ORCHID COUNCIL OF NEW ZEALAND

COMMITTEE ON AWARDS

RESOURCE MANUAL AND SUPPLEMENT TO THE JUDGES HANDBOOK

VERSION 2 (2014)

ORCHID COUNCIL OF NEW ZEALAND

RESOURCE MANUAL

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Note that these genera are listed in alphabetic order and not to indicate their importance within the programme.
In this document, particularly in Part Two, the text in *bold type and italics* indicates wording taken from the Judges Handbook. This is then followed by further explanation.
Entries in blue are linked to the relevant page – clicking on the desired entry will take you directly to the page.

FOREWORD

This manual has been produced as a **supplement** to the Judges Handbook and is intended primarily as a resource tool for trainee judges. All judges, accredited and in training, are expected to be fully conversant with the contents of the Judges Handbook. The objective of this manual is to assist you in gaining a better understanding of the requirements of the OCNZ judging system and we hope that you will find it is a useful tool, a source of information, and a guide to obtaining the knowledge a competent judge should acquire.

Learning about orchids never ends as new species are still being discovered and the proliferation of new hybrids continues unabated. This resource is not intended to be a single volume encyclopaedia on orchid judging. While the exercises included in the previous version have been deleted there is much more learning required than can be included here and whether you are a trainee or accredited judge you are encouraged to make every effort to keep abreast of current trends and new developments. We have included a schedule of reference material sources which should assist in this quest.

The OrchidWiz programme, which is provided by OCNZ for use by all judging groups, has become a veritable orchid encyclopaedia covering many aspects relevant to judging including genera, hybrid registration, cultural and award information. The more recent addition of award information from a number of other international judging systems will provide a much wider range of comparison.
When using this software as a judging or learning tool however you need to be aware that very little of the American Orchid Society award detail has been added since 2009 and as they grant the largest number of awards each year this is a significant omission.
You also need to remember that not all of the photos included are of awarded plants and also that some of the data from some systems (e.g. Brazil) relates to show results rather than those from an award system.

INTRODUCTION

Orchids are considered to be the most highly evolved flowering plants on earth. They are unusual in form, uncommonly beautiful in colour, often powerfully fragrant, intricate in structure, and different from any other family of plants.

According to current estimates there are some 730 genera and 32,000 species. There may be many more that have not yet been discovered and possibly thousands that once lived on earth and are now extinct. Well over 100,000 hybrids have now been created and while most of this has been done in commercial nurseries many special and interesting hybrids of quality have been the result of hybridising by enthusiastic amateurs.

JUDGING OBJECTIVES

The aim of orchid judging is to recognise and acknowledge plants that are exhibiting characteristics of superior quality. In judging an orchid plant the members of the judging team are assessing the plant against their perception of perfection. You need to be aware that as new and superior hybrids are developed our view of theoretical perception may also need to change.
There is also an important relationship with commercial developments and the judging system should take note of hybridising trends and can help these trends to develop by awarding hybrids of maximum quality. For example over recent years there has been a trend towards smaller plants, and the massive Japanese and European move to pot plant styles. Our judging system should be sufficiently flexible to recognise advancement and quality in new developments even where they may not fit the established pattern as defined in the Handbook.

In the past some people have been put off judging by the apparent difficulty, the long training and the apparent mystique engendered by those who have successfully negotiated the necessary hurdles in the way to becoming an accredited judge. It is hoped this publication will help to remove these barriers and encourage more successful growers to become involved with judging.

Trainee Judges comprising both Registered Observers and Associate Judges have an intensive period of training and apprenticeship. The subject is vast, there is much to learn and you may find it will be helpful to prepare a portfolio of the work undertaken during your training which will be helpful reference material at a later date.

All judges should be aware of recent outstanding cultivars awarded by the various international judging systems to provide an appreciation for the modern breeding and commercial trends in orchid hybridising and to be aware of continuing improvements in flower quality.

Candidates for Accreditation should have a well grounded knowledge of orchids and the judging system. You should have sufficient knowledge to present a short talk on specific plants, genera, etc and have the ability to debate a topic. At the end of the training program all trainee judges should have a good understanding of the main orchid genera and the ability to find information about lesser known genera, a thorough grasp of the OCNZ judging system, an awareness of other systems and be able to identify important issues and trends.

JUDGING ETHICS.

Ethical standards are a set of moral ideals for intent and behaviour. Normally they are unwritten and they delineate what is right and wrong, what is and what is not acceptable behaviour. Each judge occupies a position of trust so that all competitors know that their plant will be treated fairly and equitably according to the judging or show rules. By nature we are all different and may therefore have a different perception of when a standard will be breached. To this extent it is better to err on the side of caution and not score the plant than to be the subject of an ethical violation, real or apparent, which could generate bitterness and acrimony on either the accused or the accuser.
There are a number of obvious, and some not so obvious, ethical issues that have to be considered in orchid judging. Some are listed below.

Conflict of interest.
Probably the most obvious but nobody should take part in the judging of their own flowers or plants, but the matter is broader than that. You need to consider carefully whether you should be involved where plants are submitted by a relative, close friend or even enemy.
The owner of a plant to be considered should leave the judging area so that there is no question of the judging process being anything less than impartial. In a show judging situation a panel member should leave the panel while there is a personal interest in any class or genera being judged.

Bias.
Strong personalities can lead the group to their opinion. It is essential that the chairperson of the panel should act promptly to eliminate any such bias. Conversely it is tempting for less experienced (and sometimes experienced) judges to watch the hands of others before showing their vote. This is a trend that individual judges must avoid. You should be able to make up your own mind and vote without waiting to see how the vote appears to be going. This is where voting on paper (award scoring) is generally superior to open hand voting (class judging at shows).

Prejudice
May be termed more severe than bias because it implies that someone has a favourable or unfavourable opinion of a colour, flower characteristic, the plant or the plant owner.

Undue influence and or intimidation,
Both these imply that there is an outside influence on the awarding of a plant. This may not be so obvious at the time of judging but may be conveyed by a casual comment or inflection of the voice at the time of judging. Beware of taking heed of comments like “Look at that flower!” or “Is that award quality!” that are said either overenthusiastically or sarcastically. As a judge you are accredited to make and stand by your own decisions without being influenced by ant other judge or plant owner.

Bribery
Bribery is the opposite extreme of intimidation, and usually is with compensation of goods or services to ensure that a flower/ plant is awarded. The ‘prize’ may take the form of plants, all expenses paid invitations, or more blatantly cash in hand.

Appearance of impropriety
Accurate and quick assessment of a flower is the mark of a competent judge however care must be taken not to give the impression that any flower or plant has been excluded from or given undue consideration. Remember that at all times when you are acting as an OCNZ judge your actions both individually and collectively reflect on the image of the OCNZ.

PART ONE – PROCEDURES FOR AWARD JUDGING

TYPES OF AWARDS

Quality Awards

There are three levels of awards which are given for flower quality. The requirements to achieve these awards are fully outlined elsewhere in this document.
To be recommended for a quality award a plant must receive a mean score calculated as set out in clause 6.1.10 of the Judges Handbook. The mean score will determine the level of award as follows;

Highly Commended Certificate (HCC/OCNZ) for a mean score of 75 or more points.
Award of Merit (AM/OCNZ) for a mean score of 80 or more points.
First Class Certificate (FCC/OCNZ) for a mean score of 90 or more points.

Award of Distinction

This award is given to recognise an unusual feature of a plant which cannot, in the opinion of the judges, be evaluated otherwise in the OCNZ system.
The Award Application must record the specific unique feature for which the award is recommended. For example it may be to recognise a unique colour or a uniquely new inter-generic combination. Uniqueness is the important feature of this award and the judging team should not use it as a sympathy award for a plant that does not quite measure up for a quality award.
No judging form is necessary as no scoring is required. The majority of judges present must approve the award.

Certificate of Botanical Merit

The purpose of this award is to grant recognition **once only** to a species or natural hybrid for which definitive information on form, colour, size and floriferousness in cultivation may not be readily available. The effect of such an award is to provide a base record against which other cultivars may be judged in the future.

The plant must be rare or unusual in cultivation and should be well established and in flower. The owner of the plant may be required to provide evidence of identification before the award can be ratified.
No judging form is necessary as no scoring is required. The majority of judges present must approve the award.

Cultural Awards

These awards are given to recognise cultural expertise and as such are given to honour the grower rather than the plant.

Judges should be cautious not to engage in the endless awarding of large specimen plants of easy to grow species. Where plants are relatively easy to grow to specimen size large plants are to be expected. This is to be considered when assessing the 20 points for 'Difficulty of growing to specimen size'. The points scale is designed to place more emphasis on the difficulty of attaining an outstanding level of culture in the plant being judged.

The Chairperson will ask the panel if a plant should be scored for a cultural award then if anyone nominates the plant it is to be scored according to the relevant scale. Be aware that the provisions of clause 6.1.10 of the bylaws regarding scoring apply to cultural as well as quality awards. A mean score of 80 or more points is required for a CCC award and 90 or more points for a CCE award.

Plant Breeders Award

This award aims to recognise excellence achieved by hybridisers in their breeding programmes. It is to recognise quality, outstanding colour or a new breeding line.

Six different clones from the same seed capsule are to be exhibited at the same time. At least one of these plants must have received an OCNZ quality award, though the award may have been made previously, and the remainder must be near award quality. No cultivar name is required because there is

more than one plant involved but the judging team must record the specific reasons for which the award is granted.
No judging form is necessary as no scoring is required. The majority of judges present must approve the award.

Display Judging

The judging of displays is not part of the OCNZ award structure but is a regular requirement for judges at national or local shows. At national shows which are organised by OCNZ the scoring as set out in Form 3 will apply. It will also apply for any local shows that have not established their own criteria. At local shows the person leading the judging panel should determine from the local Show Marshall what rules are to apply.

Arrangement 25
Presentation, Placement and visibility, Colour, Harmony and Finish
Presentation concerns the way plants are prepared – if they are visible are the pots clean? Are the leaves free from blemish or livestock? Has there been a lot of leaf trimming? Is staking tidy? Has it been done before the blooms have set?
Placement and visibility concerns the way plants are placed in the display – Are the blooms easily seen? Are they placed to their best advantage? Best quality blooms easily seen and accessed? Hidden by foliage? Are small plants obscured by larger?
Colour and harmony also concerns the way plants are placed – Are they grouped by families or colours? Is there a balance in placing plants and colours? Is the arrangement of colours pleasing to the eye?
Finish is about the quality of presentation – Are the pots covered? Are props neatly placed and finished? Do plants have their best side to the viewer? Is there a consistency in the overall presentation?

Effect and Theme 25
Visual impact, Interest, Balance and proportion, Originality
Visual impact is about having the wow factor – Does the display grab your interest and retain it? Is there a theme (not all shows do have one) and how well is it represented?
Balance and proportion refers to the image the display presents – Is the layout well balanced? Is the placement of plants in proportion to their size? Does the use of props overpower the plants? Is the number of plants used in proportion to the size of the display?
Originality is about the design of the display – Does it include fresh ideas? Is there innovative interpretation of the theme?

Quality 40
Freshness and Award Quality.
This section needs careful attention as nearly half the points are allocated to it.
Check that all or the majority of blooms are fresh and lustrous. As in award judging tired blooms will show a lack of substance and texture. Are the blooms pristine? Is there evidence of insect damage or botrytis?
Check out the overall quality of the plants and flowers – are the plants well established? Are they well grown? Are they well flowered? Are they good examples of the grex? What proportion of the display is near or of award quality? If the schedule judging has already been done quality will be evident from the number of certificates on the display but this would not normally be the case so you will need to make these assessments.
.
Visibility, correctness, ease of reading.
The best labels will have correct names and be easily read on a material which is not conspicuous. White labels should be avoided as they tent to overshadow the blooms. The accepted standard for readability is to be clearly read from 2 meters away. Under correctness of the names as well as correct spelling you also need to look at treatment of species names (are they in lower case?) and genera names (are abbreviations used? If so have they been consistently used or is there a mixture with full names?).

Return to TABLE OF CONTENTS

PRESENTATION OF A PLANT FOR AN AWARD APPRAISAL

There are two ways that an award appraisal can be initiated. One is through nomination by a member of a judging panel at a show or seminar and the other is by the owner requesting that a plant be assessed. This could be at a show or at a local judging event. Note that while the owner need not accept an award that has arisen from nomination at a show or seminar, it must be accepted if the appraisal is owner initiated. An appraisal may also be initiated at a club meeting (by a member of a local judging panel or by owner request) and an owner may request their plant be judged at his/her home.

Because you may be approached by another grower about the awarding of a plant you should be aware of the requirements so that you are able to discuss the practicalities of the judging process with the inquirer. This may include an initial observation of the plant to assess suitability.

The Procedures for Award Judging are set out in section 6.1 of the Judges Handbook.

When a plant is presented for award consideration the characteristics and background of the plant must be researched. The leader of the panel may ask you to do the research and present the details to the team or it may be researched and discussed as a joint exercise.
The panel needs to consider such things as the specific qualities of the genus or cultivar, characteristics of the genera, lines of breeding, and similar awards given by OCNZ and other judging systems. If the plant is a hybrid you will need to assess if it is an improvement over the parents involved. Much of this research information can be found using the OrchidWiz programme which is provided for each judging panel.

The standard of awards granted here in New Zealand must be comparable with other Judging Systems to maintain the credibility of the OCNZ judging system.

There are some floral characteristics, which are so undesirable and unacceptable that they should prevent the plant being eligible for award consideration. These characteristics include obvious colour breaks, failure of the flower to open fully, excessive cupping, extreme plane variation, column and staminode twisting, severe twisting or notching of petals or sepals, badly unbalanced dorsal. However at all times due consideration must be given to the inherent characteristics of the genus being assessed as what is unacceptable in one genera may be an attribute in another e.g. some of the New Guinea Dendrobiums.

While discussion about aspects of the plant under consideration prior to appraisal is in order, and can in fact benefit the process, it is essential that no attempt is made by any participant to influence or bias the judging. If you feel at any time that anyone is trying to influence the outcome this should be brought to the attention of the panel leader.

