Alternatively, such cultivars can be indicated by a color group name, capitalized and in Roman type in parentheses following the plant name - i.e., *Cattleya trianae* (Blue Group) or *Cattleya trianae* (Coerulea) would be designated to accommodate the cerulean forms of *C. trianae*.

For matters of hybrid nomenclature, the AOS accepts the Royal Horticultural Society Orchid Hybrid Register as its source of grex names and hybrid parentage.

6.2 Awards for Individual Plants (and Special Groups of Plants)

6.2.1 Flower Quality Awards

The AOS offers three flower quality awards – the First Class Certificate (FCC), the Award of Merit

(AM), and the Highly Commended Certificate (HCC). All are scored based on the point scales defined in 7.2.1 through 7.2.10; all scores are recorded as whole numbers. The award definitions are as follows:

6.2.1.1 First Class Certificate (FCC)

Awarded to an orchid species or hybrid which scores 90 points or more.

6.2.1.2 Award of Merit (AM)

Awarded to an orchid species or hybrid which scores between 80 and 89 points, inclusive.

6.2.1.3 Highly Commended Certificate (HCC)

Awarded to an orchid species or hybrid which scores between 75 and 79 points, inclusive.

6.2.2 Awards Recognizing Superior Plant Cultivation

The AOS offers two awards recognizing sustained, outstanding culture of an orchid – the Certificate of Cultural Excellence (CCE) and the Certificate of Cultural Merit (CCM). Both are awarded to the exhibitor and require that the entry have been in the care of the exhibitor for at least 12 months immediately prior to the award. The entry must be of robust health and appearance with an unusually large number of flowers.

Plants presented for judging must clearly be a single cultivar and adhere to the following:

- a) For plants with a sympodial growth habit each growth must be continuously connected to its preceding growth.
- b) For plants with a monopodial growth habit, lateral growths, offshoots, or 'keikis' must have a clear, unbroken connection to the mother plant.
- c) For colony-forming terrestrial or semi-terrestrial genera (which may be neither sympodial or monopodial in nature), the colony must be of a single cultivar.

Nominated plants are scored on the point scale found in paragraph 7.3.1

6.2.2.1 Certificate of Cultural Excellence (CCE)

To be awarded, the plant must score at least 90 points.

6.2.2.2 Certificate of Cultural Merit (CCM)

To be awarded, the plant must score between 80 and 89 points, inclusive.

6.2.3 Botanical Awards

The AOS offers two botanical awards – the Certificate of Horticultural Merit (CHM) and the Certificate of Botanical Recognition (CBR). Both awards are granted provisionally pending taxonomic verification by the Species Identification Task Force (SITF) and are filed with the judging center chair; submission of a plant for verification must take place no more than 60 days after the date the award takes place.

Taxonomic verification need not be presented prior to an award being granted; if it was previously obtained, it should be submitted when the plant is judged for inclusion with the request for identification by the SITF. So long as the question of verification is actively being pursued by the SITF the award will remain provisional and need not be considered for nullification.

Taxonomic verifications should acknowledge the name or names under which the taxon has been previously known if that differs from the botanically correct name. Once an award has been cleared it

shall stand, regardless of subsequent name changes resulting from taxonomic changes or award challenges. A species or natural hybrid shall not receive, at the same judging, a CBR and a CHM.

6.2.3.1 Certificate of Horticultural Merit (CHM)

Awarded to a cultivar of a species, subspecies, variety, or natural hybrid with outstanding aesthetic appeal that contributes to the horticultural aspects of orchidology. The entire plant must be exhibited. The plant and flowers displayed must be established in or upon its growing medium, in good condition, and have sufficient flowers to judge the horticultural merit of the plant. This certificate may be awarded more than once if a plant has characteristics significantly desirable and different from other awarded cultivars. The distinctive features of the cultivar must be clearly described, measurements recorded, and the country of origin, if known, should be noted. The award may not be granted to a cultivar which has previously received a Certificate of Botanical Merit (an award that has been discontinued). A score of at least 80 points on the point scale in paragraph 7.3.2 is required.

6.2.3.2 Certificate of Botanical Recognition (CBR)

Awarded to a cultivar of a species, subspecies, variety, or natural hybrid deemed especially worthy of recognition for rarity, novelty, or educational value previously unrecorded by AOS. The entire plant must be exhibited. The plant must be established in or upon its growing medium, in good condition, and while it need have no special horticultural value, it must be deemed by the judging team to be representative of the taxon being recognized.

No award of any kind may have previously been made to the taxon. A taxon may be granted a second CBR only to correct a clear taxonomic error in the record and the description of such an award must clearly state the reason for the second award.

6.2.4 Awards Recognizing Excellence in Orchid Breeding and Hybridization

6.2.4.1 Award of Distinction (AD)

Awarded once to a grex or strain, exhibited individually or collectively, representing a worthy new direction in breeding. The award is granted unanimously without scoring by the judging team assigned. The specific values for which this award is granted must be recorded in the award description by the judging team. If the hybridizer and exhibitor are different, each shall receive a certificate. The Award of Distinction is not given a cultivar name.

6.2.4.2 Award of Quality (AQ)

Awarded once to a strain which is the result of a mating of specific cultivars which meets all of the following requirements:

- a) The entry must be exhibited as a group of not less than 12 different clones or inflorescences thereof: and
- b) The entry must be of a seed-raised species or hybrid, and
- c) The entry must demonstrate a result of sufficient improvement over the former type, and,
- d) The parental cultivar epithets and the hybridizer of this strain, (not necessarily the registrant of the hybrid), must be provided by the exhibitor(s) upon entry, and
- e) At least one cultivar of the exhibited strain must receive, or have received, a flower quality award. It is granted unanimously without scoring by the judging team assigned. The specific values for which this award is granted must be recorded in the award description by the judging team. If the hybridizer and exhibitor are different, each shall receive a certificate. The Award of Quality is not given a cultivar name.
- f) It is granted unanimously without scoring by the judging team assigned. The specific values for

which this award is granted must be recorded in the award description by the judging team. If the hybridizer and exhibitor are different, each shall receive a certificate. The Award of Quality is not given a cultivar name.

6.2.5 Other Awards for Individual Plants (and Special Groups of Plants)

6.2.5.1 Judges' Commendation (JC)

Awarded to flowers or plants, individually or in groups, for a distinctive characteristic or aspect of historical or other importance which, in the opinion of the judges, is worthy of recognition. Judges' Commendations must record the specific values for which the award is given. The award is granted without scoring by an affirmative vote of at least 75 percent of the judging team assigned.

6.3 Special Annual Awards

Creation of New Awards:

Purpose/History: The national AOS awards program began in 1964 as a mechanism to recognize the best award photographs of various orchid genera in the previous calendar year and to honor various individuals for their life-long contributions to the AOS and orchids.

In 2020 the AOS Board of Trustees put a moratorium in place until such time as a policy and procedure were developed for implementation.

In the beginning it was felt that \$10,000.00 was sufficient to endow an award for sustained annual cash awards to the winners. This amount continues to appear to be sufficient.

Process: Individuals or institutions wishing to nominate an annual award to be named in some manner should not send any funds to the AOS until such time as the proposed award has been approved.

Applications should indicate the name of the sponsoring individual or institutions, the individual(s) intended to be honored and a detailed account of the honoree's contributions to the AOS and orchids. The application should detail funding the endowment in its entirety upon approval. The AOS cannot receive and hold donations for a proposed award.

All applications should be sent to the Chair of the Judging Committee (judging_committee@aos.org) for review prior to actions by the Judging Policy Task Force, the Judging Committee and recommendation to the Board of Trustees.

These are monetary awards, except for the Ann and Phil Jesup Trophy, given annually by the Board of Trustees to exceptional plants awarded in the preceding calendar year. Nominations for these awards are made by each center committee and forwarded to the chair of the JC and the presenter of the nominations at least 60 days prior to the fall meeting of the Board of Trustees. Each winner shall receive an appropriate, signed award certificate. All awards must have been cleared (paid for) before they can be eligible for these Special Annual Awards.

6.3.1 The Ann and Phil Jesup Botanical Trophy

The Ann and Phil Jesup Botanical Trophy is a trophy awarded to the grower of the orchid species plant which is regarded as the most outstanding orchid species awarded during the previous calendar year. The award was established in 2002 and endowed by donations to honor Ann and Phil Jesup

6.3.2 The Butterworth Prize

The Butterworth Prize is given to the grower of the orchid plant, either species or hybrid, which is regarded as the most outstanding example of orchid culture to have been awarded a Certificate of Cultural Excellence or Certificate of Cultural Merit during the preceding calendar year. This, the first of the AOS' permanently endowed awards, was provided in 1966 through the gift to the AOS from Mrs. Rachel Butterworth Dietz in memory of her parents, John and Nancy Butterworth, and of George Butterworth, past president of the AOS.

6.3.3 The W. W. Wilson Award

The W. W. Wilson Award is given to the grower of the orchid plant, either species or hybrid, which is regarded as the most outstanding example of the *Cypripedium* Alliance awarded during the preceding calendar year. The award was established in 1990 and endowed by donations to honor William W. Wilson, MD.

6.3.4 The Masatoshi Miyamoto Award

The Masatoshi Miyamoto Award is given to the grower of the orchid plant, either species or hybrid, which is regarded as the most outstanding example of the *Cattleya* Alliance awarded during the preceding calendar year. A plant may be simultaneously eligible for the Miyamoto and Gerber awards, however, the plant may not win more than one of these awards. The award was established in 1991 and endowed by donations to honor Mr. Masatoshi Miyamoto.

6.3.5 The Herbert Hager Award

The Herbert Hager Award is given to the grower of the orchid plant, either species or hybrid, which is regarded as the most outstanding example of the genus *Phalaenopsis* awarded during the preceding calendar year. The award was established in 1992 and endowed by donations to honor Mr. Herbert Hager.

6.3.6 The Carlyle A. Luer Award

The Carlyle A. Luer Award is given to the grower of the orchid plant, either species or hybrid, which is regarded as the most outstanding example of the *Pleurothallid* Alliance awarded during the preceding calendar year. A plant may be simultaneously eligible for the Luer and Ferrusi awards, however, the plant may not win more than one of these awards. The award was established in 1992 and endowed by donations to honor Carlyle A. Luer, MD.

6.3.7 The Merritt W. Huntington Award

The Merritt W. Huntington Award is given to the grower of the orchid plant, either species or hybrid, which is regarded as the most outstanding flower to have been awarded a First Class Certificate (FCC) during the preceding calendar year. No judging center nominations are necessary for this award as all FCCs are eligible. The award was established in 1992 and endowed by donations to honor Mr. Merritt W. Huntington.

6.3.8 The Roy T. Fukumura Award

The Roy T. Fukumura Award is given to the grower of the orchid plant, either species or hybrid, which is regarded as the most outstanding example of the genus *Vanda*, those genera in the subtribe *Aeridinae* (= *Sarcanthinae*) which hybridize with *Vanda*, and their intergeneric hybrids, excluding

Phalaenopsis, awarded during the preceding calendar year. A plant may be simultaneously eligible for both the Fukumura and the Fuchs Awards; however, the plant may not win more than one of these awards. The award was established in 1993 and endowed by donations to honor Mr. Roy T. Fukumura.

6.3.9 The James and Marie Riopelle Award

The James and Marie Riopelle Award is given to the grower of the orchid plant, either species, intersectional hybrid or intrasectional hybrid, which is regarded as the most outstanding example of *Miltonia*/*Miltoniopsis* awarded during the preceding calendar year. The award was established in 1993, endowed by Mr. and Mrs. James H. Riopelle, and augmented by donations to honor them.

6.3.10 The Robert B. Dugger Award

The Robert B. Dugger *Odontoglossum* Award, established by the friends of Robert B. Dugger and members of the *Odontoglossum* Alliance, has been presented by the AOS trustees since 1996. It recognizes the work of a man who was responsible for the 1980s renaissance in *Odontoglossums*. Dugger established new pathways in intergeneric breeding and created more than 8,000 crosses. Plants, either species or hybrid, eligible for the Robert B. Dugger Award should have parentage that contains an *Odontoglossum* as defined by the taxonomy in place at the time the award was established and have been awarded during the preceding calendar year. Examples of these species include the following: *Odm. crispum*/*Onc. alexandrae*, *Odm./Onc. nobile* (*Odm. pescatorei*), *Odm./Onc. cirrhosum*, *Odm./Onc. spectatissimum*, *Odm./Onc. luteo-purpureum*, and *Odm./Onc. Hallii*. A plant may be simultaneously eligible for the Carpenter and Dugger awards; however, the plant may not win more than one of these Awards.

6.3.11 The Benjamin Kodama Award

The Benjamin Kodama Award is given to the grower of the orchid plant, either species or hybrid, which is regarded as the most outstanding example of the *Dendrobium* Alliance awarded during the preceding calendar year. The award was established in 1996 and endowed by donations to honor Mr. Benjamin Kodama.

6.3.12 The Fred Hillerman Award

The Fred Hillerman Award is given to the grower of the orchid plant, either species or hybrid, which is regarded as the most outstanding example of the *Angraecoid* Alliance awarded during the preceding calendar year. The award was established in 2000 and endowed by donations to honor Mr. Fred Hillerman.

6.3.13 The Benjamin C. Berliner Award

The Benjamin C. Berliner Award is given to the grower of the orchid plant, either species or hybrid, which is regarded as the most outstanding example of the genera *Lycaste*, *Sudamerlycaste*, or *Anguloa* or the hybrids between those genera awarded during the preceding calendar year. The award was established in 2000 and endowed by donations to honor Benjamin C. Berliner, M.D.

6.3.14 The Milton Carpenter Award

The Milton Carpenter *Oncidiinae* Award is given to the grower of the orchid plant, regarded the most outstanding example of intergeneric hybridizing within the *Oncidiinae* alliance, excluding *Trichocentrum*, *Tolumnia*, *Cyrtochilum* and *Psychopsis*, awarded during the previous calendar year. A [Top of the Document](#)

plant may be simultaneously eligible for the Carpenter and Dugger awards; however, the plant may not win more than one of these awards. The Award was established in 2005 and endowed by donations to honor Mr. Milton Carpenter, commercial grower, hybridizer, past president of the AOS, and one of the truly great ambassadors for the hobby.

6.3.15 The Ernest Hetherington Award

The Ernest Hetherington Cymbidium Award is given to the grower of the orchid plant, either standard, miniature or novelty hybrid, or species, regarded as the most outstanding example of the genus *Cymbidium* awarded in the previous calendar year. The award was established in 2006 and endowed by donations from the Cymbidium Society of America to honor Mr. Ernest Hetherington.

6.3.16 The Bill Thoms Award

The Bill Thoms Award is given to the grower of the orchid plant, either species or hybrid, which is regarded as the most outstanding example of the *Bulbophyllinae* Subtribe awarded during the preceding calendar year. The award was established in 2007 and endowed by donations to honor Mr. Bill Thoms.

6.3.17 The Frank Sr. and Elizabeth Jasen Award

The Frank Sr. and Elizabeth Jasen Award is a monetary award given annually by the Board of Trustees to the grower of the orchid plant, either species or hybrid, regarded as the most outstanding example, species or hybrid of the Stanhopea alliance; *Acineta*, *Coryanthes*, *Stanhopea*, *Embreei*, *Gongora*, *Houlletia*, *Polycycnis*, *Sievekingia*, *Kegeliella*, *Lacaena*, *Lueddemannia*, *Peristeria*, *Braemia*, *Schlimia*, or *Soterosanthus* and their intergeneric hybrids, awarded during the preceding calendar year. The award was established in 2012 and endowed by the Jasen family to honor their parents Frank Sr. a long-time avid but amateur orchid grower and Elizabeth (Betty) Jasen. The award honors the grower that dares to grow unique and unusual orchids and the spouse that tolerates and helps nurture the grower's hobby.

6.3.18 The Fuchs Family Award

The Fuchs Family award is given to the most outstanding example of the genus *Vanda* as currently circumscribed, species or hybrid, awarded during the previous calendar year. Intergeneric hybrids are excluded from consideration. A plant may be simultaneously eligible for both the Fukumura and the Fuchs Awards; however, the plant may not win more than one of these awards. The award was established and endowed by the West Palm Beach Judging Center in 2016 to honor the Fuchs family for their hybrids, awards, and being great ambassadors for AOS over three generations.

6.4.19 The Walter Off Exhibit Award

The Walter Off Exhibit Award is given to an AOS Show Trophy Award, Silver Certificate or Gold Certificate or Educational Award recognized as the most outstanding example of these types of awards given at an AOS sanctioned orchid show awarded during the previous calendar year. The Award shall be determined based upon the submissions of photograph(s) from each judging center of its nomination for the award. This award was established in 2017 and endowed by donations to honor Walter Off, exhibitor and teacher of exhibition.

6.3.20 The Paul and Mary Storm Award

The Paul and Mary Storm Award is given to the grower of the orchid plant regarded as the most outstanding example of a hybrid with at least one valid *Myrmecophila* species and/or the following former *Schomburgkia* species now classified in the genus *Laelia*: *colombiana*, *heidii*, *elata*, *gloriosa*, *lueddemannii*, *lyonsii*, *marginata*, *moyobambae*, *rosea*, *schultzei*, *splendida*, *superbiens*, *undulata*, or *weberbaueriana* in its background, awarded during the previous calendar year. The award was established in 2017 and endowed by friends of Paul and Mary Storm. The award honors hybrids that are not intended to be round, full flowers.

6.3.21 The Martin Motes Orchid Breeder Award

The Martin Motes Orchid Breeder's Award is given to the breeder and exhibitor of the best Award of Quality or Award of Distinction awarded during the preceding calendar year. The goal is to encourage hybridizers and growers to exhibit their work and to make more hybrids. This award for a single AD or AQ differs from the AOS Hybridizer's Award which recognizes a lifetime of hybridizing efforts. As with ADs and AQs, if the hybridizer and exhibitor are different, the prize will be divided equally between them.

6.3.22 The Mario and Conni Ferrusi Award

The Mario and Conni Ferrusi Award is given to the grower of the orchid plant, which is regarded as the most outstanding example of *Masdevallia*, *Dracula*, or *Dracuvallia*, awarded during the preceding calendar year. A plant may be simultaneously eligible for the both the Ferrusi and the Luer Awards; however, the plant may not win more than one of these awards. The Award was established in 2018 and endowed by donations to honor Mario and Conni Ferrusi, avid orchid growers and exhibitors, and among the truly great ambassadors for the hobby.

6.3.23 The Renee and Marvin Gerber Brassavola Hybrid Award

The Renee and Marvin Gerber award is given to the most outstanding example of a hybrid using *Brassavola* as one parent. A plant may be simultaneously eligible for the Masatoshi Miyamoto Cattleya Alliance Award; however, the plant may not win more than one of these awards. The award was established in 2020 and endowed by donations to honor the work of Renee and Marvin Gerber in hybridizing with *Brassavola*.