If the panel leader thinks that the plant or inflorescence is not mature enough for best evaluation the exhibitor will be advised to submit the plant again at a later date.

The leader will then ask the judges if they wish to score the plant and any one judge may nominate the plant in which case scoring will take place. If no nomination is received then the plant is deemed to have been judged and of course to have not achieved the minimum score of 75 points. A plant cannot be evaluated more than once on the same blooming.

Return to TABLE OF CONTENTS

COMPLETION OF THE SCORE SHEET (Form 3)

The score sheet has been designed to incorporate all of the award types that require scoring i.e. quality awards, cultural awards and display judging. The Award of Distinction, Certificate of Botanical Merit and Plant Breeders Award do not require scoring.

You should make sure that the score sheet is fully completed and correctly added. Apart from incomplete detail in the heading section of the form the major errors are 1) using the multi flowered scale for a single flowered genus or vice versa and 2) incorrect additions.

You may not feel able to participate in scoring a plant because you are not familiar with the particular genera or do not consider the plant presented is up to standard. Any judge may abstain from scoring at any time without having to give a reason.

When scoring is completed the points of the accredited judges are listed in numerical order and if the range of points is within 6.0 points inclusive the mean (average) score can be calculated. If the range is exceeded the Chairperson announces the range of scores without identifying
All judges have the opportunity to reconsider their score but under no circumstances must a judge feel that they are being pressurised to change their score up or down. It must be remembered however that not changing a score may mean that those at the ends of the range are not included in the final result. This can make a significant difference to the final award score where small groups of judges are involved. Generally it is better to be prepared to review your score where needed so that you can have a say in the final outcome.
If after review the scores are still outside the 6.0 points inclusive band, the Chairperson will calculate the median (the mid-point of the range of scores) and then discard the scores furthest away from the median until the scores remaining fall within the range. The mean is then calculated.
Ideally the judging panel scores should be well clustered around the mid-point of the mean range. Mean scores of 75 and over suffice for an HCC, 80 and over an AM and 90 and over an FCC.

Be aware of differences that occur in other judging systems. In the AOC system 85 points suffices for an FCC. The RHS system has no HCC equivalent.

Return to TABLE OF CONTENTS

COMPLETION OF THE AWARD APPLICATION (Form 4).

The accurate completion of the award documentation is an important function of the judging process. The completed form along with the award photo provides the historical record of the awarded plant. As in most judging systems the Award is subject to final ratification by the COA. Following ratification the award details are provided to the NZ regional panels and annually to the OrchidWiz database.

If the award is to proceed after scoring of the flower, the award application form has to be written up and this should be done as soon as possible after the judging appraisal. This will avoid any deterioration in the flowers which could arise before measuring and describing takes place.
You will find the requirements set out in Section 4 of the Judges handbook.

Owners Details:

This information should be available before the appraisal begins but in a show situation this may not be possible. Note that the name should be recorded as the owner wants it shown on the certificate. The length of ownership is required if the award is for culture.

Plant:

It is important that the details recorded in this area of the form are correct.

You cannot assume that the details on the plant label are right. Any errors should have already been discovered when researching the plant prior to scoring and noted at that time.

Be sure that the Genus name is the currently valid RHS name for the genus as shown in OrchidWiz.

The hybrid grex or species name also needs to be checked with OrchidWiz paying particular attention to hyphens and apostrophes. Note that for other than cultural awards a hybrid grex must be registered with the RHS before the award can proceed.

The cultivar name (or varietal name for a species) may not be available at the time of judging but the name should be included before the application is submitted for approval.

Measurement:

All measurements must be recorded in millimetres (mm).

The **natural spread** is recorded in three measurements.

- Across the petals at their widest part (Not required for Masdevallia & Pleurothalid)
- Across the widest part of the flower that is visible, be it Lip, Petals or Sepals.
- Vertically, from the top to the lowest edge of the flower.

a) Dorsal Sepal

i) Width. Measured without manipulation or damage to the flower at the widest point.

ii) Length. The distance from the point of attachment or confluence to the tip measured along the central vein without manipulation or damage to the flower, including caudae in Masdevallia etc.

b) Ventral or Lateral Sepal - Width and Length measured as for Dorsal Sepal.

c) Petal - Width and length measured as for Dorsal Sepal. Not required for Masdevallia and Pleurothalid.

d) Lip - Width and length measured as for Dorsal Sepal. Not required for Masdevallia and Pleurothalid.

Note *- Spur length is measured from its attachment to the labellum to the tip, and should be recorded separately*

The flower should be measured with callipers covering all the dimensions shown above and recorded in the relevant boxes on the form. Details of Spikes, Flowers and Buds which are recorded in the same section of the form should also be entered at this time. Care needs to be taken not to damage any of the flower segments during the measuring process as the award photograph(s) will not have been taken.

Description:

The importance of correctly describing the flower cannot be over emphasized as this becomes the official record of the award. In writing up a description you must remember that it should always be possible to create a mental picture of the awarded bloom from the description provided without referral to the photo.

Uniform standards in describing awarded plants and flowers are critical to maintaining accurate records for the purpose of comparison. Use of the standard terminology contained in the glossary will assist in maintaining uniformity in recording the characteristics. The description should be brief and accurate explaining clearly why the particular cultivar was recommended for an award. While digital images provide useful information they do not in themselves allow adequate appraisal for a full evaluation.
The following points are provided to give guidance in writing the description.

Form; Include a short descriptive sentence about the shape of each part of the flower, noting in particular features such as is it oval, spatula, concave, convex, reflexing. What are its characteristics; is it frilly edged, tails crossed, does it have an elongated pouch, warts, hairs, side lobes or keels.
Review the points scale to ensure that all significant characteristics have been covered. Mentally break down the flower to individual pieces and make sure that you have included the reasons for the award. For cultural awards this should include the plant size and number of spikes and flowers.

Colour; Particular attention should be paid to describing colours as accurately as possible. If they are available the RHS standards or Gibbon's stamp colour guides should be quoted. Appreciate the depth of colour in the flower. Identify the main colour, the background colour or the overlay colour. Note the clarity, intensity and hue on each of the sepals, petals, lip, lobes and keels. Note any patterns, marking, spots, stripes, and edging, blushing or rendering of colour at the axial parts of the tepals.

Substance; The substance of the flower is the quality of density, thickness or firmness in the segments. This should be noted where it is of better quality than would normally be expected for the plant.

Texture; This is the surface quality of a flower and should be noted if it enhances the appearance. Your comments should state if it is waxy, velvet, wrinkled, smooth, iridescent, glowing, sparkling, crystalline?

General Comments; Note the attractiveness; is it striking or exceptional. Spike presentation; does it stand clear, above foliage, upright. Is there good spacing, symmetrical, arching, straight, strong, self supporting, directional tendency whether pendulous or erect: under, over or clear of foliage.
Avoid describing the bad points of the plant or flower – remember that you are awarding it!

Return to TABLE OF CONTENTS

DISPLAY AND CLASS JUDGING

Display Judging

When show organisers request that a show be judged it normally includes the judging of displays. The display judging is normally undertaken after the class judging but before the judging of quality awards. It is essential that all judges taking part are familiar with the Show schedule as to the specific rules that apply at each show.

Judging of cut flowers or potted plants that are arranged for effect in displays is probably one of the most individual aspects of orchid judging. The design or general arrangement of a display should create a visual impact that is aesthetically pleasing and holds the interest of the viewer. This is achieved by the judicious placing of quality orchid flowers along with foliage (and possibly flowering) plants and the display props to create balance and proportion. Supporting orchid flowers and foliage can be used to create a variation in texture, colour and overall harmony.

Every display should have at least one focal point and larger displays may have more than one. Premium flowers or flowers that are fresh and of award quality rather than the display props should create these focal points. Lines of contrast that take the viewer's eye to these focal points enhance displays. These lines of contrast may be generated by colour (e.g. flowers or shadow) or by different plant foliage textures.
Quality displays will have a sensible ratio of flowers to plants and flowers to props and are well balanced without the display appearing to be lopsided while generating a flowing and harmonising rhythm.
When the show schedule does not specifically exclude the use of flowers that are not orchids the displays should be penalized if the proportion of orchids to other flowers is out of balance. The effective use of foliage plants can add a variety of textures and background that will enhance the display.

The orchids should have clearly written labels that are taxonomically correct and unobtrusive yet can be read by the viewer without moving on to the display. The labelling should not be a distraction or a major eyesore. Look for general tidiness and finish in the display such as finished paint work, the disguising of pots, flower supports, hidden stands, and if material drapes are used that the draping lines are realistic and that strong creases in the drapes are disguised.

Some shows have a theme and how well the theme is interpreted and implemented into the design is the objective judges should look for. The display should normally be able to convey the theme without the excessive use of props that will distract the viewer from the flowers. Where there is no show theme the originality and effect of the underlying display arrangement will be the objective.

Class Judging.

There are a number of differences between award judging and class judging at a show. A large proportion of the OCNZ awards are given to plants displayed at shows which is to be expected when quality plants are assembled in one venue. Be aware however that the show schedules may differ in requirements from the award guidelines and will take precedence where they exist.

Class judging needs a change of emphasis. Award judging focuses on the worth of a single bloom while in class judging the focus shifts to the whole plant. Mental application of the cultural scale rather than the quality scale may be more appropriate in this situation.

The Bylaws relating to show judging are covered in 6.3 while 4.1.4 provides that Associate Judges and Registered Observers may assist in show judging with the approval of the appropriate chairperson. Every opportunity should be taken to be involved as it gives exposure to a greater number of plants and can be a helpful learning experience particularly if trainees can be paired with a competent judge.

Return to TABLE OF CONTENTS

PHOTOGRAPHY OF FLOWERS AND PLANTS

A quality photograph is paramount in maintaining a permanent and accurate visual record of the plant or flower in the Awards System. The guidelines require a photograph of the flower or plant to be submitted with the Award Application form. Photographs must be of a high standard to accurately represent the plant. Out of focus and sub-standard photographs can mean that the award will not be ratified. . It is important to remember at all times that this is part of the official record of the award and therefore **photographic technique is more important than artistry**.

The award photograph is required to be an entire front on image of a single flower on which the award was assessed. The flower portrait should fill the frame as much as possible. To do this while maintaining sharp focus requires a camera with close focus ability and cannot be achieved without the use of a tripod. Cultural awards require the foliage and inflorescences to be shown and where the inflorescence is tall this may require more than one photograph – foliage, flowers and whole plant.

The plant and pot should be clean and any unsightly foliage, labels and stakes removed if they are likely to appear in the photograph. The flower (or plant) being photographed must be positioned as the main focal point, forward looking, attractively positioned to show the flower to the best advantage. The camera should be positioned at right angles to the plane of the flower so petal and sepal sizes are not distorted relative to each other.

A board covered with matt black cloth on one side and sky gray-blue on the other side will make a suitable background. Use whichever side gives a good contrast against the flower – an acceptable result will not be achieved photographing a dark flower against a black background. A very light colour will distract from the flower. The plant should be positioned far enough in front of the backboard to ensure the background is out of focus. Ensure that the background is taut with no creases and there should not be any shadows or bright spots which will be a distraction in the photograph. Some additional background material may be required for larger plants when a whole plant photo is required for a cultural award.

The camera should be on a tripod or fixed stand. This is important to ensure there is no camera shake which will affect the sharpness of the image. While you may be able to achieve a sharp image in a landscape photo a close up is very different. The close proximity to the flower accentuates any movement making the use of a support essential.

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 did film cameras. Be familiar with all of them before shooting any awarded orchids.

Depth of field problems are often encountered at close range but by keeping the camera parallel to the major vertical and horizontal planes of a flower, most segments can usually be brought into focus. Any that lie outside these planes can usually be dealt with by stopping down the lens aperture as necessary (f-16 to f-32 are common settings).

The best results are achieved when your photographs are taken between 10am and 4pm when light conditions are more suitable. Avoid bright sunlight because this will cause harsh shadows and bright spots. A light cloudy day is preferable to bright full sun. If the photograph is being taken outside choose a breeze free position to lessen the chance of movement. A white or light coloured wall adjacent to your subject will give some reflected light on the side of the plant and reduce harsh shadows. A large piece of white cardboard is a suitable alternative. Remember to have the sun behind the camera in relation to the plant being photographed. If using flood lights or other indoor lighting be sure that the camera's white balance is correctly set for the light source being used. It is good practice to take several photographs varying the exposure for each one.

Some faults to be avoided are the background being in focus, shadows or other distractions on the background, shadow on plant, flower not presented or arranged at its best, flower not “front on”, leaves not clean, plant label or stakes showing, loss of colour because of bright light.

Return to TABLE OF CONTENTS

NOMENCLATURE RULES AND REGULATIONS

You need a general knowledge of plant nomenclature, especially that relating to cultivated orchids, to understand the international orchid registration procedures maintained by the Royal Horticultural Society. This will help you to interpret labels that are hard to understand and you will be able to complete an award or plant registration application.

To allow for proper identification every orchid has only one name that is separated into several terms. There are four basic parts to a name: **Generic name**, **Grex epithet**, **Cultivar name** and **Parentage** (unless a species). In human terms these equate to race, surname and christian name.
Detailed examples of format and typography can be found in the International Code of Nomenclature for Cultivated Plants (ICNCP). The ICNCP now supersedes the Handbook on Orchid Nomenclature and Registration.

Generic name. The first term is the generic name specifying the genus the orchid belongs to e.g. Cattleya, Cymbidium, Laelia, Paphiopedilum, Phalaenopsis, etc. It is written in italics with an initial capital letter.
Many hybrids are the result of combining two or more compatible genera to form multigeneric hybrids such as Laeliocattleya. Generally when two or three genera are involved the generic name will be a combination of their names. A manufactured name is used when more genera are involved and these are usually in a latinised form.
Standard abbreviations as defined by the RHS may be used when indicating the genus of any plant, ie. C., Cym., L., Paph., Phal.