6.4 Awards for Display of Plants, Flowers, and Educational Material

6.4.1 Gold Certificate

The Gold Certificate shall not be limited in number at any show. Criteria are as follows:

The Gold Certificate shall be awarded to the exhibit that wins the AOS Show Trophy if the average of all scores is at least 90 points. Any accredited judge may nominate another exhibit(s) for a Gold Certificate to be scored according to the Point Scale used for the AOS Show Trophy, paragraph 7.3.3, and all eligible judges or, in a large show, where there are many judges, an appointed team of at least five accredited judges may score it. Any exhibit that is scored an average of at least 90 points on this Point Scale shall be awarded a Gold Certificate.

An exhibit or group of orchid plants or cut-flower exhibit may also be nominated by an accredited judge for a Gold Certificate on the basis that it is exceptional, unique, or worthy of high recognition but that it does not meet the usual requirements of the Show Trophy. Educational value and creativity may be part of the consideration. It is preferable that all eligible judges vote; however, in a large show the chairman may appoint a team of at least five judges to vote on the nomination. A

Gold Certificate shall be awarded by a positive vote by at least $\frac{3}{4}$ of those voting. An award description shall be written that describes the reasons for this prestigious award.

6.4.2 AOS Show Trophy

(1) A trophy intended to encourage the improvement of the standards of exhibits will be made available upon request to the AOS to any show staged by an affiliated society within or outside the United States, which has conformed to the procedures in paragraph 5.6.1 for securing AOS sanction for the show, including the exclusive use of AOS judges for award judging. It is intended that this trophy encourage excellence by recognizing in competition the best collective material meritoriously displayed in public exhibition (see 7.4 Principles of Design). Only one trophy may be awarded at a show. The awarding of the trophy shall not be obligatory. The pooling of resources by groups or individuals is permitted. The following regulations apply:

(2) All certified senior and emeritus judges present may participate in the decision whether or not to award the trophy with the exception of judges who must disqualify themselves [see paragraph 4.8 (2)] and the chair of AOS judging, whose vote is reserved to break a tie in accordance with paragraph (4). Should the chair of AOS judging be similarly disqualified, the eligible judges shall elect one of their number to be held in reserve to break any tie.

(3) In the event that fewer than 3 judges are eligible to vote, the following procedure should apply. Each judge present may nominate one choice for best exhibit excluding their own exhibit. All nominations must be signed to qualify. Those judges whose exhibits are not nominated may participate in the trophy balloting process, which shall follow the procedure in 6.3.2(4) and (5).

(4) All exhibits entered in a show shall be considered eligible for the AOS Show Trophy, except in the case of 6.3.2(2) above, when only the nominated exhibits are eligible. All displays should have orchids as the focal point. The use of foliage is encouraged and an occasional non-orchid flower(s) that is not a focal point should not disqualify the display. Each judge voting must submit a ballot in favor of the one exhibit they score highest (as least 80 points) on point scale 7.3.3 or note "No Award" on the ballot if no exhibit scores at least 80 points. All ballots must be signed to qualify.

(5) For any exhibit to win the trophy, two-thirds of the judges present, and voting must vote in favor of some exhibit. If more than one-third of the voting judges vote "No Award", the trophy shall not be awarded. The exhibit which receives the highest number of votes shall win the trophy. If a tie in votes exists between two or more exhibits, the exhibit with the highest score shall win. If a tie still exists, the chair of AOS judging shall cast the tie breaking vote to award the trophy. If the chair is not eligible to vote, the designated reserve judge shall break the tie. An exhibit must be scored by each judge voting and a favorable vote must consist of a score of at least 80 points on the scale in paragraph 7.3.3. The factor of labeling shall be evaluated on completeness, correctness of names, neatness, and legibility to the viewing public.

6.4.3 AOS Show Trophy Certificate

The American Orchid Society offers a Show Trophy Certificate upon request to affiliated societies staging shows outside the United States where judging is not performed exclusively by certified AOS judges. This certificate award is intended to encourage the improvement of the standard of exhibits and may be given by persons who are recognized in their country as qualified to judge (see 7.4 Principles of Design).

6.4.4 Artistic Certificate

Awarded to an outstanding exhibit which the judges consider to be exceptionally artistic. No restriction shall be applied to the class of exhibitor, whether amateur, commercial, or professional florist. The award shall be given only upon the unanimous decision of the judging team assigned. Judges are expected to consider the exhibit with the point scale in paragraph 7.3.5 in mind (see 7.4

Principles of Design). Although actual point scoring is optional, no award should be made to an exhibit which a judge believes could not score at least 90 points.

6.4.5 Certificate of Meritorious Arrangement

Awarded to an outstanding exhibit in the flower arrangement class of a show in which orchid flowers are dominant (see 7.4 Principles of Design). This certificate is available to AOS-sanctioned shows and may be awarded by nationally accredited decorative or flower arrangement judges. If flower arrangement judges without these qualifications are used to judge flower arrangements, they may recommend an award, but a team of AOS certified judges assigned for the purpose must confirm the award. The following stipulations apply:

- (1) There shall be no limitation on size.
- (2) Orchids shall be dominant in the arrangement.
- (3) Orchid flowers need not have been grown by the exhibitor.
- (4) Corsages are considered arrangements for purposes of this award.
- (5) The award should be given only once at any show. If nationally accredited flower show judges make the award, this fact shall be noted and authenticated by the chair on the summary sheet.
- (6) Photographic records are not required.

6.4.6 Educational Exhibit Certificate

Awarded to an educational exhibit that furthers the knowledge and education of the public regarding orchids. Consideration should also be given to displays that further conservation awareness. The following regulations apply:

- (1) The decision whether or not to award this certificate shall be made by a judging team assigned for the purpose.
- (2) An exhibit must receive a score of at least 80 points using the point scales in paragraph 7.3.4.
- (3) An exhibit shall receive this award only once; however, there is no limit to the number of Educational Exhibit Certificates which may be awarded at any one show.
- (4) In judging exhibits which further conservation awareness, the judging team is encouraged to consider the exhibit and its message in light of the AOS Conservation Policy, as adopted by the Trustees in October 1989, as follows:

"Preservation and protection of orchids and their habitats throughout the world are among the primary goals of the AOS. The AOS encourages and engages in worthwhile activities to these ends, including but not limited to:

- Propagation and cultivation of orchid species to maintain a diverse gene pool, especially for endangered species.
- Formalization of procedures to ensure the protection and maintenance of orchid species in private and research collections where neglect endangers the plants.
- Development and dissemination of proper cultural information for species to ensure their survival and propagation.
- Support the development of national parks and nature preserves worldwide.
- Salvage and rescue of orchid species and other flora where preservation is not possible or practical.
- Management of orchid habitats, endangered or not."

6.4.7 Silver Certificate

The Silver Certificate shall be awarded to the exhibit that wins the AOS Show Trophy if the average of

all scores is between 85 and 89 points. Any accredited judge may nominate another exhibit(s) for a Silver Certificate to be scored according to the Point Scale used for the AOS Show Trophy, paragraph 7.3.3, and all eligible judges or, in a large show, where there are many judges, an appointed team of at least five accredited judges may score it. Any exhibit that is scored an average of at between 85 and 89 points on this Point Scale shall be awarded a Silver Certificate.

An exhibit or group of orchid plants or cut-flower exhibit may also be nominated by an accredited judge for a Silver Certificate on the basis that it is exceptional, unique, or worthy of high recognition but that it does not meet the usual requirements of the Show Trophy. Educational value and creativity may be part of the consideration. It is preferable that all eligible judges vote; however, in a large show the chairman may appoint a team of at least five judges to vote on the nomination. A Silver Certificate shall be awarded by a positive vote by at least $\frac{3}{4}$ of those voting. An award description shall be written that describes the reasons for this prestigious award.

VII. JUDGING CRITERIA AND POINT SCALES

(Revised March 9, 2018)

7.1 Quality

The purpose of judging quality is to recognize superiority and improvement in extraordinary orchid flowers rather than recognizing commonplace characteristics. In scoring for quality awards (i.e., for HCC, AM and FCC), judges should consider and apply equally the following three principles:

- (1) the hypothetical standard of perfection, at the time.
- (2) the qualities and merits of previously awarded or known plants of comparable type, breeding or characteristics; and
- (3) the extent to which any quality or characteristic of the plant represents an advance over what has been witnessed heretofore and thereby establishes a new standard for the future. In this connection, new lines of breeding, including new shapes, colors, or growth habit, should be considered but should not be awarded unless the new line has superior characteristics and quality. Awards appropriate for new lines of breeding or species, are the JC, AD, CHM and CBR.

7.1.1 General

The General Point Scale may be used for any genus of orchids, especially those that do not have a specifically designated scale. Should the specific criteria, outlined in the point scales that follow, not match the flower being judged, then the general scale should be used. Where doubt exists, use the general scale.

7.1.2 Cattleya and Allied Genera

The general form of the flower is toward fullness and roundness. A circle, drawn with the base of the column as the center, should touch the tips of the petals and sepals and the margin of the lip, while the flower should fill the greater proportion of the area of the circle. Sepals should be broad and fill in the gap between the petals and the lip. Petals should be erect to slightly arched, broad, and rounded, frilled, or undulated at the margins according to the variety. The lip should be proportionate to the petals with a rounded, flattened, symmetrical, and crisped or frilled trumpet or isthmus in accordance with its background; it should be closed toward the base and more or less rolled around the column. Hybrids containing *Rhyncholaelia* generally have lips larger than the petals. Most cattleyas have lips slightly larger to slightly smaller than the petals, depending on the ancestral species used. The entire flower should be nearly flat when viewed from the side, the lip curving down and not jutting out at right angles to the plane of the petals and sepals.

The color of the flower should be clear, bright, and strong, evenly dispersed throughout the petals and sepals without "washing out" at the mid-veins. The hue should be consistent with the parentage or an unusual shade, without spotting, breaking, or splashing, except where a balanced and harmonious pattern exists. The lip should be more prominently and richly colored, blending or pleasingly contrasting with the rest of the flower. Additional markings, if present, should form a symmetrical pattern.

The size of the flower should be equal to or greater than the geometric mean of the size of the parents. The potential of the species in size may already have been established by fine forms discovered in their natural habitats. In bifoliate crosses, the size of the flowers and the width of the petals will be less than in pure *Cattleya labiata* crosses because of the differences in the species involved. Substance of a high degree is now standard through polyploid forms. Texture should be

sparkling, crystalline, velvety, or waxy.

Floriferousness is closely related to parental background and size of flowers. While cattleyas with one exceptional flower may be judged, labiata-type cattleyas should have two or more flowers to be considered. In crosses involving bifoliate cattleyas, several flowers would have to be produced to warrant consideration, depending on the ancestry involved. The stem should be strong and upright to display the flowers to their best advantage, so that one flower does not crowd and distort another. The inflorescence should be mature enough to show the full potential of the flower or flowers.

Use the General scale when judging non-labiata species and their hybrids.

7.1.3 Cymbidium

The general form of the flower is toward roundness and fullness, as in *Cattleya* but not to the same degree. Some fine cultivars have a more open, star-like appearance, and other good forms are somewhat cupped. Excessive cupping, however, is a fault. The lip usually does not extend to the line of a circle; neither does the dorsal sepal, due to its being curved forward or hooded. The sepals should fill the gaps between the petals and lip. The petals usually make an inverted, broadly based isosceles triangle with the lip; they should be broad, slightly arched with a minimum of narrowing toward the tips. The lip should be proportionately sized, the side lobes being more or less erect, and the front lobe curved gracefully but not strongly turned under, narrowed, or pinched.

The color of the flower should be definite and clear. Suffusion of one color over another should be regular and harmonious, not mottled, or muddy. Venation with color, if present, should be definite and distinctive, or in regular lines and patterns. The lip should be as distinctively colored as the sepals and petals, with markings in definite and distinctive patterns. The throat and crests should be clear white or brightly colored.

The size of the flower should be equal to or greater than the geometric mean of the size of the parents. Substance should be equal to or greater than the average of the parents. The inflorescence should be erect or gracefully arching according to the ancestral species, with the flowers well-spaced and well-displayed. The number of flowers will vary according to the variety and breeding. The inflorescence should be mature enough to show the full potential of the flower or flowers. Non-standard cymbidiums should be judged using the General Scale.

7.1.4 Dendrobium

The genus *Dendrobium* is extremely large and diverse so that general criteria for all species and hybrids cannot be stated. The flowers presented for judging generally fall into one of three categories. In judging species and hybrids of the form typified by *Dendrobium nobile*, the criteria used in judging *Cattleya* flowers would apply. In judging species and hybrids of the form typified by *Dendrobium phalaenopsis* and *Dendrobium bigibbum*, the criteria used in judging flowers of the genus *Phalaenopsis* would apply. In judging those *Dendrobiums* that have petals and sepals more or less equal to each other, the chief criterion is improvement over the ancestral species using the *Dendrobium* point scale in paragraph 7.2.4. The inflorescence should be mature enough to show the full potential of the flower or flowers.

7.1.5 Miltonia (Miltoniopsis)

The general form of the flower is toward fullness, roundness, and flatness. The sepals and petals should be equal to each other and may be slightly reflexed. The lip should be predominantly large, symmetrical, and not too deeply notched. Color should be definite, clear, and unblemished. The mask,

if present, should be symmetrical and well-defined. The inflorescence should be gracefully arching, with the flowers well-spaced and well displayed. The point scale for *Miltonia* is designed for use in scoring *Miltonia*, *Oncidium*, *Odontoglossum* and similar genera whose flowers have lips which are the dominant feature. For other types of miltonias, etc., flowers of which have lips that are proportionate to the petals and sepals, the *Odontoglossum* point scale should be used. The inflorescence should be mature enough to show the full potential of the flower or flowers.

7.1.6 *Odontoglossum*

The general form of the flower is toward roundness, fullness, and flatness, tending to fit within a circle as in *Cattleya*. The color of the flower must be definite and clear, in well-defined patterns. Size of flower should be equal to or greater than the geometric mean of the size of the parents. Substance should be equal to or greater than the average of the parents. The habit of the inflorescence may be simple or branching with flowers well-spaced and well displayed. Floriferousness is closely related to parental background. The inflorescence should be mature enough to show the full potential of the flower or flowers.

The *Odontoglossum* point scale is designed primarily for the *crispum*-type *odontoglossums*, *odontiodas*, *vuylstekearas*, *oncidiums*, *miltonias*, and similar orchid flowers that have lips approximately equal in size to the petals and sepals. For large-lipped forms, score by the *Miltonia* point scale.

7.1.7 *Paphiopedilum*

The great variety of *paphiopedilums* currently grown, from species to primary hybrids to the modern complex hybrids, makes uniformly applicable criteria impossible to define. The majority of judged *paphiopedilums* are those having a single flower on an upright stem; these are scored using the *Paphiopedilum* point scale in paragraph 7.2.7. Those having several flowers on an upright or arching inflorescence are commonly termed multifloral *paphiopedilums* and should be scored according to the General Point Scale in paragraph 7.2.1, as their floriferousness and arrangement of inflorescence are of substantial importance. In the judging of species and those hybrids with parentage near to the species, the general criterion is improvement over the ancestral type(s). The natural spread of flowers with long pendulous petals depends on the angle at which the petals are held, and the horizontal and vertical dimensions should be recorded.

The appearance of complex hybrids is the result of many generations of selective breeding that have obscured the contributions of the many species in their ancestry. The desired form of complex hybrid flowers is round, or broadly oval, with particular emphasis upon fullness, balance, and proportion. The dorsal sepal should be large, rounded, slightly concave and not reflexed. The petals should be broad, and their length should be in proportion to the rest of the flower. The pouch should be full, in proportion and not protrude excessively forward. The synsepal should afford a harmonious background for the pouch; a split synsepal is not in itself a defect if its effect on the overall appearance of the flower is pleasing. The stem should be proportionately tall and strong, holding the flower well above the foliage. The color of the flower should be clear and definite in well-defined areas and patterns, or harmoniously suffused, according to breeding.

Due to polyploidy, substance in complex *paphiopedilums* is generally heavy, and is now expected as a necessary feature. Texture should be waxy or varnished. Size is based on the overall spread of the flower, with emphasis on the width of the dorsal sepal. The inflorescence should be mature enough to show the full potential of the flower or flowers.

7.1.8 Phalaenopsis

The general form of the flower is toward roundness, fullness, and flatness. The dorsal sepal should tend to be somewhat larger and broader than the lateral sepals. The petals should be broad and flat, filling in the gap between the sepals. The lip will vary according to variety and breeding. The color should be definite and clear. Markings, when present, should be pleasing. The lip should be distinctively marked or colored. Substance should be equal to or greater than the average of the parents.

The size of the flower should be equal to or greater than the geometric mean of the size of the parents. The inflorescence should be gracefully arching with the flowers well-spaced and well displayed according to breeding. The number of flowers will vary according to the species, or breeding. The inflorescence should be mature enough to show the full potential of the flower or flowers.

The General Scale should be used where the flower under consideration does not meet the above criteria.

7.1.9 Pleurothallid

The Pleurothallidinae are extremely diverse, so general criteria for all species and hybrids cannot be given. Some plants, especially members of the section Coccineae of the genus *Masdevallia*, have flowers of striking colors and relatively flat form. Often the sepals are relatively broad in this group, and the desired form is toward fullness and, in some taxa, roundness. In other pleurothallids, the sepals may be very narrow, twisted or otherwise unusual. In addition, the form may be cup-shaped, bowl-shaped, or even tubular. Ideally, the edges of the sepals should not reflex nor should the sepals be asymmetrically twisted, particularly in hybrids. Caudae may be short or elongated, depending on type, and may extend outward or be crossed. What is important is the overall aesthetic appearance of the caudae to the general form of the flower. Caudae and sepals may reflex; however, the generally desired trait is for no (or minimal) reflexing. The prominent parts of the flower are generally the sepals and the sepaline tube. Petals and labella are usually quite insignificant.

Colors are as varied as form in pleurothallids. Some species have brilliant colors while others are quite drab. The color of the flower should be clear. Suffusion of one color over another should be regular and harmonious, not muddy, or blotched. Stripes, spots, or blotches, if present, should be distinct. These should never detract from the overall attractiveness of the flower. Hairs, if present, should enhance the overall appearance of the flower.

The size of the flower in hybrids should be equal to or greater than the geometric mean of the size of the parents. It is critical that vertical, as well as horizontal, spread be recorded, as vertical dimensions are critical in judging size in many species and hybrids. For tubular flowers, floral depth (and/or sepaline tube length) can be useful information. In hybrids, the inflorescence may be erect or not, depending on the ancestral species; although, at all times the scape should be long enough and strong enough to display the flowers well.

Normally, pleurothallids are floriferous, and this should be considered when determining the floriferousness of any plant. Texture of the flowers varies considerably, from glossy to matte, depending on ancestral species. The inflorescence should be mature enough to show the full potential of the flower or flowers.