Grex epithet. The second term is the grex epithet or name which is used to identify a specific species or hybrid grex. Species and hybrids are treated differently.
Species. Species names always start with a small letter and are written in italics (or a single straight underline). Some species have varietal forms. This indicates that although the plants in question fall within the parameters of the description for the particular species, there may be significant variations sufficient to allow for a varietal section. An example is *Miltonia spectabilis var. Rosea*
Hybrids. Hybrid names always begin with a capital letter and are written in roman type. The form must be a unique name and is governed by certain nomenclature rules detailed in the ICNCP.
An example is *Pleione* Fujiyama 'Teal' where *Pleione* is the generic name, Fujiyama is the grex name, and 'Teal' is the cultivar or clone name.

Cultivar name. This is an individual name normally given by the owner to a specific plant within a hybrid cross, or to an individual plant of a species. It is written in Roman type with an initial Capital letter and is always within 'single' quotes, never "double" quotes. Caution must be exercised that a cultivar name has not previously been used for another plant of that grex or conversely that a different cultivar name is applied to a grex which already has a cultivar name.

Parentage: Every plant, including the species, has parents. The parents of a species will always be from within the same species. This will be either with pollen from a flower on the same plant (called a selfing), or pollen from a different plant of the same species (called a sibling cross).

An unregistered hybrid will have two parents listed, but in an extreme case, four or more may be shown. This will arise when one or more of the parents used has not been registered. Before such a cross can be registered the earlier parental crosses must first be registered.
A plant that has not been registered is still a recognised plant and may be entered as such in any form of judging. If, however, it receives an OCNZ quality award, it must be formally registered with the RHS before the award can be validated. Note that registration is not a prerequisite for a cultural award.
An example of a multiple parent listing is:
Cym. [(Profita x Sensation) x (*devonianum* x *insigne*)] = *Cym.* (Allara x VogelSang) = *Cym*. Maree Porter.
Brackets ( ) are used to designate an unregistered cross. Parentheses [ ] are used to define unregistered crosses where more than one unregistered cross is involved.
If one bloomed this plant as a seedling, and gave it a Cultivar name, the label on the plant could read: *Cym.* Maree Porter 'Waikanae' The cultivar name is unique to this seedling and it is the only grex from the cross on which it can be used. If this cultivar was mericloned it would always carry the name *Cym*. Maree Porter 'Waikanae'

Botanists are famous for their lumping, or splitting, of generic classifications on a regular basis. This

has often been required as knowledge of a particular genera has increased, but many species known and awarded previously as separate species may have been lumped into larger classes or separated into smaller ones e.g. *Laelia purpurata* is now listed as *Cattleya purpurata.*

There have recently been significant changes in generic names within the Cattleya and Oncidium alliances. Many species have been moved to different Genera and a number of new Generic and Intergeneric names have been created. While these changes have been adopted by the RHS and have been updated within OrchidWiz they have not been readily accepted by all authorities.
These changes cause a great deal of confusion as many growers are reluctant to change their plant labels. You will find that plants that are presented for judging can have a label showing either the old or new name. One of the big advantages of OrchidWiz is the inclusion of both versions of the Generic name.

Owners of plants should regularly check the new registrations listed in one of the publications recording newly recorded hybrids such as *The Orchid Review* (RHS publication*)* or *Orchids Australia* (the AOC publication). A record of the registration of all hybrids is available within OrchidWiz.

Return to TABLE OF CONTENTS

REFERENCES – Where to find more information

There is a wealth of information available. New reference books have continued to appear and the internet, through search engines such as Google, has given us the ability to find information on almost any subject very quickly. The three main fields of information which can yield information relating to orchid judging are reference books, magazines and electronic databases.

For many years the hybrid registration data was contained in a series of volumes known as Sanders Register of Orchid Hybrids. For some years the hybrid register has been maintained by the Royal Horticultural Society and the data can be downloaded from the RHS website quarterly in .pdf format. The information from these volumes is now readily accessible from databases such as OrchidWiz or AQPlus.

Books;
There are some excellent encyclopedias available containing lots of information relating to species of most genera. Be aware that while the information in them will be correct at the time of publication subsequent changes in classification and naming makes them less reliable as the time since publication increases. Data on many species will also become less relevant in older publications due to the improvements made through line breeding.
Orchid Society or Town Libraries are likely to have some of these books available. Purchases would be through specialist bookstores or online suppliers such as Amazon.

Some examples of encyclopedia type books are;
Encyclopedia of Cultivated Orchids, Alex Hawkes (1975)
Flora's Orchids, David Banks (2005)
The Illustrated Encyclopedia of Orchids, Alec Pridgeon (1992)
Home Orchid Growing, Rebecca Northern (1950)
The New Encyclopedia of Orchids, Isobyl la Croix (2008)

Additionally there are a number of specialized books available providing in depth information on a single genera or alliance or of the orchids of a country or climatic area.
Some examples are;
The Pictorial Encyclopedia of Oncidium, Chase & Zelenko (2003)
Tropical Slipper Orchids, Harold Kooperwitz (2008)
Dendrobium and Its Relatives, Lavarack & Harris (2006)

There are many books available but some you will find are much more suited as coffee table books than providing suitable judging material.

Magazines;
Some good material can be found here with some articles specifically directed toward judging. They can all be useful and differ on the emphasis they place on different aspects.

Examples are;
Australian Orchid Review – issued bi-monthly, well illustrated and often has in depth articles on new or updated species and genera. Edited by David Banks
CSA Journal – issued quarterly, covers Cymbidium, Paphiopedilum and Phragmipedium. It includes a pictorial record of CSA awards from USA, Japan and NZ. Articles often cover current breeding trends.
Orchid Digest – issued quarterly and well illustrated. This one regularly devotes an issue to an in depth study of a single genus.
Orchids – issued monthly the official journal of the American Orchid Society. A wide subject range and well illustrated including the highest awarded plants from their judging system.
Orchids Australia – issued bi-monthly the official journal of the Australian Orchid Council. Includes a range of articles and club news, has a pictorial record of recent AOC awards and RHS registrations.

Electronic Databases;
Almost anything can be found through a search engine on the internet. Care must be taken however that the information is drawn from reliable sources and accurately portrayed.

OrchidWiz – This programme has developed significantly during the last few years and now appears to be the front runner. OCNZ with the generous assistance of the Orchid Trust Foundation have provided this software for all judging panels and discounted copies have been available from OCNZ for individual purchase. The database contains the RHS registrations and award data and photos from a number of international judging systems. Illustrations are numerous, sometimes overwhelming, and a lot of cultural and habitat information is also included.

When using this software as a judging or learning tool however you need to be aware that very little of the American Orchid Society award detail has been added since 2009 and as they grant the largest number of awards each year this is a significant omission.
You also need to remember that not all of the many photos included are of awarded plants and also that some of the data from overseas systems (e.g. Brazil) relates to show results rather than from an award system.
The current purchase price is $US295 with an annual update plan after the first year of $US90.

AQPlus – Some years ago the AOS replaced their Awards Quarterly publication with an electronic version. Designed for use within their judging programme it contains details and photos of all their awards along with additional information such as their judges handbook and the RHS registrations. The annual subscription is currently $US50 which includes quarterly updates.

Return to TABLE OF CONTENTS

Glossary of Terms

Terms relating to shape:
Surface textures

bullate blistered or puckered.
ceraceous or **cereous** waxy.
coriaceous having a leathery texture.
farinose mealy.
glabrous hairless**.**
hispid bristly.
hirsute hairy.
papillose small bumps or protuberance.
pilose densely haired.
pubescent covered with fine hairs.
rugose a rough or wrinkled surface
tessellation a chequered pattern.
verrucose with a warty or bumpy surface.

Other terms relating to shape

aculeate prickle-shaped.
arcuate curved like a bow.
auricles ear-like lobes, often paired, as on the labellum or column
campanulate or **campanuliform** bell-shaped.
caudate having a 'tail" or narrowed, apical extension, as some sepals and petals
ciliate fringed with cilia or tiny hairs.
clavate club-shaped, thickened towards the apex, sometimes said of some pseudobulbs and pollinia
cordate heart-shaped.
crispate curled.
cristate crested.
cucullate hooded or hood-shaped.
cuneate or **cuneiform** wedge-shaped.
cymibiform boat-shaped.
dentate referring to a toothed margin, the teeth pointing perpendicularly
denticulate minutely toothed.
elliptic ellipse-shaped, oblong with regularly rounded ends.
ensiform: sword-shaped.
falcate sickle-shaped.
fimbriate finely fringed, as the margin of the labellum
flabellate fan-shaped.
hastate: spear or halbert-shaped, with the basal lobes turned outward.
hippocrepiform horseshoe-shaped.
hypochile the basal portion of the labellum in some genera, e.g. Stanhopea
keel a fleshy ridge, as on a labellum.
labellum lip, the median modified petal of an orchid flower.
lamelia raised membranous outgrowths on the labellum
lacerate appearing torn, as the margin of a sepal or petal.
lanceolate lance shaped.
lateral lobes the two lobes on either side of the midlobe of a three lobed labellum
ligulate strap shaped.
lorate thong- or strap-shaped.
lunate half-moon-shaped.
mentum a 'chin' formed by the fusion of the lateral and the column-foot.
mesochile the middle portion of the labellum in some genera
midlobe the middle lobe of a three-lobed labellum, usually brightly coloured and furnished with calli, keels, and or lamellae.
navicular boat-shaped.
obcuneate inversely wedge-shaped.
obovate egg shaped, the broader end in the middle.

ovate egg-shaped, the broader end below the middle
pandurate fiddle-shaped.
pyrsporm pear-shaped.
quadrate square or rectangular.
reclinate turned or bent downward.
recurved curved backward or downward.
reflexed abruptly bent or turned downward or backward.
reniform kidney shaped.
rostellum part of the median stigma lobe of orchid flowers
rostrate beaked.
sagittate arrow-head-shaped.
staminode a sterile stamen
stellate star-shaped.
subulate awl-shaped.
triquetrous three-angled; three-winged.
trullate trowel-shaped.
truncate with one end squared off.
tubercle a small, wart like protrusion, as on the callus on an Oncidium flower
uncinate hook shaped.
undulate wavy, as the margin of a sepal or petal
valvate margins of sepals or petals not over lapping.

Terms relating to floral parts:

anther the pollen-bearing portion of the stamen.
bursicle the pouch like expansion of the stigma into which the caudicle of the pollinarium is inserted.
capitate appearing in heads, as some inflorescences
capitulum a dense head of flowers
caudicle extensions of tissue derived from the anther and connected to pollinia.
claw a long and narrowed basal portion of a sepal or petal (including labellum)
clinandrium the portion of the column that supports the anther
column the organ of the orchid flower representing the fusion of stamens, styles, and stigmas.
column-foot a basal extension of the column to which the labellum is attached, often flexibly.
column wings paired protuberances or winglike flanges on the column
corymbose a broad flat topped inflorescence in which the outermost flowers open first
disc an elevated region of the labellum, usually the midlobe, distinguished by colour and / or accessory features such as calii, keels, or lamellae
epichile the apical portion of the labellum in some orchid genera, e.g. stanhopea
galea a hood or “helmet” formed by the dorsal sepal or fusion of dorsal sepal and petals in some orchids.
i**mperfect** in flowers, having only male or female parts; unisexual
labellum The lower central petal of orchid flowers, usually developed to attract pollinators
non-resupinate referring to orchid flowers which do not twist 180 degrees during development or which twist a full 360 degrees, with the result that the labellum is uppermost
osmophore a gland, usually floral, which produces fragrances that attract pollinators
ovary the part of the pistil which contains ovules
ovule the unit of the ovary which contains the egg cell and becomes the seed
perfect in flowers, having both male and female parts; bisexual
perianth the sepals and petals of a flower.
petal the whorl of flower parts just inside the sepals, usually colourful, the median petal of orchids, the labellum, is often differentiated in form and or function.
pistil the female portion of the flower consisting of the stigma, style, and ovary with ovules.
pollinarium a functional unit in orchid pollination, consisting of two or more pollinia, stalk or stipe, and viscidium.
pollinium a mass of pollen grains.
resupinate referring to orchid flowers which twist through 180 degrees during development with the result that the labellum is upper most.
sectile referring to pollinia in loosely coherent packets.
sepal the outermost whorl of flower parts.
speculum the shiny, coloured region of the labellum region as in some *ophrys* species.
spur saccate or tubular extension of the labellum (or other floral parts) in many orchid species often bearing nectar.
stamen the male portion of the flower, consisting of the pollen-bearing anther and filament.
stelidia column teeth.
stigma that portion of the pistil that receives the pollen

stipe	the stalk connecting the pollinia and viscidium in a pollinarium
syle	the elongate portion of the pistil between stigma and ovary
synsepal	a floral part formed by the partial or complete fusion of two or more sepals terete pencil-like; round in cross-section
viscidium	the sticky portion of the rostellum which is connected to the pollinia

Terms relating to colour pattern descriptions

banded	Distinctive horizontal stripes of one colour over an other
blotched	Colour disposed in broad, large irregular blotches
bordered	As edged but surrounding colour broader
candy striped	Normally red striped on a white background
diaphanous	permitting the light to shine through.
discoidal	Where a large spot of one colour is in the centre of a different colour
dots	Colour disposed in very small round spots
edged	A very narrow band on the edge of the petal/sepal
enamel	Very shiny appearance
hyaline	colourless or translucent.
maculation	spotting or marking.
marbled	As veined but edges further blurred
ocellated	Where a large spot of one colour has another spot of a different colour
painted	Colours are dispersed in streaks of unequal intensity
pellucid	wholly or partially transparent.
peloric	Lateral petals mutated to resemble the lip
picotee	Ornamental edging around the rims of the petals
polychrome	Having as many as six or seven different colours.
pure colour	No red pigments in the flower
spotted	Colour disposed in small spots
splashed	Two toned petals, sepals normally single toned
striped	Distinctive transverse stripes of one colour over an other
tessellated	Distinctive colour arranged in small squares.
variegated	Colour disposed in various irregular sinuous spaces
veined	Distinctive irregular veins on the surface
vini colour	Deep purple almost black
waterfall	Colour pattern imitating a waterfall on the labellum as found in Miltoniopsis
zoned	Same as Discoidal but with concentric bands more numerous