Pleurothallidinae without caudae and other flowers not matching the above criteria should be judged using the General Scale.

7.1.10 Vanda

The general form of the flower is toward roundness, fullness, and flatness. The dorsal sepal should be as nearly equal to the lateral sepals as possible. The petals should be broad and rounded, as nearly equal to the dorsal sepal as possible, and should fill the gap between the sepals. The lip should be harmonious with the rest of the flower in size and shape, in accordance with the ancestral species. The spur or nectary, if present, should be harmonious and compatible with the ancestral species. The color of the flower should be definite and clear; suffusion of one color over another should be regular and harmonious, not mottled, or muddy. Colored venation, if present, should be definite and distinctive, or in regular lines and patterns. The lip should be distinctively colored. The size of the flower should be equal to or greater than the geometric mean of the size of the parents. Substance should be equal to or greater than the average of the parents.

The inflorescence should be erect or gracefully arched according to parental background, with the flowers well-spaced and well displayed. The number of flowers will vary according to the species or the breeding. The inflorescence should be mature enough to show the full potential of the flower or flowers. Non-Euanthe type hybrids and species should be judged using the General Scale.

7.2 Point Scales for AOS Awards - Flower Quality

The appropriate point scale is used to record the judges' evaluation of various qualities being judged. (Editorial: Click on <https://www.aos.org/AOS/media/forms-for-judging/Score-Sheet-Fillable-11-2022.pdf>.)

7.3 Point Scale for AOS Awards - Other

The following point scales are used for evaluating factors other than flower quality:

7.3.1 Cultural Merit or Excellence

Size and condition of plant	50
Floriferousness	30
Condition of bloom	20
Total Points	100

7.3.2 Horticultural Merit

Flower characteristics		36
Form	(12)	
Color	(12)	
Size	(12)	
Plant characteristics		36
Robustness	(12)	
Condition	(12)	
Floriferousness	(12)	
Other characteristics		28
Aesthetic appeal	(28)	
Total Points		100

7.3.3 Groups of Plants or Cut Flowers Arranged for Effect

This point scale is used for judging exhibits for the AOS Show Trophy and Show Trophy Certificate (paragraphs 6.3.2 and 6.3.3) and for the Gold and Silver Certificates for Groups, Collections or Cut Flower Exhibits (paragraph 6.3.1). For additional information, see paragraph 7.4 Principles of Design.

General arrangement (Design)	35
Balance	
Contrast	
Dominance	
Proportion	
Rhythm Scale	
Quality of flowers	35
Variety	20
Labeling	10
Total Points	100

Evaluation should be based on the following:

- (1) General arrangement (design) of an exhibit should be evaluated using the criteria in paragraph 7.4 Principles of Design.
- (2) Quality of flowers displayed should be scored using the criteria found in paragraph 7.1 Quality and 7.1.1 through 7.1.10.
- (3) Variety should reflect the intent of the exhibit. If it is a specialized exhibition of a single genus or alliance, then color variation, variety of the species or related hybrids, variety in form, or other factors including, possibly, high degrees of uniformity, should be considered. If it is of a general nature, containing many genera, then the numbers and/or types of genera should be considered, or the rarity of species and lesser-known genera balanced against well-known genera, species, and hybrids. The judges should evaluate variety in similar terms as in the principles of design, using balance between the varieties, contrast of types and dominance of any one variety of orchid as guidance. The use of foliage is encouraged and an occasional non-orchid flower(s) that is not a focal point should not disqualify the display.
- (4) Labeling shall be evaluated on completeness, correctness of names, neatness, and legibility to the viewing public. The labels should also be unobtrusive and not detract from the orchid exhibit.

7.3.4 Educational Exhibit	
Educational value	25
Effectiveness of presentation	25
Clarity of labeling explanation	25
Appropriateness and attractiveness of staging	15
Originality	10
Total Points	100

7.3.4.1 For Use with Conservation Displays

Educational value	20
Effectiveness of presentation	20
Adherence to conservation ideals	25
Clarity of labeling explanation	10
Appropriateness and attractiveness of staging	15
Originality	10
Total Points	100

7.3.5 Orchid Arrangements

This point scale is designed to recognize aesthetic skill in the use of orchids rather than horticultural achievement. For additional information, see paragraph 7.4 Principles of Design.

Design	30
Balance	
Contrast	
Dominance	
Proportion	
Rhythm Scale	
Harmony	30
Color	
Texture	
Relation to container	
Conformity to schedule and/or	
suitability of purpose	15
Distinction	10
Originality	10
Condition	5
Total Points	100

7.4 Principles of Design

Design principles are basic art standards based on natural laws. They apply to all forms of art including flower arranging and exhibiting and are the same for all design. These principles are balance, contrast, dominance, proportion, rhythm, and scale.

(1) Balance is visual stability. It is the result of placing equal weight on opposite sides of an imaginary central axis. The axis is always vertical because balance is related to the force of gravity. Balance should be evident when viewed from all sides. Symmetrical balance is repetition of all elements, including space, in opposite directions from the real or imaginary axis. It is attained by having the two sides as nearly alike as possible. Asymmetrical balance is equal visual weight composed of different elements, and in varying directions, about the axis. Visual weight may differ from actual weight. Asymmetrical balance has greater appeal aesthetically than symmetrical balance. There is no rule of achieving this balance. The following appear heavier: dense and bolder forms, larger sizes, darker colors, and coarser textures. Their opposites appear lighter in weight. Forms have more visual weight than closed spaces, closed spaces more than open spaces. Elements higher up in the design and farther away from the axis appear heavier than those nearer the center.

[Top of the Document](#)

(2) Contrast is difference. Contrast is achieved by placing opposites of unlike elements together in such a way as to emphasize difference. Contrast exists only between elements that are related in some manner. Examples: long and short both relate to dimension; light and dark to color; hot and cold to temperature. Contrast whether of size, form, or color, affects design in many ways. It stimulates interest; color contrast helps to distinguish both form and space; on the other hand, contrast of equals divides attention; too much contrast of too many elements results in confusion.

(3) Dominance is the greater force of one kind of element such as more curved lines, more round forms, or more of one hue. This may also be achieved using larger forms or stronger colors. However, the largest amount does not always have the greatest effect or furnish the most interest. For something to be more effective, something else must be less effective. Thus, dominance implies subordination. Subordinate interest can be provided by similar but weaker material or by contrasting material.

(4) Proportion is the relationship of areas and amounts to each other and to the whole. In regard to line, it is relative length; in regard to form or space, it is relative area or volume; in regard to color, it is relative magnitude: the combined effect of hue, value, intensity, and texture. Nothing is too big, too much, or too little. Things are only too big, too much, or too little in relation to something else. Not all proportion is good. Good proportion is the pleasing variation of one form, part, or color to another or to the whole. The golden mean, i.e., the ratio of 1 to 1.6, is pleasing to most people and serves as a good guide for the beginner; however, much greater ratios are often more interesting and distinctive.

(5) Rhythm is a dominant visual path through the design. Rhythm suggests motion. It may be achieved using repetition or gradation in a linear direction. Repetition is achieved by repeating a shape, hue, value, direction, etc. Exact repetition is monotonous, so it should be modified, such as the use of pink for a repetition of red, or a grouping of small round forms for a repetition of a large round form, etc. Gradation is the sequence in which the adjoining parts are similar or harmonious. It implies gradual change: in size, from large to small; in weight, from heavy to light; in texture, from coarse to fine; in color, from dark to light, dull to bright, hue to hue and value to value. Successful design moves by gradation from solidity to thinness or delicacy at the extremities. Rhythm makes a design appear to be alive, rather than at rest.

(6) Scale is the size relationship. It is closely related to proportion. It is a minor principle, because it applies only to one element, the element of size. Repetition and variation of size are always in good scale. Contrast of size may also be in good scale. It is only when contrast of size is too great that components are out of scale.

7.5 Measurement and Description

A uniform standard for measuring and describing awarded plants and flowers is essential in providing useful records with which to compare subsequent cultivars of the same species or breeding. To that end, the following principles must be kept in mind:

1. The purpose of measuring and describing flowers is to provide reference data for judges who are confronted with similar cultivars but who have not seen previously awarded flowers.
2. All measurements should be made without physical damage to the flowers and must be expressed in centimeters (e.g., 0.6 cm, 5.4 cm, 16.0 cm).
3. Photographs and slides provide information to judges and other persons who have occasion to view them in *OrchidPro* or in programs developed for use by affiliated societies, but photographs by themselves do not provide adequate information.
4. The description should be accurate, detailing what features, good and bad, influenced the judges in reaching their decisions and, if applicable, explaining clearly how this cultivar varies from previously awarded cultivars of the species or grex.
5. The description should be sufficiently detailed to be both complete and informative.
6. The description should not repeat information which is included in the measurements or implied by the nature of the award. Terms such as 'larger than average' and 'a large well-grown plant'

are redundant when measurements are also given, or the award is a Certificate of Cultural Excellence or Certificate of Cultural Merit.

7. Standard terminology as defined in Chapter VIII should be used.
8. Since there is no standard terminology for colors, particular attention should be paid to describing colors in precise terms which will be understandable to others.
9. The point scale should be reviewed to make sure that all significant characteristics have been included in the description.
10. Special attention must be given to the descriptions and measurements of orchid species which, by their nature, are small and difficult to describe clearly. This is particularly true where no previous record of the species exists in AOS records since the award will serve as a benchmark for future awards.
11. The responsibility for complete, accurate, and properly written descriptions and measurements rests with the judging team captain.
12. Once the award is entered into the JC program, the recorded measurements and description should be reviewed by the chair of judging or their designate prior to marking the award data as complete to ensure that the information is complete and informative prior to submission.