Terms relating to the Inflorescence

axil	the angle formed by a petiole and stem or, on an inflorescence, pedicel and rachis.
basal	flower at the base of an organ or part such as the stem or pseudobulb.
cymose	a broad divaricately branched inflorescence, of determinate or centrifugal type.
heteranthous	an apical inflorescence produced on a separate shoot which does not develop to produce a pseudobulb and leaves.
hysteranthous	used of an apical inflorescence produced after the pseudobulbs and leaves have developed.
panicle	a branched raceme.
pedicel	the stalk of an individual flower in an inflorescence
peduncle	the stalk of a solitary flower or an entire inflorescence
proteranthous	of an apical inflorescence produced before the pseudobulbs and leaves on the same shoot.
raceme	an unbranched inflorescence of stalked flowers
rachis	that portion of an inflorescence, above the peduncle, bearing flowers
scape	a leafless peduncle: commonly, the leafless stalk of an entire inflorescence
spathe	a bract surrounding or subtending an inflorescence
umbel	a more or less flat topped inflorescence in which the pedicels arise from the same point, much like an umbrella
unguiculate	having a claw; commonly said of a perianth segment

Terms relating to plant habit

acuminate	referring to an apex (leaf, sepal, etc.) which tapers to a fine point.
acute	referring to an apex that is broadly tapered.
bifid	two-lobed.
bifoliate	two-leafed.
bract	a leaflike organ.
canaliculate	channelled with a longitudinal groove.
distichous	in two ranks or rows on opposite sides of an axis

entire smooth and continuous; said of the margin of a leaf or leaflike organ
equitant with leaves overlapping and arranged in two ranks or rows
erose referring to the irregular margin of a leaf or leaflike organ which appears to have been chewed.
flexuose: bent alternately in opposite directions.
fusiform spindle-shaped, as some pseudobulbs
glomerate densely clustered.
internode the region of an axis between two successive nodes
lamina the blade (of a leaf, sepal, petal etc.).
monopodial referring to a growth habit which new leaves develop from the same meristem or growing point.
node the region on an axis (stem, rhizome etc.) to which other plant parts eg. leaves are attached
oblanceolate tapering towards the base more than towards the apex.
petiole the stalk of a leaf.
pseudobulb the variously thickened portion of an orchid stem
ramicaul the leafy stem of some sympodial orchids such as those in subtribe Pleurothallidinae; distinguished from the rhizome.
retuse notched at the apex of a leaf or flower part
rhizome the indeterminate axis of many plants (such as svmpodial orchids) which successively gives rise to new shoots and flowers; often horizontal and may be underground but not necessarily.
subequitant (leaves) half folded sharply in. the midrib.
sulcate furrowed lengthwise, such as pseudobulbs.
sympodial referring to a growth habit in which new shoots arise successively from auxilliary buds of a rhizome
terete circular in transverse section, cylindrical and usually tapering.
tuber a thickened, usually underground storage organ consisting of stem tissues; commonly ascribed (incorrectly) to orchids
tuberoid a thickened, underground storage organ with stem and root tissues
unifoliate one leafed.

General Terms

acranthos applied to a sympodium with a main axis of annual portions of successive axes, each beginning with leaf scales, and ending with an inflorescence.
adnation fusion of unlike parts, e.g. labellum with column; contrasted with connation.
angulate more or less angular.
applanate flattened out or horizontally expanded.
appressed lying flat for the whole length of the organ.
aristate Having a long bristle at its apex.
apicule a short, sharp point.
bifurcate forked.
caespitose tufted; growing in small clumps.
callus a waxy or fleshy protuberance, as on a labellum
capsule a dry fruit splitting along one or more sutures; the fruit type in the orchid family
cataphyll scale-like leaf, as on a rhizome or base of a stem
cauline borne on the stem.
conduplicate folded once longitudinally down the middle
connation fusion of like parts, e.g. sepal with sepal; contrasted with adnation
conspecific belonging to the same species.
crenate scalloped, toothed with crenatures.
crenulate: crenate, but the toothings themselves small.
cuspidate tipped with a sharp, rigid point.
deflexed bent backward or downwards.
divaricate extremely divergent.
echinate having prickles, as some orchid ovaries and capsules
emarginate notched, usually at the apex.
epiphyte a plant growing on another.
fasciculate clustered or bundled.
foliaceous leaflike.
fugacious withering away early; ephemeral.
furfuraceous scurfy, having soft scales.
glaucous covered with a bluish-grey or sea green bloom
gyrose curved backward and forward in turn.
hamate hooked at the tip.
imbricate overlapping, as the scales on a snake
intergeneric the result of crossing plants from two or more distinct genera
intrageneric the result of crossing two plants within the same genus.

keikei	a vegetative offshoot formed at a node, as on an inflorescence.
linear	at least 12 times longer than broad, with the sides parallel.
lithophyte	a plant which grows on rocks.
meristem	in plants, undifferentiated tissue which retains the ability to provide new cells.
mucronate	having a sharp terminal point
multicostata	many-ribbed.
muricate	rough, with short and hard tubercular excrescence.
nervose	prominently nerved
obligate	restricted to a particular way of life.
obtuse	blunt or rounded at the apex.
orbicular	circular, spherical.
paleaceous	chaffy.
papillae	a rounded projection from a portion of an epidermal cell, a small bump or protuberance.
peltate	disc-shaped, the stalk arising from the undersurface.
pendent	hanging.
plicate	folded or pleated.
plueicostate	many ribbed.
plurisulcate	many grooved or furrowed.
porate	set with pores.
porrect	directed outward and forward.
praemorse	bitten off at the apex.
protocorm	the embryo before primary differentiation is complete.
reticulate	netted.
retrorse	directed backward or downward.
retuse	shallowly notched at a rounded apex.
revolute	rolled back from the margin.
rosulate	in rosettes.
rotund	rounded in outline.
saccate	with a conspicuous hollow swelling.
saprophyte	a plant which derives nourishment, in whole or in part, from dead organic material.
scarious	dry and papery, often said of bracts.
secund	to one side, as flowers on an inflorescence.
septate	divided by partitions.
septum	a partition.
serrate	referring to a toothed margin, the teeth pointing forward
sessile	lacking a stalk.
setaceous	thread- or bristle-like.
setose	bristly.
spicule	a small, sharp point.
subcylindric	half cylindrical.
subspreading	half or somewhat having a outward direction.
subquadrate	half square, somewhat square.
subsimilar	somewhat similar.
subtend	to insert below, as a bract below a flower.
trichome	a plant hair.
tridactylate	literally, three fingered, with three narrow lobes.
trifid	three cleft.
velamen	the outermost tissue of roots of many orchids, dead at maturity and capable of absorption and short-term storage of water and nutrients.

Return to TABLE OF CONTENTS

PART TWO - KNOWLEDGE OF GENERA

FLOWER CHARACTERISTICS

The Principles of Award Judging advise that *the Council system of judging is designed to recognise new or superior forms of orchid species and to reward lines of hybridisation leading to improvement in flower form and colour in all genera. Recognition is also to be given to growers who exhibit plants that evidence superior culture. Ideally these two elements should provide the foundation of all judging decisions.*

To achieve this objective it is necessary to have a good understanding of the species used in hybridising as well the parents of any particular hybrid. Much of this information will be learned by experience but the subject is so extensive that no one can be expected to absorb or keep up to date with it all. The important thing then is to know where to find the information.
Judges must also be familiar with the dominant features transferred by the species and hybrids and the reasonable expectation of breeding lines. This will enable you to decide whether the hybridiser's goals have been achieved and whether in the judge's eye an award is merited.

Accredited judges must have a well-developed concept of perfect flower form for any particular genera and understand the optimum standard of cultivation that plant can achieve. Only then can they then appraise complex hybrids against their own concept of theoretical perfection. When a plant is being considered both elements should be considered, though in varying degrees depending on the type of award being considered.

In the process of scoring a plant or flower you are making an assessment of how well the subject compares with your mental picture of what a perfect flower of that cultivar would be. To be worthy of an award the plant should be outstanding for its type in as many characteristics as possible.
Bi-generic and multi-generic crosses should show an improvement which is greater than the expected average from the combination of their parents. Characteristics of species in recent parentage should always be taken into account.

Plants should project indefinable qualities of charm, attractiveness and personality. The effect may be due to unusual colour combinations, flamboyant lip patterns, unique flower carriage, non-traditional flower form, evenness of spike or flower grouping. These and other eye-catching qualities should encourage judges to score plants highly.

Form (shape of a flower)
A flower presented for judging must be mature or set. The flower form should be balanced and symmetrical, both are essential for quality of form. A vertical line drawn through the flower should bisect the flower into two symmetrical halves giving a mirror image. Slight asymmetry may not preclude an award but should always result in a lower score. Twisting, reflexing and other distortions, if not natural to the genus, should be penalised. Where a species occurs in the recent parentage consideration must be given to the effect that the species may have on the progeny.
The shape of Complex hybrids should approach a full round or oval circle completely filled in. There should be no light showing between the flower parts particularly near the base of the column. The ideal flower should be flat, without excessive cupping or reflexing. When flat flowers are viewed from the side the petals should be held close to the plane of the dorsal sepal. At all times consideration must be given to the dominant gene characteristics in the background breeding of the flower.

While the following comments refer more particularly to complex hybrids, with due consideration to the parentage involved, they apply to all flowers;

Sepals should be broad and fill in the gap between the petals and the lip. They should form an equilateral triangle apart except in plants where there is a synsepal. If the edges of the sepals are wavy this should be even.
The **Dorsal Sepal** should be large, full and round with the size in proportion to the rest of the flower. It should be flat to slightly concave and except where it is a characteristic of the genus there should not be reflexing.

The **Ventral Sepals** should form a background to the lip or pouch and extend low enough to give a balanced appearance. In Paphiopedilums the top of the ventral sepal should overlap the bottom of the dorsal sepal when viewed from the back.

Petals should form an inverted equilateral triangle with the lip when viewed from the front which is a opposite of that formed by the sepals. Generally reflexing of the petals is a fault but the species characteristics could have an effect. If the petal edges are undulating this should be even. Notches in the petal edges are undesirable and should be penalised when obtrusive.

Labellum (Lip or Pouch) should be proportionate to the size of the rest of the flower. In most examples it will be closed towards the base and more or less rolled around the column. It should be held in such a way that it gives balance and beauty to the form of the flower. All shapes are acceptable but when viewed from the side, the lip should curve down and not jut out at right angles to the plane of the other segments. If the edge of the lip is wavy this should be even. Where the lip has side lobes these should enhance the appearance of the lip in proportion to the whole flower.

Colour

The flower colour should be definite, clear, bright and strong, and evenly dispersed throughout the petals and sepals without *washing out* at the mid veins. Bright, fresh, glistening colours are highly desirable and should be given recognition. The lip colour needs to be considered separately in evaluation of the general colour and appearance of the flower to see if it contrasts, complements or is consistent with the general colour.

We each have our own colour preferences but we must take care that we do not let our preferences or prejudices influence our colour appraisal.

Markings, stripes and shadings should be well defined, distinct and distributed to enhance the colour appearance of the flower. They may create symmetrical patterns or show regular lines or patterns, which enhance the style of the flower. Suffusion of one colour over another should be regular and harmonious. Improperly distributed colour should be avoided but polychromes and mottled colours must not be automatically discarded. Irregular spotting which is characteristic of many genera in the Oncidium alliance should not be unduly penalised. Sepal staining or pigmentation on the back of the sepals due to excessive light during the bud stage, should be penalised only if it gives an undesirable appearance.

Judging should preferably be carried out in daylight, avoiding light within 2 hours of sunrise or sunset, as this enhances the red hue. The light should be coming over your shoulder, leaving back and side lighting to the ‘effects’ people.

Different types of artificial light will affect the flower colours. Fluorescent lights give a green tinge while incandescent lights give an orange tinge. These effects also need to be remembered when taking the award photograph.

Size.

The guidelines are designed to reward size on the basis that bigger is better. This was appropriate when the guidelines were first developed and in general it still is particularly for standard complex hybrids. However for some years hybridisers have sought to produce miniature or intermediate plants in a number of genera and this trend is continuing. No doubt this has partly been driven by increasing heating costs and customer demands to grow more plants in a finite area.
Flower size in these plants will not reach that of the standard versions. Because there are usually fewer generations involved it is much more important that parentage is taken into account in assessing the points for size.

The size, floriferousness and substance to be expected in hybrids, particularly primary hybrids, will be the geometrical mean rather than the average of the two parents. Most hybridisers have noted that if a small flower is crossed with a large flower the progeny always seems to be nearer to the features of the smaller parent.

As an example when *Cym. suave* (20 mm) is crossed with a large flowered Cymbidium hybrid

(100mm) the resultant flower size would be closer to 44 mm than 60mm.
It should be noted however that the presence of polyploidy could distort these ratios.

Arithmetical mean	(20+100)/2	= 60 mm
Whereas Geometrical mean	√20 X 100	= 44 mm

Substance

This is the thickness and turgidity of the flower tissue and should be sufficient to hold the petals and sepals firm and in place. You should be aware that light shining from behind the flower could give the appearance of reduced substance.

Texture

This is the surface appearance of the flower tissue. Good texture is a desirable feature that will enhances its appearance. The flower may appear crystalline like dusted sugar crystals or be like patent leather depending on its parentage.
Generally the flower should be of refined quality, firm, fresh, lustrous and without blemish.

Floriferousness

It is desirable that 75% of the flowers on the inflorescence to be judged should be open. This is particularly important in genera that are prone to fading species and hybrids. It does not apply to any of the sequential flowering genera as in some of the multi-floral Paphiopedilum. Sequential flowering genera should be judged when the spike is fresh. The flower count should be comparable with that which could be expected from the parentage.

Where a species or hybrid is normally expected to produce only one, or in exceptional circumstances, two flowers on its inflorescence, then the plant should be judged under the Single Flower Point Scale. These plants should not be unfairly penalised where this is their normal characteristic.
Although there are times when a plant with one flower will be judged, you need to be aware that the number of flowers on a stem, and the number of stems carried by the plant, can have an effect on the flower size.
As with many other factors the flower count should be in keeping with what could be expected from the parentage.

Flower Habit and Arrangement.

The stem should be straight or gently arching, strong and long enough to lift the flower(s) out of the foliage and display the flowers in a pleasing manner. It should be able to support and hold the flower upright and should not be skewed, at an unnatural angle, twisted or distorted. In general flowers should be well spaced on the inflorescence and not bunched. They should either all face approximately in the same direction or be well spaced around the spike giving an overall cylindrical shape such as is seen in pendulous miniature Cymbidiums.

Return to TABLE OF CONTENTS

Cattleya Alliance (Standard)

The modern standard Cattleya is the full round circumscribed circle form typified by the labiata or exhibition type. After many generations large lavender and white cattleya approached perfection in the later 20th century. Subsequent breeding has brought improvement in the form of other colour varieties as well as increases in the colour range. The standard of yellow flowers is now close to that of the lavenders.
Hybridising over more recent years has also seen advances in hybrids with intermediate or miniature flowers of standard shape and these are also considered here. Because of this when considering size we must forget that "bigger is best" and be fully aware of the expectations from the parentage involved.

The name is in honour of William Cattley, an early English orchid enthusiast, who was the first to flower the plants in Europe.

Form

The flower should be tending to fullness and roundness. A circumscribed circle, drawn with the column base as the centre, should touch the petal and sepal tips and the lower lip margin. The flower parts should fill the greater part of the interior of the circle.
Within the circle the segments should form two nearly equilateral triangles - one formed by the sepals and the other inverted formed by the petals and the lip. Crippling can still be a problem with large flowered yellows and seems to increase in severity with the age of the plant.

The ventral sepals should be broad and fill the gap between the petals and the lip.
Symmetry is important here and the tips if the sepals should form an equilateral triangle. The sepals should be broad and flat and preferably straight with a minimum of reflexing at the tips. Twisting and recurving are not acceptable. The dorsal may cup forward slightly.

The petals should be relatively wide, balanced, frilled or undulated at the margins according to the breeding but must not fall forward.
The midrib should not be prominent with no be lateral reflexing from the midrib. The petals may overlap across the dorsal sepal but their size should be in balance with the other segments.

The lip should be proportionate to the petals, closed towards the base and more or less rolled around the column.
This is a major part of the flower and will vary somewhat depending on the background. It should always be symmetrical but may be crisped or frilled trumpet or isthmus. The lip should be in proportion to the size of the petals and most will have a lip about the same size as the petals. Rhyncholaelia influence will generally produce lips larger than the petals. Note that the coccinea lip is a narrow one and this can show up in hybrids.

The 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 sepals.
There will be some variation in the angle of the lip depending on the breeding involved.
When checking the flower for flatness watch for rolling back of the edges of the sepals.

Colour

Flower colour should be clear and bright, evenly dispersed throughout and not 'washed out' at the petal midrib.
The intensity of colour will be determined by genetic composition. If the colour is a new or unexpected hue or intensity it should be attractive and distinctive enough to be considered an improvement over that expect from the cross. Any blotchiness, missing colour or muddiness is not acceptable and should be penalised.
The hue should not be broken or splashed except where it is well defined and pleasing to the general effect.
Where patterns or splashing are present they should complement and enhance the general colour of the flower.

Lip markings, particularly edging, should be well defined and in a symmetrical pattern.
The lip will generally be more prominently and richly coloured than other segments but may be blending or pleasantly contrasting. Colour breaks or muddiness should be penalised.

Substance and texture

Heavy waxy substance and crystalline texture are qualities sought.
Good substance is now expected as a standard through polyploidy forms. The texture should generally be sparkling and crystalline or velvety. Any dullness in the surface texture would usually indicate that the flower has aged.

Balance, proportion and arrangement of inflorescence

The stem should be strong and upright, displaying the flowers without crossing, crowding, twisting or distortion.
A strong upright stem is necessary to display the flowers to their best advantage and should be clear of the foliage to avoid crowding.

Floriferousness

The number of flowers expected will vary according to the parentage.
Floriferousness is closely related to parental background and the size of flowers. While cattleyas with one exceptional flower may be judged there should be two or more flowers to be considered. A single flowered species in recent parentage (i.e. C. *coccinea* or *pumila*) will influence this.

Return to TABLE OF CONTENTS

Cattleya Alliance (Modern & Other)

The Cattleya Alliance is a vast, diverse and complex group of orchids with many variations in plant habit and flower form, colour and size. In the previous section we discussed those plants with flowers of classic *labiata* or exhibition shape regardless of actual flower size. Here we discuss all those that do not fit into that category.
Many of the plants considered here are of more recent origin than the *C.labiata* types and consequently awareness of the characteristics of the background species assumes greater importance.

Form

Flowers should be well proportioned and where appropriate uniform in shape. The overall impression of the flower shape must be pleasing.
The segments should form two nearly equilateral triangles - one formed by the sepals and the other inverted formed by the petals and the lip. Because of diversity within the group not all flowers may fit this criteria. Those that do not should still have an overall symmetry and pleasing appearance. Petals should be as flat and full as their genetic background will allow.

Colour

Flower colour should be clear and bright and evenly dispersed throughout. Colour patterns or a mixture or suffusion of strong colours should combine to produce a pleasing effect.
A greater range of colours with more pronounced variations or markings can be expected. If the colour is a new or unexpected hue or intensity it should be attractive and distinctive enough to be considered an improvement over that expect from the cross. Any blotchiness, missing colour or muddiness is not acceptable and should be penalised.
Where patterns or splashing are present they should complement and enhance the general colour of the flower.
The lip will generally be more prominently and richly coloured than other segments but may be blending or pleasantly contrasting. Colour breaks or muddiness should be penalised.

Substance and texture

Heavy waxy substance and sparkling crystalline texture are important features.
Substance and texture can vary considerably according to the species involved.
In general substance should be heavier than *labiata* type cattleyas.
Texture may be glossy (e.g. hybrids with *C. guttata),* leathery (e.g hybrids with *C. bicolor*), satiny (e.g. hybrids with *C. walkeriana*) or anywhere in between
It may be appropriate not to heavily penalise flowers lacking these qualities where the breeding lines are incapable of providing them.

Balance, proportion and arrangement of inflorescence

The stem should display the flowers in a pleasing manner, clear of the foliage.
A strong upright stem is necessary to display the flowers to their best advantage and should be clear of the foliage to avoid crowding. This is particularly important with multi-flowered bifoliates involving species such as *Gur. bowringiana* or *C. guttata*

Floriferousness

The flower count should be comparable with what could be expected from the parentage. Multiple spiking may be rewarded here where this is expected and is not merely due to the plant being of a specimen size.
Floriferousness is closely related to parental background and size of flowers. It is important to keep parentage in mind when evaluating floriferousness as some hybrids, particularly the bifoliate cattleyas, can be expected to have a much greater flower count than hybrids involving say *C. coccinea* or *C. aclandiae*.

Return to TABLE OF CONTENTS

Cymbidium (Standard)

Cymbidiums are probably the best known of the orchid genera. They have been the backbone of the commercial orchid industry for many years, most orchid growers have them in their collection and they are still what are most commonly referred to as an orchid by the general public. Because of this it is important that we as judges do not adopt a blasé attitude and treat them as common.

The Handbook states that any Cymbidium may be judged including cut spikes. The entire spike being judged should be free of any major flower blemishes. If there is more than one spike on the plant being considered the best spike is to be selected and from that spike one flower will be designated for the determination of form and colour. When cut spikes are being considered there should be sufficient stem below the lowest flower to indicate clearance of the foliage.

For the purposes of clarification the following are defined as large flowered Cymbidium species.

1. *Cymbidium erythrostylum*
2. *Cymbidium sanderae (formerly parishii 'Sanderae')*
3. *Cymbidium lowianum*
4. *Cymbidium hookerianum (formerly grandiflorum)*
5. *Cymbidium iridiodes (formerly giganteum)*
6. *Cymbidium eburneum*
7. *Cymbidium tracyanum*
8. *Cymbidium insigne*

The generic name comes from the Greek word ”kymbe" a boat, referring to the boat like shape of the lip.

Form

The flower should be tending to fullness and roundness. Some fine cultivars have a more open star-like appearance; other good forms may be slightly cupped. Excessive cupping is a fault.

Within the circle the segments should form two nearly equilateral triangles - one formed by the sepals and the other inverted and formed by the petals and the lip. Appearance will be governed by parentage. The overall expectation for form will be to see an improvement over that of the parents.

The dorsal sepal is almost always curved forward or hooded but this should not be pronounced. Furling or reflexing of flower parts is undesirable.

Twisting and recurving or reflexing are not acceptable. The dorsal may cup forward slightly but should be penalised if this is considered to be too pronounced.

The lip should be broad, in proportion, well displayed and never pinched or turned under at the distal end.

This is a major part of the flower and while it may vary somewhat depending on the background it should always be symmetrical and be in proportion to the size of the other segments.

Colour

If one colour is suffused over another this should be harmonious not blurred. Veining, if present, must be regular and distinctive.

If the colour is a new or unexpected hue or intensity it should be attractive and distinctive enough to be considered an improvement over that expect from the cross. Any blotchiness, missing colour or muddiness is not acceptable and should be penalised.

Sepal staining should be penalised if it detracts from the overall effect.

Sepal staining can arise where plants are flowered in high light conditions. As it will be present on the back of the segments where it is prominent from the front this could also indicate a lack of substance. Where patterns or splashing are present they should complement and enhance the general colour of the flower.

The lip should be distinctively coloured either to contrast with the other flower parts or to blend in a concolour effect.

The lip can be more prominently and richly coloured than other segments particularly with banding or spotting at the distal edge or side lobes. Any colour bleeding or muddiness should be penalised.

Size of flower

Generally a flower 110mm or over in natural spread should score high points for size.

Classification as a standard, intermediate or miniature type is determined by size of flower. Those to be considered as standards will either be bred from the species identified above as large flowered or be 100mm or more in natural spread even though there may be miniature species in their parentage.

Substance and texture

The flower surface should be fresh with a lustrous sheen.

Good substance is now expected as a standard particularly with polyploid forms. The texture should be fresh and lustrous. Any dullness in the surface texture would usually indicate that the flower has aged.

Balance, proportion and arrangement of inflorescence

The inflorescence may be erect or arching but not twisted. Flowers must be clear of the foliage and should be well spaced and displayed.

A strong upright stem is necessary to display the flowers to their best advantage clear of the foliage. Flowers should be evenly spaced to provide a good display. Overcrowding or bunching on the stem is a fault.

Floriferousness

While the number of flowers expected will vary according to parentage, there should be an average of eight flowers and buds per spike unless immediate parentage negates this possibility, e.g. Cym. eburneum hybrids.

The number of flowers will always be influenced by parentage however on well grown plants there can be considerably more flowers than the eight described as the expected minimum. Consequently unless indicated by parentage a higher flower count must be present to score highly in this section. Conversely while a spike with less than eight flowers could still be considered it should be heavily penalised.

Return to TABLE OF CONTENTS

Cymbidium (Intermediate)

Plants in this group must have a miniature flowered or foliaged species in their parentage. Where flowers are over 100mm in natural spread they should be presented as Standard Cymbidiums even though they have miniature parentage.
Because there is a greater variation in shape within this class Intermediate Cymbidiums should not be thought of as merely dwarf Standard Cymbidiums.

Form

The flower should be symmetrical in form and well balanced. More variations in acceptable form are possible with Intermediate Cymbidiums than would be desirable in Standard Cymbidiums.
The segments should form two nearly equilateral triangles - one formed by the sepals and the other inverted and formed by the petals and the lip. Appearance will be governed by parentage. The overall expectation for form will be to see an improvement over that of the parents.
Excessive hooding, furling or reflexing of flower parts is not desirable.
Twisting and recurving or reflexing are not acceptable. The dorsal may cup forward slightly but should be penalised if this is considered to be too pronounced.
The lip should be broad, proportionate to the rest of the flower and not turned under at the distal end. With more than one spike on the plant to be judged, the best spike will be selected and one flower will be designated for determination of form.
This is a major part of the flower and while it may vary somewhat depending on the background it should always be symmetrical and be in proportion to the size of the other segments.

Colour

Because of the ancestral species involved, blurred colours are a common fault and must be heavily penalised. Development of intermediates has progressed to the point where colour evaluation should be the same as for Standard Cymbidiums.
If the colour is a new or unexpected hue or intensity it should be attractive and distinctive enough to be considered an improvement over that expect from the cross. Any blotchiness, missing colour or muddiness is not acceptable and should be penalised.
Polychromes (three or more colours excluding the lip) are quite acceptable but should not be smudged or lifeless.
Where patterns or splashing are present they should complement and enhance the general colour of the flower.
The lip colour must enhance the general effect.
The lip can be more prominently and richly coloured than other segments particularly with banding or spotting at the distal edge or side lobes. Any colour bleeding or muddiness should be penalised.

Size

Flower size should be over 60mm and under 100mm natural spread.
Care should be taken that plants considered here meet the parentage as well as size requirements.
Small or poorly grown standards do not comply. This applies particularly in a show judging environment

Substance and texture

Polyploidy is common in Intermediate Cymbidiums and substance is rarely weak. The flowers should be fresh and with a lustrous sheen.
Good substance is now expected as a standard particularly with polyploid forms. The texture should be fresh and lustrous. Any dullness in the surface texture would usually indicate that the flower has aged.

Balance, proportion and arrangement of inflorescence

The inflorescence may be erect, arching or pendulous, but in all cases the flowers must be displayed clear of the foliage. Flowers should be well spaced, bunching is a common fault in Intermediate Cymbidiums.

A strong upright stem is necessary to display the flowers to their best advantage clear of the foliage. Flowers should be evenly spaced to provide a good display. Overcrowding or bunching on the stem is a fault and should be penalised.