(Editorial: Click on https://www.aos.org/AOS/media/forms-for-judging/Judging_Entry_Form-2Up.pdf for "Judging Entry Form")

7.5.1 Overall Measurement

Both the horizontal and the vertical dimensions of a flower are recorded. The overall measurement of a flower, referred to as, the natural spread, is that measurement of the natural carriage of the flower in its maximum dimension without flattening or grooming in the horizontal plane. This measurement may be from the tips of the petals, lateral sepals or caudae, whichever is greater.

The vertical measurement is likewise taken without flattening or grooming and at its maximum dimension but in the vertical plane. Often this will be from the tip of the dorsal to an imaginary line drawn across the tips of the lateral sepals or caudae.

7.5.2 Actual Measurements

1. Dorsal sepal width: The dimension when the sepal is flattened into a plane.
2. Dorsal sepal length: The dimension from the point of attachment to the tip along the central vein.
3. Petal width and length: Same as for dorsal sepal.
4. Lateral Sepal width and length: Same as for dorsal sepal. The synsepal is used for paphiopedilums.
5. Lip width: The natural dimension at its widest point.
6. Lip length: The dimension from the point of its attachment to the base of the column or column foot to the tip (or to a line representing the outermost margin of the lip). Spur length is measured from its attachment to the labellum to the tip.
7. Inflorescence (peduncle and rachis) length:
 - a. All inflorescences are measured from the point of emergence from the growth to the end of the terminal flower or bud borne on that inflorescence. Separate measurements can be given for the peduncle (section of the inflorescence beginning at the point of emergence from the growth and ending at the point of attachment of the lowermost flower) and the rachis (section of the inflorescence on which the flowers are borne;

beginning at the point of attachment of the lower most flower and ending at the base of the petiole of the terminal flower or bud) if that is deemed an important feature.

- b. Measurement of a branched inflorescence is based on the peduncle and the primary rachis and is measured from the inflorescence's point of emergence from the growth to the end of the terminal flower or bud borne on the primary rachis. Separate measurements can be given for the branch lengths if that is deemed an important feature.
8. Additional measurements may be necessary for species identification if the flower is submitted to the SITF. These should be recorded on the SITF information form.
 9. If a majority of the judging team desires, minute flower segments under 0.2 cm may be measured as hundredths of a centimeter (2 decimal points). Other components of such descriptions should be comparably accurate.

7.5.3 Description

An award description is made up of various parts, or sections, which together constitute the description. The different sections are separated by semicolons and the description ends with a period. Descriptions may be separated into three sections: 1) description of the vegetative portions of the plant, including cultural condition); 2) description of the inflorescences and flowers; and 3) comments. Not every description includes all three sections. A section may be emphasized, de-emphasized, and/or left out altogether by judges as deemed appropriate.

Ambiguity is a common occurrence in award descriptions. In editing descriptions for publication, it is important to note instances of ambiguity and to eliminate them whenever possible. Sometimes a telephone call to the exhibitor or to a member of the judging team will clear up the problem. If available, reference to the award slide is also helpful in resolving ambiguous descriptions. Unfortunately, it is sometimes necessary to refer a description back to the Judging Center for clarification. This is a time-consuming process, which can result in significant delays in the processing of an award.

7.5.3.1 Sequence

(1) The three principal sections are separated by semicolons and are listed in the following sequence:

1. Vegetative parts and culture
2. Inflorescence(s) and flower(s)
3. Comments

The sequence as listed above is essentially a summary of the sequence used in botanical descriptions and should be adhered to as closely as possible. Since AOS awards descriptions always begin with an enumeration of the number of flowers, buds and inflorescences, there is a long-standing and persistent tendency to describe the flowers before describing vegetative parts and culture. Description of the vegetative parts and culture is most frequently mentioned when describing cultural awards.

(2) The portion of a description which concerns itself with the inflorescences and flowers is itself broken down into subsections. These subsections are also separated by semicolons and follow a strict sequence in *OrchidPro*. In describing the inflorescences and flowers, the sequence proceeds from the general to the specific and from the outer parts of a flower to the inner parts.

(3) Sequence of Floral Parts

This is a list showing the sequence in which the various parts of the description of the inflorescences and flowers are listed in *OrchidPro*.

All GENERA

- Number of Flowers
- Number of Buds
- Number of Inflorescences
- Form-Arrangement-Presentation
- General Flower Color
- Dorsal Sepal
- Petals
- Lateral Sepals or Synsepal Lip*
- Pouch
- Spur (if applicable, belongs with the flower part to which it is attached)
- Column** or Staminode
- Ovary
- Substance Texture

*Includes callus, disk, midlobe, side lobes, and throat where applicable.

**Includes anther cap.

(4) Because orchid flowers are complex both in their morphology and color patterns, sometimes it is not possible to adhere to the above sequence. When two or more floral parts are being described together, they are placed in sequence within that subsection according to the sequence shown above in (3).

Each section or subsection of an award description usually begins with the name of the part being described.

7.5.3.2 Spelling and Preferred Usage

(1) Common spelling errors

CORRECT	INCORRECT
burgundy.....	burgandy
chartreuse	chartruse
crystalline	crystaline
fuchsia.....	fuschia
hirsute	hirsuite
iridescent	irridescent
lavender	lavendar
overlaid.	overlayed
raspberry.....	rasberry
striped.....	stripped
tessellation	tesallation or tesselation
venation.....	veination

(2) Preferred Spelling

USE	INSTEAD OF
apices	apexes
midlobe	mid lobe or mid-lobe

side lobesside-lobes or sidelobes

(3) Table 3. Preferred Usage

USE	INSTEAD OF
anther cap.....	pollen cap
cauda (esp. in Masdevallia)....	tail
caudae.....	tails
color.....	coloration
cultivar.....	variety (horticultural)
dorsal sepal.....	dorsal (meaning dorsal sepal)
inflorescence.....	spike, spray, or stem
lateral sepals.....	ventral sepals
lip (in nearly all genera).....	labellum
margin(s) or edge(s).....	periphery
parentage.....	cross
parts.....	segments or tepals
pendent.....	pendant
pouch (in Paphiopedilum).....	labellum, lip, or slipper
ramicaul(s).....	secondary stem(s) (vegetative growths)
sepaline caudae.....	sepaline tails
staminode (in Paphiopedilum)..	shield
synsepal.....	synsepalum
synsepal (in Paphiopedilum)....	ventral sepal

(5) Words describing color patterns ending in "ing"

USE.....	INSTEAD OF
bars or barred.	barring
blotched.	blotches or blotching
edge(s) or edged or margin(s) or margined... ..	edging
mark(s) or marked (less precise).....	marking(s)
pattern or patterned.....	patterning
spots or spotted.	spotting
stripes or striped	striping
venation, veins or veined.....	veining

7.5.3.3 Colors

(1) Terms describing colors should be carefully chosen to avoid confusion or ambiguity. Amaranth and raspberry are frequent sources of ambiguity.

Amaranth is a wine purple, but sometimes is confused for a yellow-green because the common roadside weed of the genus Amaranth has a peculiar yellow-green color. Also, amaranth is being developed as a minor grain crop which has green to bright yellow seed heads.

There are black, red, pink, and yellow raspberries, depending on the geographic region. Therefore, the use of the word raspberry standing alone should be avoided. Raspberry, followed by the color form, is acceptable.

Certain color terms such as bois de rose, celadon green, cochineal red, garnet lake, madder red, and perilla purple are unfamiliar to most AOS members and should be avoided. Overly specific color terms

should also be avoided. For example, apple green suffices for Granny Smith apple green or Pippin apple green. The suffix 'ish' is colloquial and should not be used. Use green or red rather than greenish or reddish.

(2) Compound color terms are hyphenated according to the following rules.

- A hyphen is used when a color is modified by another color, for example yellow-green, purple-blue, brown-red and rose-red.
- No hyphen is used when a color is modified by a noun, for example grass green, sky blue and brick red.

7.5.3.4 Punctuation and Numbers

(1) Periods

A period marks the end of a description. Therefore, no periods should be used within the body of a description. The various parts of a description should be separated by semicolons. If it is necessary to subdivide within a section or subsection, as with the various parts of the lip, commas should be used.

(2) Hyphens

Hyphens should follow common usage as indicated in a dictionary. Compound words beginning with well (such as well-held or well-presented) are always hyphenated. Compound words formed by combining a color with a color pattern should also be hyphenated, as in red-blotched, pink-spotted, purple-dotted, yellow-picoted, and violet-splashed. Fractions are also hyphenated, as in one-half, two-thirds and three-fifths.

(3) Numbers

Numbers from one through ten are always spelled out in the body of the description. Any number, no matter how large, is always spelled out if it begins a sentence. Numbers larger than ten are written as numbers. Numbers between 21 and 99 are hyphenated when spelled out. Large numbers are not hyphenated when spelled out; however, if a large number contains within it a number between 21 and 99, that part of the number is hyphenated. The word 'and' is not used when writing large numbers.

7.5.3.5 Taxonomic Verification and Descriptions

Any notes provided in the taxonomic verification of an award are to be included in the edited description. Because of the way in which provisional awards are processed, the judging team which writes the description rarely sees the taxonomic verification, which may not be obtained until many months after the award is granted. Such notes are considered part of the description because of their educational value. These should be regarded as comments and placed at the end of the description. The source of the taxonomic notes should be clearly stated along with the name of the taxonomic authority making the identification.