Floriferousness

There should be an average of at least 12 flowers and buds per spike unless immediate parentage negates this possibility, e.g. Cym. virescens hybrids

Return to TABLE OF CONTENTS

Cymbidium (Miniature)

Miniature Cymbidiums must have miniature flowers and foliage with a miniature flowered **and** foliaged species in their recent parentage. A plant with several inflorescences evenly distributed is highly desirable. Cut sprays are not eligible to be judged. Foliage should be clean and glossy without excessive trimming and with dead husks removed.

Form

Acceptable form for Miniature Cymbidiums allows some leeway but the sepals and petals should have enough width to give the appearance of flower roundness. They may be flat or slightly concave.

The segments should form two nearly equilateral triangles - one formed by the sepals and the other inverted and formed by the petals and the lip. Appearance will be governed by parentage. The overall expectation for form will be to see a commendable improvement over that of the parents.

Excessive hooding, furling or reflexing of flower parts is not desirable.

Twisting and recurving or reflexing are not acceptable. The dorsal may cup forward slightly but should be penalised if this is considered to be too pronounced.

The lip should be full and wide, lending balance to the flower with no turning under at its distal end.

This is a major part of the flower and while it may vary somewhat depending on the background it should always be symmetrical and be in proportion to the size of the other segments.

The best spike will be selected and one flower designated for determination of form.

Colour

Stripes, shadings or overlays of colour must enhance the overall colour effect. Fresh glistening colours are to be strongly favoured.

If the colour is a new or unexpected hue or intensity it should be attractive and distinctive enough to be considered an improvement over that expect from the cross. Any blotchiness, missing colour or muddiness is not acceptable and should be penalised.

The lip colouring should be distinctive and add to the beauty and charm of the flower.

The lip can be more prominently and richly coloured than other segments particularly with banding or spotting at the distal edge or side lobes. Any colour bleeding or muddiness should be penalised.

Size

Flower size should be 60mm or under. Any flower with a natural spread exceeding 60 mm, or hybrids with larger foliage (e.g. bred from Cym. madidum), should be considered as an Intermediate Cymbidium.

Care should be taken that plants considered here meet the parentage as well as size requirements.

Small or poorly grown intermediates do not comply. This applies particularly in a show judging environment

Substance and texture

The substance of an award quality Miniature Cymbidium should be not less than the average of its parents. Flowers should be fresh with a lustrous sheen.

Good substance is now expected as a standard particularly with polyploid forms. The texture should be fresh and lustrous. Any dullness in the surface texture would usually indicate that the flower has aged.

Balance, proportion and arrangement of inflorescence

The inflorescence may be erect, arching or pendulous but in all cases the plant should display its flowers free of interference from the foliage. Flowers should be spaced so that they display themselves well.

A strong upright stem is necessary to display the flowers to their best advantage clear of the foliage. Flowers should be evenly spaced to provide a good display. Overcrowding or bunching on the stem is a fault.

Floriferousness of spike and plant

There should be an average of at least 12 flowers and buds per spike unless immediate parentage negates this possibility (e.g. Cym. virescens hybrids).

Return to TABLE OF CONTENTS

Asian (Chinese) Cymbidiums - the Jensoa group

Though the majority of Cymbidiums come from Asia this is a group of seven that have been cultivated in China and Japan for many centuries.

They are: Cymbidium ensifolium, Cymbidium sinense,
Cymbidium kanran, Cymbidium cyperfolium,
Cymbidium faberi, Cymbidium munronianum,
Cymbidium goeringii.

When judged in Asia the plant's age and recorded history are important factors in their placing and awarding. Likewise the pot they grow in is also part of the judging.

Plants with variegated foliage and those containing the red factor are prized and highly sought after. The perfumed flowers are not large and showy and they do not always display above the foliage. The flower is starry shaped and usually there are between two and nine flowers per inflorescence. Flower segments are usually long and narrow and the petals tend to come forward as though protecting the column. In Chinese cymbidiums this is considered a desirable trait.

Cym. sinense has a longer inflorescence and more flowers than other members of this group. All members of this group are very variable in colour and appearance. Colours range from white through yellow and orange to dark purple, often with striping.

It is important to remember when assessing these plants that they are to be considered according to our guidelines and not be influenced by other systems which may place their emphasis on different factors. Because this group are not yet commonly seen, research will be necessary to ensure that plants being evaluated are excellent examples of the particular species. Where the plant being evaluated is a hybrid it should show a commendable improvement over the parents.

Form
The flower should be symmetrical in form and well balanced. The petals can come forward and may enclose the column. They should be excellent examples of the genus to score well for form. The effect of hybridising with cymbidiums of 'normal' form will become evident as recent hybrids come into bloom. Twisting, reflexing or other distortions should be penalised.

Colour
Flower colour should be definite, clear and bright, evenly dispersed throughout. Any markings should be well defined and evenly distributed.

Size
Expectation for size will depend on the species involved. For hybrids the size should exceed the geometric mean derived from the parentage involved.

Substance and Texture
Substance may vary depending on parentage but should generally be good and able to hold the petals and sepals firm. The texture should be fresh and lustrous. Any dullness in the surface texture would usually indicate that the flower has aged.

Habit and Arrangement
The flower should be facing forward and the stem should always be strong enough to support it. For multiflowered spikes normal cymbidium requirements will apply

Floriferousness
As the majority of the species in this section have only one flower on the inflorescence the single flowered scale would be used for assessment and the preferred minimum flower count will not apply.

Return to TABLE OF CONTENTS

Dendrobium (Nobile and Phalaenanthe types)

Many of the hybrids considered in this section have several generations of breeding in their background so the expected standard is well defined. Many of the Den. phalaenopsis type species themselves had good form providing a quality platform for hybridists to work from. Big advances were seen in Den. Nobile hybrids with the arrival of the Yamamoto types in the 1970's.

Form

The flower should generally be circular in outline, the dorsal and ventral sepals wide and evenly spaced. The dorsal sepal should not be hooded. There is a tendency for petals in Nobile type flowers to lean forward. Held flat in one plane is the ideal so this should be penalised if it is considered excessive

Petals should be broad and rounded, overlapping the sepals. The Nobile type species generally have narrower petals so the degree of roundness will depend on parentage.

The broad lip must not jut forward nor turn under and should be large enough to balance the flower. In the Nobile types the lip should be wider across than the dorsal sepal while in the Phalaenopsis type it will be approximately the same width

Colour

This should be clear and fresh without smudging or blurring. Although many Phalaenopsis types will carry the colour of flower segments into the lip, more pronounced colour contrast is normal for the Nobile types. Sepals and petals may vary in colour intensity often fading toward the centre of the flower. In such cases the transition should be even with no blotches of colour. The dark eye present on the lip of most Nobile types should be well defined without bleeding of colour into the surrounding area.

Substance and texture

The crystalline texture of the Nobile type Dendrobiums and the velvet texture of many Phalaenopsis types add greatly to their visual appeal. Texture may be crystalline or matte depending on parentage but should always be lustrous and fresh.

Substance may vary depending on parentage but should generally be good and able to hold the petals and sepals firm. As with many orchids a dull surface texture probably indicates aging of the flowers.

Balance, proportion and arrangement of inflorescence

With Nobile types the flowers should be evenly distributed on each pseudobulb of the previous season. The flowers should be well arranged on the inflorescence without undue bunching. The flowers should ideally be presented facing toward the viewer.

The inflorescence of Phalaenopsis types may be erect to arching and the flowers should display themselves without excessive overlapping. The flowers should present themselves in a symmetrical manner without excessive overlapping or being too widely spaced.

Floriferousness

In Nobile hybrids, floriferousness should be assessed on the percentage of flowering nodes on the cane being judged. A cane with every node on the upper two-thirds producing at least two flowers should gain near maximum points. Floriferousness in Phalaenopsis types will depend on parentage but as a guide 8-12 flowers would normally be expected on a *Den. Biggibum* inflorescence.

Return to TABLE OF CONTENTS

Dendrobium (Other types)

The Dendrobium genus is found through much of Asia and is extremely large and diverse. There is a big variation in flower shape, colour and size. Well known Dendrobiums included in this group are Ceratobium, Dendrocoryne but there are many other types that have sepals and petals more or less equal to each other.

Form

The flowers should be uniform in shape. Many different shapes can be seen here depending on the species involved but there should be uniformity among the flowers on an individual plant.
Petals can be twisted or flat. A lot of variation can be expected here. *D. lasianthera* will have perfect corkscrews while *D. formosum* will be perfectly flat like a cattleya.
Individual flowers should still exhibit the expected symmetry of the type. The lip should add balance to the flower. The shape of some like *D. spectabile* may even be considered grotesque but they can still show symmetry in their composition.

Colour

The flower should exhibit both harmony and brilliance of colour. The lip should be distinctively and attractively coloured. Colours should be clear and bright and any markings should be distinct and well defined. Muddied colours and indistinct markings should be penalised. Many have distinctive variations in lip colour and marking. In others the lip colour will mirror that of other segments and many of these may have variations in shape such as heavy fimbriation.

Size of flower

The size of many flowers in this group will be greatest in the vertical plane. There are many species in this group resulting in a great variety of flower size and shape. Expectations for size will depend on the parentage involved.

Substance and Texture

Substance may vary depending on parentage but should generally be good and able to hold the petals and sepals firm. Texture may be crystalline or matte depending on parentage but should always be lustrous and fresh.

Balance, proportion and arrangement of inflorescence

They may gracefully arch, but should not droop so that individual flowers present themselves poorly. Flowers should not be bunched on the inflorescence. A fault among the Dendrocoryne group can be the weakness of the stem causing the flowers to droop. This can be seen in many hybrids where breeding for size of flower has not been matched by strength of stem.

Floriferousness

Expectations will vary with the species involved. A massed floral effect is desirable and flowers arranged sparsely on the stems should be heavily penalised. The quantity of flowers produced will vary with the species involved. Not all flowers may be open at once and some will tend to sequential flowering. With some plants, particularly the yellow flowered Indian Dendrobiums the blooms are relatively short lived while the nigro-hirsute group, while appearing delicate, are very long lasting. Watch for freshness of bloom when assessing substance and texture.

Return to TABLE OF CONTENTS

Lycaste

A relatively small genus with around 50 species the lycaste have been grown for over 150 years but have not been as popular as some of the mainstream orchids. L. skinneri has been the basis of the large flowered hybrids. Greater interest over the last 30 years or so has seen a big improvement in flower quality. Lycaste can be very floriferous and some of the smaller flowered species such as *L. aromatica* are very fragrant.

In establishing the genus Lindley noted that Lycaste was 'a beautiful woman' of ancient Greece.

Form

There are now several generations of breeding in *L. skinneri* type hybrids so the expected standard is well established. More diversity can be expected in hybrids involving the smaller flowered species.
The flower form should be symmetrical with the sepals forming an equilateral triangle.
The **sepals** should be flat and held in one plane. They are generally longer than they are wide and tapering to the tips. In some of the newer hybrids the sepals are so broad they are almost round and in these cases the flower must still have a balanced and pleasing appearance. Faults include reflexing of the sepal tips and excessive or random furling of margins.
The **petals** are much smaller than the sepals and tend to wrap around the top of the column with the tips folded or flared back. Watch for symmetry and balance in the way the column is enclosed.
The **lip** will form an inverted triangle with the petals which is smaller than that formed by the sepals. The base lines of the two triangles should be parallel. The lip should be aligned vertically with the dorsal sepal. In some hybrids the lip tends to roll under and this should be penalised if it is excessive.

Colour

The flower colour should be rich and vibrant without any sign of spots or blemish. In many flowers the segments will be the same colour or nearly so. In others the petals and/or the lip may be a contrasting colour in which case it should be harmonious. Muddiness or indistinct colour sometimes seen as a greenish or brownish cast a fault and should be penalised.

Size

The species have a big variation in flower size from the possible 15cm of *L. skinneri* to the 5cm or so of *L. aromatica*. Size in hybrids will be linked to parentage but the L. skinneri type hybrids can be expected to achieve 12 to 15cm.

Substance & Texture

Substance is should be able to hold the sepals firm and straight. These flowers can bruise easily which should not in itself be seen as evidence of poor substance. Texture can be crystalline or matte but good texture will be shown in a flower which is fresh and lustrous in appearance. Dullness of colour can indicate an aged flower.

Stem and Presentation

The inflorescence is single flowered. The flower stem is formed at the base of the pseudobulb generally before, but sometimes with, the new growth. Depending on parentage few to many flowering stems can be produced from each pseudobulb but 10 or more could be expected. The stem should be strong enough to support the flower unaided but because the flowers bruise easily they are often staked particularly to prevent travel damage for a show.

Return to TABLE OF CONTENTS

Masdevallia

Masdevallia are part of the Pleurothalidinae and the genus has recently been divided into 18 new genera. Care will be needed to ensure that they are correctly handled particularly as new hybrids are created incorporating the new generic names.
Masdevallia typically have a very short rhizome giving them a tufted appearance. Many of the plants are miniature with flowers that are large relative to the plants that produce them.
The generic name honours Jose Masdeval a Spanish physician and botanist.

Form
The flowers display great diversity in size, shape, texture and colour with the sepals and caudae being the most obvious part of the flower. The sepals are joined at the base to varying degrees with some species being tubular. The ideal flower will have a dorsal standing perpendicular with straight ventral caudae running parallel to each other. In some cases the ventral caudae will be crossed. This should not be considered a serious fault unless there is also marked furling of the sepals.

Colour
The flower colour should be clear and bright and any veining or spots should be well defined. The caudae will often be a different colour from the rest of the sepal. Muddiness and poorly defined markings should be treated as faults. Hybrids that have *Masd. veitchiana* parentage may give the appearance of a purple haze over the base colour caused by many small hairs on the surface.

Size
There is a big variation in flower size from the possible 50cm of *Masd. macrura* to miniatures of 5mm or so like *Masd. Wagneriana*. Many hybrids are primary or still close to the species so the expected size will depend on parentage.
The vertical measurement is taken from the tips of the caudae. The measurement across the visible limits may also be at the caudae tips where they are spreading as in *Masd. triangularis*. The lip, petals and column are usually very small and hidden within the flower. These parts are not measured for an award

Substance & Texture
Substance should be strong which will be evidenced by the caudae held straight and the ventral sepals not rolling under at the base of the caudae. Good texture will be shown in a flower which is fresh and lustrous in appearance. Dullness of colour can indicate an aged flower.

Stem and Presentation
With very few exceptions the inflorescence is single flowered. The flower stem is formed at the base of the leaves or on the leaf stem. The stem should be strong enough to support the flower unaided and should be long enough to hold the flower well clear of the foliage.

Return to TABLE OF CONTENTS

Miltoniopsis

Line breeding and the introduction of polyploidy clones have improved the modern hybrids through increased size, fuller flowers and less reflexing. Floriferousness has improved and presentation tends to be better with flowers held well above the foliage.

Form

The flowers should be a well-filled-in oval form.

The charm of Miltoniopsis comes from their oblong to ovoid shape where the prominent lip balances the smaller overlapping petals and sepals. The sepals should form a slightly flattened triangle that occupies the upper portion of the flower.

The sepals and petals should be balanced, wide, but may reflex slightly at their tips. The petals should be flat or slightly reflexed and should fill the gaps between the sepals overlapping them slightly. While some reflexing of the sepals and petals is normal significant reflexing is a fault.

The lips should be predominantly large and symmetrical.

The lip should be flat and symmetrical. While the edges may be wavy they should not be floppy and there should not be a prominent midrib. The lip can have a waist near the base which is a fault if it compromises the symmetry or fails to overlap the sepals.

Colour

The colour should be definite, crisp and fresh. Any mask should be sharply defined and symmetrical. Odd colour blotches, as distinct from waterfall lip markings are common in many Miltoniopsis and should not be penalised unless they are a distraction.

The colour should always be clear and if multicoloured they should be clearly defined or pleasantly blended. While Miltoniopsis are known for their striking intense colours there are clones that are equally striking in subtle pastel shades. Don't confuse a pastel flower with a muddy one. If blushing is present it should be uniform and never blotchy. Waterfall patterns or masks on the lip should be in a pleasantly contrasting colour.

Substance and texture

The velvety texture of good Miltoniopsis should be recognised and rewarded.

Texture may sometimes be crystalline but is normally matte. The substance tends to be lighter than in some other orchids and as a consequence the flowers are prone to bruising or heat damage.

Balance, proportion and arrangement of inflorescence

The inflorescence may be upright or gracefully arching. Flowers should be well spaced and well displayed.

The flowers should alternate along the inflorescence and only slightly overlap. A cluttered or poorly spaced inflorescence should be penalised.

Floriferousness

Miltoniopsis must have at least three flowers and/or buds on the stem.

Modern breeding has significantly improved this area so that multiple inflorescences on pseudobulbs can be expected. To score highly well grown plants should be expected to carry two inflorescences of four flowers each.

Return to TABLE OF CONTENTS

Oncidium Alliance

This is a large and diverse group showing considerable variation in plant and flower size, shape and colour. As a result of a recent review there have been a lot of name and generic changes. Care will be needed to ensure these are correctly handled – *Odontoglossum* have been transferred to *Oncidium* and many *Oncidium* are now found in *Gomesa*.

Form

In general the Onc. alexandrae type flower form should tend toward roundness, fullness and flatness fitting within a circumscribed circle. There have been many generations of breeding in this group so the standard is now well defined. Not all flowers in this alliance fit the full round form however and should not be penalised for this e.g. Brassia or Tolumnia etc.
Flower segments may be serrated or frilled, providing that this does not destroy the overall form. Care must be taken to ensure that the lip is flat and proportionately developed. Plants showing Onc. Alexandreae (syn Odm, crispum) type form should have lips approximately equal in size to the petals and sepals. Others will show considerable variation according to parentage.

Colour

The flower colour should have well-defined patterns. On some plants the flowers will be heavily marked while others will show little or may be self coloured.
Markings should be reasonably well balanced though some variations in spotting are normal. The total effect of various colour combinations should be to give the flower a pleasing bright appearance. The ideal is well balanced markings with a mirror image on each side and flowers approaching this should score highly. Muddiness of colour or markings that are poorly defined should be penalised.
The colours of the lip mask and crest should add to the attractiveness of the flower. Some species within the alliance are prone to fading of the lip colour as the flowers age.

Size of flower

Generally branched spray types will have smaller flowers. In some inter-generics flower size may be smaller than expected, and while this will necessitate a lower score for flower size, it may be easily offset by high evaluations in other areas. Considerable variation in flower size can be expected. Flower size will always be governed by parentage so it will be necessary to look closely at this aspect before determining points.

Substance and texture

The substance should be greater than the average of the parents. Texture should be fresh and crystalline. Any tendency towards transparent spots in pastel flowers must be heavily penalised. Hybrids in the Onc. alexandrae group can have a crystalline texture while others will be velvet or matte. A dull surface can indicate aflower that has aged.

Balance, proportion and arrangement of inflorescence

The inflorescence may be simple or branched depending on parentage. Lateral branches should be strong enough to carry the flowers without drooping. Where lateral branching is present a well balanced arrangement is sought. In all cases the blooms should be evenly spaced and well presented.
Bunching and clustering of flowers in some inter-generics is a serious fault. This can arise when one parent is many flowered and the other has only one or a few. Hybrids with *Miltonia moreliana* often exhibit this characteristic.

Floriferousness

In general spikes should have at least eight flowers and buds. A big variation in flower count will be seen among plants in this group depending on the parentage.

Return to TABLE OF CONTENTS

Paphiopedilum - Complex Hybrids

The Complex Paphiopedilum Hybrids of today have flowers which are large, round and reasonably flat. They also have heavy substance and are long lasting.
There have been many generations of breeding since the first hybrid was produced (Harrisianum 1869) and thousands of hybrids were produced during the most popular years from the 1930s to 1980s. Breeding for shape may have reached its peak at this time and subsequent years have seen a concentration on increasing size and the range of colours.
The COMPLEX description refers to the many generations and multiple species involved in their background.

Form

The desirable form of complex hybrid flowers is round to broadly oval, balanced and filled.
The ideal shape we expect to find in these hybrids is a full flat circle with the sepals and petals not extending beyond the circumference. While the pouch protrudes in front it should still be aligned vertically. In most flowers you will find some degree of cupping, that is the outer edges of the dorsal sepal and petals bending forward, and while a certain amount is acceptable a flatter flower is preferred. Excessive cupping should be penalized.
Symmetry is an important feature and a line drawn from the central tip of the dorsal petal through the staminode to the tip of the pouch should produce a mirror image in both halves.

The dorsal sepal should be large, rounded and slightly concave.
The preferred dorsal sepal shape is a semi to three quarter circle. It can be flat or slightly concave but should never reflex backwards. There is almost always a groove running vertically at the midline and often you will find some folding at the top. These features should be penalized if considered overly prominent.

Reflexing of any flower parts is undesirable.
This is the bending backward of the outer edges of sepals or petals and so is the opposite of cupping. This is not a desirable feature and if present it should always be penalized.

Petals should be broad with length in proportion to the rest of the flower.
You should expect to see petals that are displayed in a horizontal plane and held back tightly against the sepals. Symmetry is important. Wider petals tending to roundness are ideal but not so that they obscure the dorsal unduly. Notching at the tips or ruffling at the edges should not be too pronounced.

The ventral sepal (synsepalum) should be large enough to background the pouch and, when viewed from behind the flower, must lock with the dorsal sepal and neither should reflex at the junction.
The ventral sepal should complete the circle formed by the dorsal sepal and while you may find that it bends forward it should match the degree of cupping in other segments. You should expect to see the back edges fitting tightly against the dorsal and holding it in place and the lack of this feature is a fault.

The pouch to be full in proportion and not protrude excessively forward nor hang down and expose the staminode. A split ventral sepal does not disqualify the flower so long as the overall effect is not discordant.
You will find a lot of variation in pouch shape and size and this should always be in balance with the other segments of the flower. There should not be any indentations or dimples. Twisting of the staminode or pouch is sometimes evident and when seen this feature should be heavily penalized.

Colour

This should be clear and definite with banding, spots and markings well defined. Breaks in the pouch colourings are common and should be heavily penalized. Blurred colour overlaps are distracting and should be penalized.
There is a lot of variation in flower colour which will range from the white, yellow, green range to rust red, brown and purple. We are looking for clear colours so muddiness should be penalized. As with the form, symmetry of colour in both halves is important.

The dorsal sepal colouring may be similar or in contrast to the petals and pouch and may have a white background or margin. Darker colouring on the dorsal is generally concentrated at the base. Spots should be bold and contrast with the background.
The petals may have a darker midline and you may find variation in the colour of the upper and lower sections.
The pouch should be uniformly coloured and may show fading toward the lower tip.

Size

Invariably white Paphiopedilum Complex Hybrids will be smaller than other colours.
Before the turn of the century the expectation for overall width was 8-10cm but this has now increased to 12cm or more. With recent breeding white hybrids are now much closer in size to other hybrids.
The width of the dorsal also needs to be considered in assessing points for size.
The exception is the more recent “teacup” paphiopedilums arising from the addition of small flowered species into the parentage.

Substance and texture

Substance in Paphiopedilums is generally heavy. Transparent edges on the dorsal are frequently encountered. Some greens may lack substance. A waxy or varnished texture is characteristic.
Good substance is now an expected feature in this group.
Be aware that as flowers age the surface texture or appearance will become dull.

Stem and presentation

The stem should hold and present the flower well above the leaf axial. The stem measurement is taken from the axial to the base of the ovary.
The flower should be facing forward and the stem should always be strong enough to support it.
Staking is allowed but should never be a distraction.

Return to TABLE OF CONTENTS

Paphiopedilum (Multifloral, Species or Other)

The Paphiopedilums considered here will usually be species or those having at least one parent at or close to species level. There are a large number of species in the family with a great deal of variation in size, shape and colour therefore we can expect considerable variation in the plants to be judged. In general we are looking for an improvement over the parents without loss of the species character and charm.

Form

The flowers should be well proportioned and symmetrical. When compared with complex hybrids more variation in pouches may be expected but proportion must not be lost.

The plants reviewed in this section will be species or much closer to species than those considered in the complex section. The shape should be a circle with the sepals and petals not extending beyond the circumference. While the pouch protrudes in front it should still be aligned vertically. In most flowers you will find some degree of cupping, that is the outer edges of the dorsal sepal and petals bending forward, and while a certain amount is acceptable a flatter flower is preferred. Excessive cupping should be penalized but there may be a greater variation than would be acceptable in complex hybrids.

Symmetry is an important feature and a line drawn from the central tip of the dorsal petal through the staminode to the tip of the pouch should produce a mirror image in both halves.

The preferred dorsal sepal shape is a semi to three quarter circle but will depend on parentage. It can be flat or slightly concave but should never reflex backwards. There is almost always a groove running vertically at the midline and often you will find some folding at the top. These features should be penalized if considered overly prominent.

Petals that are displayed in a horizontal plane and held back tightly against the sepals are a desirable feature but there will be more variation than in complex hybrids. Symmetry is important. Notching at the tips or ruffling at the edges should not be too pronounced.

The back edges of the ventral sepal should be fitting tightly against the dorsal and hold it in place and the lack of this feature is a fault.

You will find a lot of variation in pouch shape and size and this should always be in balance with the other segments of the flower. There should not be any indentations or dimples. Twisting of the staminode or pouch is sometimes evident and when seen this feature should be heavily penalized.

Colour

Unusual colours and colour combinations can all be considered but they should be clear, fresh and glistening without colour confusion or blurring. Markings should be evenly balanced on opposite sides of the flowers.

There is a lot of variation in flower colour which will range from the white, yellow, green range to rust red, brown and purple. Colours should be clear so any muddiness should be penalized. As with the form, symmetry of colour in both halves is important.

The dorsal sepal colouring may be similar or in contrast to the petals and pouch. Darker colouring on the dorsal is generally concentrated at the base. Spots or stripes should be bold and contrast with the background.

The petals may have a darker midline and you may find variation in the colour of the upper and lower sections.

The pouch should be uniformly coloured and may show fading toward the lower tip.

Substance and texture

Giving due regard to the breeding, flowers should have a waxy or varnished sheen.

Substance in Paphiopedilums is generally heavy and is an expected feature. Transparent edges on the dorsal are frequently encountered. Some greens may lack substance.

Be aware that as flowers age the surface texture or appearance will become dull.

Stem and Presentation

The stem should hold and present the flower well above the leaf axial. In Multiflorals flowers should be spaced so that they display themselves well.

The flower should be facing forward and the stem should always be strong enough to support it unaided. You should see symmetry in the way the flowers are arranged on the inflorescence. The lowest flower should be well clear of the foliage.

Floriferousness

Multifloral Paphiopedilums should have two or more flowers open per stem with the exception of those that open successively, i.e. Sub-group Cochlopetalum, which can have one flower per stem. Paphiopedilum flowers are generally long lasting so where they are multiflorals it is preferable that all flowers are open and set. Be aware however that some such as *P.lowii* have sequential tendencies while others like *P. glanduliferum* are simultaneous bloomers If the inflorescence normally has more than one flower the multi-flowered points scale should be used. In other cases the single scale will apply.

Return to TABLE OF CONTENTS

Phalaenopsis

The classic large sized white, pink or purple phalaenopsis is now well established through many generations of breeding. The introduction of more species brought a greater range of colours including brown and yellow shades as well as various combinations of stripes and spots. Due to the influence of the species used to increase the colour range, the flowers may lack regularity of arrangement on the spike and shape may not always fit the 'classic' pattern.
In more recent years we have seen the introduction of the 'Harlequin' type characterised by strong but unusual colour variations and also miniatures with flowers of good shape through the introduction of small flowered species like *Phal. Equestris* and *Phal. pulcherimma*.