VIII. AN ORCHID JUDGE'S GLOSSARY

The words and phrases below are basic to the rules and regulations of the schedules and point scales. Their definitions have been carefully constructed for use in judging and exhibition.

Accessories: Articles other than the plants or flowers exhibited. Accessories must be subordinate but a part of the whole. Cut foliage and foliage plants, stands and containers, backgrounds, etc., are classed as accessories.

According to variety: The judging of flowers or plants which takes into consideration the potential and limitations of the species and clones from which they stem and the effects of hybridization.

Alba (or album): A term applied to an individual of a species or hybrid the flowers of which are normally colored but which in this instance lack all coloration except white or, occasionally, yellow, or green in combination with white.

Amateur: One who grows their own plants primarily for their pleasure and who does not derive their livelihood or a substantial income therefrom.

Arranged for effect (in schedules): A manner of composing plants or cut flowers primarily to exhibit the horticultural material to best advantage, as well as to contribute to the general beauty of the show.

Arrangement (in schedules): An exhibit in which flowers with or without accessories are grouped to convey an idea. (Contrary to other groups or classes, the living material is of secondary importance to the idea which it expresses.)

Arrangement of inflorescence: The manner in which flowers are displayed upon the stem.

Artistic: Pleasing to the eye; conceived with taste and executed with skill. In award judging: The noncompetitive judging of plants and/or flowers for inherent quality according to established procedures.

Balance (a design principle): Illusion of symmetrical or asymmetrical visual stability.

Blemish: A bruise, spray discoloration, any injury by insects or disease, or any malformation detracting from the appearance of an exhibit.

Bloom: An individual flower.

Botanical (in point scales): A term designating any species or natural hybrid seldom seen in cultivation, the display of which contributes to the dissemination of knowledge of orchids: in schedules, any species or genus of orchids not commonly grown commercially for its flowers.

Botanical variety: A plant in nature having minor characteristics or variations which distinguish it from the typical variety of the species.

Breeder: See hybridizer.

Breeding: The planned production of horticultural forms through selection, crossing and/or hybridizing.

Charm: An intangible quality which gives an exhibit an especially fascinating appeal.

[Top of the Document](#)

Class: The extent of a group of entries in a show established by the show schedule.

Clonal variety: A named individual which is always vegetatively propagated from a clone; a cultivar.

Clone: A plant grown from a single seed and all subsequent vegetative divisions of it.

Cluster: A group of several flowers growing close together on one stem.

Color (in point scales): The hue, clarity, intensity, etc., of coloring in relation to the usual forms; an orderly arrangement of color areas; also, novelty of coloring, if handsome and desirable.

Commercial grower: One who grows plants and/or flowers for sale with or without employed help and derives their livelihood or a substantial income therefrom.

Condition: The physical state of the flower or plant at the time of judging.

Contrast (a design principle): Different characteristics of design elements, such as coarse/smooth, light/dark, short/long.

Cross: The mating of two different orchid clones, whether varieties, species, hybrids, or genera; the progeny from such a mating.

Cultivar: An individual plant in cultivation, including its vegetative propagations and meristem propagations. (Abbreviated as cv.)

Cultivar name: A fancy (that is, non-Latin) name given to an orchid clone and set in single quotes when written or printed.

Cultural perfection: The development of plants in flower to the presumed peak of their potential.

Display: An exhibit of plants and flowers for effect with emphasis on the attractiveness of the grouping.

Disqualify: To remove an entry from consideration for exhibiting or judging because of some defect which is the exhibitor's fault, e.g., not conforming to schedule, use of forbidden accessories, and violation of some rule in the schedule or detriment to the general quality of the show.

Distinction (in point scales): A quality of excellence which places the exhibit above the usual or commonplace.

Dominance (a design principle): Greater impact of some elements thereby subduing others.

Eliminate: To remove from consideration of the judges an entry which for some reason (such as poor condition or lack of beauty) is detrimental to the general quality of the show or is not worthy of consideration.

Exhibit: An entry placed in a show.

Floriferousness: The degree of flower-bearing in relation to the typical.

Foliage (in schedules): Only natural foliage, ferns, and other suitable foliage plants.

Form: The conformation, carriage and proportion of petals, sepals, and lip, according to variety.

Genus (pl. genera): A subdivision of a family, consisting of one or more species which show similar significant characteristics and appear to have a common ancestry.

Geometric mean (of two numbers): The square root of the product of two numbers. Example: The geometric mean of 9 and 4 equals the square root of 36 which equals 6.

Grex: A flock or group, applied collectively to the progeny of a given cross.

Grex name: The fancy (that is, non-Latin) name given to a cross and to all progeny of that cross.

Habit of inflorescence (in point scales): The manner in which the inflorescence is displayed.

Horticultural variety: Any of a cultivated population of a species or interspecific hybrid group having characters by which it merits distinction from others of the same kind. (Same as cultivar.)

Hybrid: The offspring of a cross between two different species, a species and a hybrid, or two hybrids.

Hybrid genus: A category of plants derived from the combination of two or more genera.

Hybridization: The act or process of creating hybrids.

Hybridizer: The firm or individual who originates a cross and produces progeny for distribution, irrespective of ownership of parent plants or agent technically concerned in pollination, germination, etc.; the breeder.

Individual: A single plant, inflorescence, or clone.

Inflorescence: Mode of flower-bearing. (For types of inflorescence, see panicle, raceme, scape, spike and umbel.)

Labeling (in point scales): The identification of the individual plants in a group exhibit by means of suitable cards or tags.

Made-up plant: A number of identical plants growing or placed together in one pot, not to be judged as a specimen plant.

Mericlone: An individual plant produced through meristem tissue culture propagation and treated as a vegetative division of the clone from which it was produced.

Meristem: Undifferentiated, actively growing cells found in certain parts of a plant; to produce individual mericlones by the technique of propagation; a mericlone.

Meritorious: A term applied to an exhibit which possesses distinct individuality and exceptional horticultural, educational, or artistic value.

Naturalistic (in schedules): A type of exhibit in which the material is displayed in a manner which suggests as nearly as possible its natural growth or habitat.

Novelty: A recent introduction, a seedling, or a sport, possessing unexpected but desirable qualities.

Novice class (in schedules): A class in a show in which amateur exhibitors who have not yet won two blue ribbons may enter.

Open class (in schedules): A class in a show open to all exhibitors.

Originality: The quality of being independently conceived or novel but not bizarre or freakish.

Outstanding exhibit: An exhibit that is prominent and striking for its design, quality, and cultural perfection.

Overcrowded: A common fault resulting from the use of too much material, making it impossible to display each plant to its best advantage.

Panicle: A branching raceme, such as in *Gomesa varicosa* (syn. *Oncidium varicosum*).

Private grower: One who employs others to grow or assist in growing their plants but does not derive their livelihood or a substantial income therefrom.

Professional grower: A person who because of education and experience qualifies for horticultural employment and derives their livelihood therefrom.

Proportion (a design principle): Relationship of design areas (including voids) to each other within entire frame of reference.

Provisional award: A conditional award which cannot be certified for publication pending registration of a hybrid, or taxonomic verification of a species or natural hybrid. Previously unawarded, or not identified to the satisfaction of the judging team, species and natural hybrids considered for awards other than CBR or CHM must also be given provisional awards.

Quality: High standard of excellence.

Raceme: An unbranched, elongated inflorescence with pedicellate flowers, as in *Cymbidium*, *Cattleya*, *Odontoglossum*, etc.

Rarity (in point scales): The scarcity of such plants in general cultivation.

Relocation: The act of moving a center or judging site from one location to another. In the AOS context, relocation describes a move from one city, region, state, etc. to another area on an anticipated permanent basis.

Rhythm (a design principle): Presence of continuous visual movement through the design.

Scale (a design principle): Measure of component size to individual design parts.

Scape: A leafless flower stalk arising from below, often with a single flower, as in *Lycaste*.

Seedling: Unless otherwise specified in the schedule, a plant grown from seed and flowering for the first time.

Segment: One of the parts of a leaf, flower or other structure that is cleft or divided.

Semi-alba: A term applied to a white flower that has a colored lip.

Show judging: The judging of plants and/or flowers in competition, either individually or in groups, in accordance with the rules of the show.

Size: The dimension of a flower in relation to the normal for its kind.

Species (singular and plural): A group of plants (or animals) showing intergradation among its individual members and having in common one or more significant characteristics which definitely separate it from any other group.

Specimen (in schedules): A single plant of unusual size and number of flowers for the variety, exhibiting fine culture.

Spike: A usually unbranched, elongated inflorescence of sessile or non-pedicellate flowers. Contrasted with raceme.

Spray: This is not a botanical term (sprays are either racemes or panicles) but may be used in a horticultural sense to imply an arching effect.

Substance: The thickness and firmness of tissue in flowers.

Sweepstakes: Unless otherwise specified in the show schedule, a prize to be given to the exhibitor who receives the greatest number of first prizes or points.

Texture: The surface qualities of a flower which enhance appearance.

Umbel: An inflorescence in which the flower stalks arise from a common point, as in *Cirrhopetalum*.

Variety:

1. A given kind; a plant that varies from the type in one or more important characters. (Also see botanical variety, clonal variety, horticultural variety, and cultivar.)

1. Both as numbers of different genera and variety within one or a few genera. (For use in scoring Groups of Plants, Collection or Cut Flower Exhibits - paragraphs 6.2. 6.4.)

Venue: A locale where an organized event, (single or repeated), takes place (local, city, state, national, international, etc.). Adapted from Wikipedia.