Form

The flowers should have a pleasing well-balanced shape with sepals and petals as broad and flat as possible taking breeding into consideration. Standards bred predominantly from Phal. amabilis species will be more or less circular in outline. These flowers of classic shape should have broad petals almost as wide as long and may be overlapping across the dorsal. Sepals and petals should be flat without reflexing or cupping. The tips of the sepals should form an equilateral triangle. The lip should be balanced and parallel with the dorsal. Both halves of the flower should be symmetrical.
The intermediates and miniatures bred from other species will exhibit considerable variation in form. These plants may not reach the standard of the flowers referred to above and may show considerable variance depending on their ancestry but they should still have balance and symmetry.

Colour

Colours should be balanced and uniform through all the flowers on the spike. Spots, stripes and bars should be definite and distinctive. Shading should be pleasing. The colours should be clear and bright without any muddiness If there is shading this should be well balanced across the flower. Where spots or stripes are present they should be regular and even and mirrored on each side of the flower.
Harlequin type flowers have Phal. Golden Peoker in their background and they are likely to display unusual colour variations, such as uneven, irregular or different sized blotches and spots. If the flower in question has this feature, it should not be penalised. The patterns in these flowers may be irregular but this does not affect the colour which should be clear and well defined without bleeding or smudging.

Size

Recognition has to be given to the fact that parentage will determine size. There is a big range of size among the various species which can be strongly reflected in the hybrids depending on the number of generations involved. As an indication miniatures will be around 50mm while the classic standards will generally exceed 100mm. Harlequins and other multi specie crosses will be somewhere between.

Substance and texture

Substance should be good as the blooms are generally long lasting but it is likely to be heavier in hybrids incorporating the smaller flowered species.
The surface should be either crystalline or waxy. Dullness of the surface is likely to indicate older blooms. Whether it is or not it is not a desirable feature.

Balance, proportion and arrangement

The flowers should be both well spaced and well displayed. The inflorescence may be upright or arching but should be strong enough to support the flowers. The flowers should be evenly spaced without overlapping. They should be evenly placed and facing the same way on each side of the inflorescence.

Floriferousness

The number of flowers will vary according to the breeding. Generally standards will have seven or more flowers but plants with flowers other than white, pink or purple may have fewer

flowers depending on breeding. The classic standards can have significantly more flowers than the minimum of seven stated here but this will depend on parentage and as with many other orchids an increase in flower numbers can result in a reduction in flower size. The numbers will also be dependant on maturity of the plant and quality of culture. You will always need to check parentage as this will have a significant effect on flower numbers.
Sequential flowering plants should not to be penalised, e.g. Phal. violacea.

Return to TABLE OF CONTENTS

Phragmipedium

This genus makes up the cultivated South American division of the Slipper family. About 30 species are currently known and they have become more popular in recent years particularly since the discovery of the brightly coloured *Phrag. besseae* in 1980 and more recently *Phrag. kovachii*. Some excellent hybrids have been produced, and a significant number of awards have been made to plants of this genus.

Form

There is considerable variation in flower structure within the members of this genus but flowers should always be well proportioned and symmetrical.
The shape should be a circle or oval with the sepals and petals not extending beyond the circumference. Note that the petals of Phrag. *caudatum* types and hybrids will not fit this mould. While the pouch protrudes in front it should still be aligned vertically.
You can find some degree of cupping, that is the outer edges of the dorsal sepal and petals bending forward, and while a certain amount is acceptable a flatter flower is preferred particularly in Phrag. *besseae* types.. Excessive cupping should be penalized.

Symmetry is an important feature and a line drawn from the central tip of the dorsal petal through the staminode to the tip of the pouch should produce a mirror image in both halves.
The preferred dorsal sepal shape will not be as circular as expected in Paphiopedilum and will depend on parentage. It can be flat or slightly concave but should never reflex backwards.
Petals that are displayed in a horizontal plane and held back tightly against the sepals are a desirable feature but there will be variation particularly where Phrag. *caudatum* or similar influence is involved. Symmetry is important. Notching at the tips or ruffling at the edges should not be too pronounced.

As with Paphiopedilum the back edges of the ventral sepal should be fitting tightly against the dorsal and hold it in place and the lack of this feature is a fault.

You will find considerable variation in pouch shape and size and this should always be in balance with the other segments of the flower. There should not be any indentations or dimples. Twisting of the staminode or pouch is sometimes evident and when seen this feature should be heavily penalized.

Colour

Unusual colours and colour combinations can all be considered but they should be clear, fresh and glistening without colour confusion or blurring. Markings should be evenly balanced on opposite sides of the flowers.
There is a lot of variation in flower colour which will range through red, white, green, yellow, brown and purple. Colours should be clear so any muddiness should be penalized. As with the form, symmetry of colour in both halves is important. Some plants, as with Phrag. *besseae* and hybrids, can have brilliant red or orange flowers and judges should be careful not to be over influenced by this when pointing colour or other sections of the score sheet.
The dorsal sepal colouring may be similar or in contrast to the petals and pouch. The pouch should be uniformly coloured and may show fading toward the lower tip.

Substance and texture

Giving due regard to the breeding, flowers should have a waxy or varnished. Rather than fading over time flowers have a tendency to hold their appearance and then drop suddenly.
Be aware however that as flowers age the surface texture or appearance will become dull.

Stem and Presentation

The stem should hold and present the flower well above the leaf axial. In Multiflorals flowers should be spaced so that they display themselves well.
The flower should be facing forward and the stem should always be strong enough to support it unaided. You should see symmetry in the way the flowers are arranged on the inflorescence. The lowest flower should be well clear of the foliage.

Floriferousness

Multifloral Phragmipediums should have two or more flowers open per stem and it is preferable that all flowers are open and set. Note however that sequential types tend to lose one flower at the same time as, or shortly before, the new one opens. . .If the inflorescence normally has more than one flower the multi-flowered points scale should be used. In other cases the single scale will apply.

Return to TABLE OF CONTENTS

Pleione

There are around 15 species in the genus which is closely allied to Coelogyne and their cluster-forming pseudobulbs make them somewhat unique in habit. Having a deciduous habit these orchids can withstand very low winter temperatures and, maybe as a consequence of this, are popular in this country.
They have been grown on the continent for many years where they are popular with alpine garden groups and a number of hybrids have been created, particularly by Ian Butterfield in the UK.
The name pleione is derived from Greek mythology after the mother of Pleiades.

Form
The flowers have a starry appearance with sepals and petals are generally about the same width.
The ideal form would have the tips of sepals, petals and lip equally spaced around the circumference of a circle with the sepals and petals held straight and all in the same plane.
In reality the dorsal tends to be cupped and the other segments tend to droop downward. In all cases the extent will be governed by parentage though there can be variation within different plants within a grex. Undue reflexing or cupping should be penalised.
The lip tends to jut forward at angle from the other segments. It can be quite broad, tends to fold around the column and in some varieties is fimbriated.

Colour
The sepals and petals are generally of one colour. The lip varies in colour and is usually heavily marked with spots or stripes of a brighter or contrasting colour. Markings should be clear and distinct. In some varieties the markings are pale but they should still be distinct with defined edges.

Size
While flowers are generally around 100mm in width there is some variation in size among the species and the expectation for size will therefore depend on the parentage.

Substance and Texture
Substance is generally of average quality. Some flowers do not appear to have good substance indicated by drooping or floppy petals and sepals. Care should be taken not to penalise doubly for form and substance. Flowers are not generally long lasting 14 days being average.
Some forms will have a crystalline texture while in others it will be velvety or matte. Dullness can indicate aged flowers.

Stem and Presentation
The stem should be strong enough to hold the inflorescence without drooping. It should be long enough to hold the flowers clear of any foliage. The inflorescence comes with the new growth and the rate of leaf growth varies according to parentage.

Care needs to be taken when assessing these plants for cultural awards. When well grown these plants are capable of producing more than one flowering growth from a pseudobulb and more than one flower on the inflorescence. Some pseudobulbs with double flowered inflorescences would generally be expected to achieve high marks for floriferousness.

Return to TABLE OF CONTENTS

Sarcochilus

The genus Sarcochilus (about fourteen species) are distributed in tropical and sub tropical regions. All but one are endemic to Eastern Australia and the mountain ranges from Queensland to Victoria. Most are small epiphytes: however, three robust species grow on cliff faces in humid gullies or gorges, where there is bright light, humidity and free movement of air. Growth habit is Vandaceous. The flower spikes come from between the leaves and there is a wide range in flower size and number of flowers per spike.
They are sometimes sequential flowering with a great variety of flower shapes. The shapes vary from small bells to starry types, with anything in between. The flowers are long lasting and often fragrant.
The name comes from the Greek words meaning fleshy lip.

Form
The classical shape displays radial symmetry (the petals and sepals are equally spaced like a five bladed propeller). In flowers of this type petals and sepals will be well overlapped and held in the one plane. Reflexing or cupping would not normally be expected depending on parentage.
With hybrids involving the smaller flowered species much more variation in shape can be expected but symmetry should still be evident.
The labellum is centrally positioned and generally small and relatively inconspicuous.

Colour
Colour can range from clear glistening white, through pinks to reds and through greens to yellows and gold. Colours should be clear and bright. Where there are markings they should be well defined and distinct without blurring. Patterning should be symmetrical.

Size
Because of the variation in size among the species the expectation for size will depend on parentage.
Flowers of the classic *hartmannii* type will normally have flowers 30mm or more in width

Substance and Texture
Substance in this group is generally heavy holding the flower segments well. Many will have a crystalline texture particularly when the large whites are involved.

Balance proportion arrangement
The inflorescence can be few to many flowered depending on parentage. The inflorescence can be upright or arching and should display the flowers evenly. Undue drooping probably indicates a weak stem unable to hold the weight of the blooms. Multiple inflorescences should not be bunched but evenly displayed.

Floriferousness
The number of flowers to be expected on an inflorescence depends on parentage. Well grown plants can be very floriferous even when young.
Be aware that many of the small flowered species are sequential flowering which may well carry through to hybrids.

Return to TABLE OF CONTENTS

Vandaceous

The classic Vanda and Ascocenda have several generations of breeding so that the standard for shape is well defined. With hybrids that have at least one parent at or close to species level, we should expect an improvement over the parents.
The genus name Vanda is derived from the Sanskrit word for orchid.

Form

The flower should be generally circular in outline and flat when viewed from the side.
The sepals should be broad and rounded and arranged in an equilateral triangle. The dorsal sepal should be as nearly equal to the ventral 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 complement the rest of the flower in size and shape. Any spur or nectary, if present, should also be harmonious with the rest of the flower.
This is the shape typical of the classic Vanda based on *V. sanderiana* and *V. corulea* breeding. The best of these flowers are flat with the sepals and petals held in one plane – this is checked by looking at the flowers from the side.
The other Vanda species are smaller flowered and of varying shapes and colours. *V. sanderiana* is dominant for shape while the other species have increased the range of colours.
Crossing with the small but brightly coloured Ascocentrum species has produced classic shapes in flowers of intermediate size with a wide range of colours.
On a proportion of terete leaf Vandas and Ascocentrums, basal thinning of the petals can be expected depending on species and breeding.
Some hybrids may exhibit the paddle shaped petals typical of *V. tricolour* and other similar species.

Colour

The colour of the flower should be definite and clear. When two or more colours are suffused they must be harmonious and not mottled.
Coloured venation, if present, should be definite and distinctive. Venation is a characteristic of the large flowered vanda species particularly
The lip should be attractively coloured. This may be of the same colour or a contrasting colour in which case it should pleasing and harmonious.

Size of flower

Considerable size variation in the size of Ascocendas may be expected depending on the relative proportions of Ascocentrum and Vanda in their parentage.
The larger flowered Vandas can be 12cm or more while Ascocendas would normally be a bit over half that size.

Balance, proportion and arrangement of inflorescence

The inflorescence may be erect or gracefully arching depending on the parental background, with the flowers well spaced and displayed. Plants involving Vanda and Ascocentrum will generally have an upright inflorescence while on Aerides or Rhyncostylis they are pendant. Intergeneric hybrids will vary depending on parentage. In all cases the flowers should be symmetrically arranged and not too widely spaced on the inflorescence.

Floriferousness

Because of the sequential nature of many Vandaceous inflorescences, it is almost impossible to determine when most of the inflorescence is open and set. Nevertheless, it is essential that any inflorescence should be mature enough to show the true potential of the flower. The number and size of flowers to expect will vary according to the species and breeding. Because there are big differences in the number of flowers on the inflorescence among the various genera background checks will be essential in assessing this area.

Return to TABLE OF CONTENTS

Zygopetalum

There are relatively few species contributing to hybrids in the genus *Zygopetalum*. Consequently we can expect generally similar flowers. Intergeneric breeding with approximately 20 other genus has produced a large number of genera. While these lines of breeding are still in their infancy they are providing a much wider range of colours and form. The more complex hybrids are often bred back to the Zygopetalum parent leading to a greater degree of Zygopetalum influence being carried forward as the distinguishing characteristic in the progeny.

The generic name is derived from the Greek term for "'yoked petal,"' referring to the yoke-like growth at the base of the lip.

Form
The flower form should be symmetrical. Intergeneric hybrids will show much more diversity in form than pure zygopetalum depending on the genetic background which must always be taken into account.
Twisting, reflexing and other distortions, if not natural to the genus, should be penalised.

Colour
Flower colour should be definite, clear and bright, evenly dispersed throughout. The markings should be well defined and evenly distributed.

Size
Size should be at least comparable with that which could be expected from the parentage, i e the geometrical mean.

Substance and Texture
Substance in zygopetalums is generally heavy and should hold the petals and sepals firm and flat with little or no recurving. Intergeneric hybrids may vary depending on parentage.
Texture is the desirable features of a flower surface that enhances appearance.
Generally the flower should be of great substance and texture, refined quality, firm, fresh, lustrous and without blemish.

Habit and arrangement of inflorescence
The stem should display the flowers in a pleasing manner well clear of the foliage. It should not be twisted or distorted and should be strong enough to support the flowers unaided. Note that some intergeneric hybrids have been made with genera whose flowers are borne on short stems at the base of the pseudobulbs.

Floriferousness
The flower count should be at least comparable with that which could be expected from the parentage.

Return to TABLE OF CONTENTS