IX. INFORMATIONAL NOTES

9.1 Notes on the Nomenclature of Orchids

The rules of nomenclature, basic for the general information of judges and exhibitors, are detailed in the Handbook on Orchid Nomenclature and Registration. The Handbook on Orchid Nomenclature and Registration has been prepared and published by the International Orchid Commission on Classification, Nomenclature and Registration, and is a practical adaptation of the International Code of Botanical Nomenclature, formulated by the International Botanical Congresses, and the International Code of Nomenclature for Cultivated Plants as formulated by the International Horticultural Congresses. In establishing this set of rules of nomenclature for orchids, certain practices traditional among orchid growers have been retained, even though they may in some degree be at variance with certain technicalities of the International Codes. A current copy of The Handbook on Orchid Nomenclature and Registration should be available at all AOS judging sessions.

The Handbook on Orchid Nomenclature and Registration has been adopted by the AOS, and all its provisions shall be binding upon the AOS in its official actions. The AOS editor may observe and correct any species names not in keeping with current taxonomic practices for use in AOS publications.

9.2 Notes on Registering Orchid Hybrids

In accordance with the recommendations of the International Horticultural Congress, the Third World Orchid Conference and the AOS, the Royal Horticultural Society was approved as the International Authority for the registration of orchid hybrids. Full details on the rules and procedures for the registration of orchid hybrids are to be found in the current Handbook on Orchid Nomenclature and Registration, available from the AOS.

Standard application forms for registering an orchid hybrid may be secured from the International Registration Authority or from the AOS. The application must be filled out and forwarded to the Royal Horticultural Society. The current registration fee must accompany the application. A hybrid cannot be registered until after it has flowered.

The Handbook on Orchid Nomenclature and Registration has been adopted by the AOS, and all its provisions shall be binding upon the AOS in its official actions.

9.3 Photographers' Notice: AOS Use of Official Images

Any photographer who undertakes to execute the official photographs of awarded orchid flowers, by so doing, gives permission to the AOS to use the submitted photographic items for the Society's purposes and programs.

9.4 Guidelines on Orchid Awards Photography

High quality digital image files of awarded orchid flowers and the right of the AOS to use these photographs for its purposes are essential to the proper functioning of the AOS judging system and the carrying out of the AOS's purposes. These pictures provide the only photographic documentation of awarded plants, making possible a comparison of developments in orchid standards over the years; they also provide a basis for the unification of orchid judging standards throughout the vast territory in which AOS judging is conducted.

While it may not be practical to hire a professional to make award photographs, judges, or others

responsible for these pictures should seek the services of the most competent and experienced photographer available. In fact, the serious amateur photographer with a good general knowledge of orchids may produce more satisfactory pictures than the full-fledged professional unfamiliar with his subjects. Before undertaking this important assignment, the newcomer to orchid photography, whether amateur or professional, should carefully study the awards photography guidelines that accompany all AOS judging kits. The photographer might also benefit from studying the books, *Garden Photography* and *Orchid Photography*, and by analyzing some of the outstanding examples of award photography published in *Orchids* and *OrchidPro*. The goal should be to achieve the highest standards of quality in all award photographs.

9.4.1 Equipment

The basic equipment needed for awards photography is a high-quality digital camera with macro capabilities, a sturdy tripod, portable lighting equipment and material suitable for creating neutral backgrounds. A separate light meter may be helpful in some situations as is an adjustable stand for posing the plants and flowers.

A digital single lens reflex camera (DSLR) or electronic view finder camera (EVF) are the most practical for awards photography. Their chief advantage is that composing, focusing, etc., are done directly through the lens that takes the picture. A competently used DSLR equipped with a macro lens or an EVF with suitable close-up range can produce pictures of excellent quality.

Through the lens metering (TTL) is the preferred setting when using flash. It is strongly recommended that photographers do not use the camera's built-in pop-up flash. A separate, external flash that fits the camera's hot shoe will provide far better results, especially if a light modifier is used. The use of an 18 percent gray card can help ensure proper exposure under any light source as well as provide a reference for minor color correction. If a separate handheld meter must be used, incident light measurement will prove to be more reliable than reflected light readings. Since awards photographers usually have only one opportunity to photograph awarded clones, they must be thoroughly familiar with their equipment. The camera's self-timer can be used to minimize camera motion during long exposures.

9.4.2 General Setup

Generally, it is unwise to schedule awards photography outdoors, owing to the impossibility of controlling the environment (sunlight, wind, etc.). Be prepared to select an indoor site, free from drafts and breezes, and preferably somewhat secluded to avoid interference by onlookers. There should be enough room to permit efficient and comfortable working conditions and accommodation of large culture awards. The camera should be tripod-mounted, and the tripod itself should stand on a firm surface for maximum steadiness.

Always avoid background materials having color or texture that may compete or even clash with the flower colors. A medium gray or even a black backdrop of non-reflective material, such as photographer's seamless paper, works very well and will not affect the color rendition of the subjects. No light should be reflected from the brightly colored objects nearby, so that the color tones of the flowers will not be affected. In general, light colors (white, yellow, pastel) are best photographed against dark backgrounds, while very deep reds, purples, etc., are seen to best advantage against a background of medium density.

Again, avoid any background with a definite pattern or distracting colors, such as wallpaper. Always place the subject far enough away from any background to eliminate shadows.

Pose the plant on a table or stand which places the inflorescence at a comfortable working height

appropriate to the camera/tripod elevation. Empty clay flowerpots or wooden baskets make useful plant stands for posing orchids at the proper height or angle. If such props cannot be eliminated from the picture area, camouflage them with a swatch of black velvet, or with some of the same material used for the backdrop. Likewise, remove or hide any plant labels, ties or other items that would distract the viewer's eye.

9.4.3 Lighting

Circumstances (power failure, equipment failure, etc.) may arise in which the photographer has no choice but to use natural sunlight. When shooting color, it is best to avoid the overly warm (reddish) daylight normally encountered during the first two hours after sunrise and the last two hours before sunset. To soften harsh, dark shadows common in sunlit photographs, use one or more reflectors to bounce light back inside the face of the flower. Crinkled aluminum foil spread over cardboard, collapsible light disks, or an 8x10 inch piece of white matte board or foam core all work well. Obviously, outdoor photography demands the most sheltered location possible. Small lens apertures and slow shutter speeds require a motionless subject.

For artificial light, there are three traditional choices: photoflood, quartz-halogen, and strobe. Newer light sources include LED's and daylight-balanced fluorescent. Be certain that the correct white balance (WB) setting is selected for the light source to be used. Conduct tests with any new light source before doing actual award photography. Whenever using existing light, each setup is likely to present its own individual problems requiring step-by-step solutions. Successful flower portraits involve almost the same general lighting principles as good people portraits. The basic light should be placed near (but not on) the camera. A key light of slightly greater intensity is usually placed at a diagonal in the camera plane, off to the side and somewhat above the subject, for modeling. Usually, a third light can be used to great advantage, placed well above and slightly behind the subject, to create a luminous effect and separate it from the background. The use of diffusion material with any light source (and especially with strobes) is highly recommended. Shadow-lines will be softened, the rendition of textural features will be enhanced, and a more pleasing natural effect is produced.

9.4.4 Posing the Flower

The awards photographer's challenge is to capture the features of a plant or flower that led the judging team to grant it an award. The photographer should ask a member of the judging team that granted the award to view the posed picture to assure that the proper flower(s) is being photographed and that the picture will show the plant to its best advantage.

The emphasis must be on photographic technique rather than on artistry. While the judges can examine a flower from any angle, the camera can record it from only one. The selection of viewing angle thus becomes crucial. In most cases the important features of a flower can only be recorded from head on, although in some cases a particular subject may require the photographer to shift his camera a few degrees away from perpendicular (plumb). Proper adjustment of camera height will usually place the flower in proper perspective.

Since orchids are three-dimensional, severe depth of field problems are encountered at close range. By keeping the camera parallel to the major vertical and horizontal planes of a flower, most of its elements can usually be brought into focus. Flower elements that lie outside these planes can then be dealt with by stopping down the lens aperture as necessary (f-16 to f-32 are common settings). Any system of incandescent lighting will generate extreme heat which may wilt the flowers, or worse, burn the plant. It is good practice to place your hand over the plant at the point nearest the light source; if the heat feels uncomfortable, the light is too close.

9.4.5 Shooting the Picture

Always use that highest image quality and size settings that the camera is capable of. Award images must be a minimum of 6 megapixels (2000 x 3000 pixels), larger is preferred. Digital cameras have far more settings than film cameras. Check all of them before shooting any awarded orchids. Particularly, be sure that the camera's white balance is set for the light source being used. Flower portraits should fill the frame as much as possible. First, make certain that you are satisfied with the flower pose, the lighting, the background, the camera settings, and all the other elements of the picture. Next make an initial exposure and carefully study the image on the camera's LCD screen. Look for unnecessary distractions. Is the pot visible? Does the background cover the entire frame? Can you see any labels, tags, ribbons, stakes, etc.? In short, is anything distracting in the picture? Is focus sharp? Correct any problems before committing to final exposures. Even with the ability to somewhat correct exposure with digital image files, it is still a good idea to bracket exposures. Finally, take at least three pictures, one at the nominally correct exposure setting and one at a lower and one at a higher f-stop. The image will look different on a computer monitor than on the camera's LCD. Do not rely on post processing to correct mistakes, get it right the first time!

Award image files should be named using the official award number as it appears on the summary sheet, saved as either TIFF or high-quality JPEG and burned to optical disc to be returned to the chair of the judging center. DO NOT send RAW files to the AOS.

9.4.5.1 Awards Photography Bulletins

The JC may issue interim information bulletins governing awards photography practices and procedures as needed.