

# Handbook For Judges and Show Officials (digital)



Edition 9.1  
January 28, 2026

ISBN# 978-1-892400-47-5

*Edition 9.1; January 28, 2026*

## Acknowledgements

This edition of the *Handbook for Judges* was completed with the cooperation of the Handbook Revision Team, the AIS Board of Directors, and all the people who wrote, revised, and edited the chapters. A loud chorus of thank you to everyone!

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### Note from the Scribe

This edition of the *Handbook for Judges* contains changes approved by the AIS Board of Directors since edition 9.0 was published in March 2025. Once again, I want to thank everyone who has submitted recommendations for the *Handbook*. These suggestions and contributions confirm that the *Handbook* is a fluid document. It continues to be a pleasure to work with everyone: the Handbook Revision Team, the AIS Board of Directors, the section groups and cooperating societies, individual members, and especially those people who offered editorial advice.

Thank you to everyone!  
Claire Schneider, January 28, 2026

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NOTE: bookmark links have been added that can be used with a digital copy of the *Handbook*. While pressing the control key, click on the desired link with your mouse. There are no bookmark links in the paper copy of the *Handbook*. In some places, the bookmark links are crowded into the text due to the special page numbering system and available space on some pages.

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## Introduction to Edition 9.1 of the *Handbook for Judges and Show Officials*

The changes to *Handbook for Judges and Show Officials* for edition 9.1 have been approved by the American Iris Society and is the authority for evaluating irises in the garden and exhibitions. It is referred to throughout simply as the *Handbook*.

With the exception of "Chapter 3: Awards and Honors", the changes to the revised chapters have been minor. Words and phrases have been added and deleted in those chapters. Because the majority of changes were minor, edition 9.1 of the *Handbook* will not be available as a printed copy. Instead, a print copy of *Handbook* 9.0 may be purchased along with a packet of pages of the 2025 changes. The approved changes also will be available as a packet, free for download or as print copies for purchase from the AIS Storefront.

### CHANGES to edition 9.1

The major change in 2025 to the *Handbook* was in "Chapter 3: Awards and Honors" regarding the Gerald Richardson Award. An integrated garden at an AIS convention is now eligible for this award whether the garden is located on public or private property or in a commercial establishment. Also in chapter 3, 'Chubby Cheeks' in 2021" was added to the list of previous winners of the Board of Directors Award. The instruction, "send the nomination to the honorary awards chair", was added to the description of the Board of Directors Award.

There were other minor changes to edition 9.1. In "Chapter 9: Tall Bearded Iris" the phrase "of introduction" was deleted from page 15, second paragraph. In "Chapter 20: Iris Species and SPEC-X", the definition of SPEC-X was clarified. The definition of magnolia-shaped flower was added to "Chapter 22: Novelty Iris" and the glossary.

### FUTURE PROCESSES

Because it is a fluid document, the Handbook Revision Team expects and welcomes requests and suggestions for changes to the *Handbook for Judges and Show Officials*. **The next deadline will be July 31, 2026.** Send all corrections, changes, and revisions to [secretary@irises.org](mailto:secretary@irises.org)

Claire Schneider  
Handbook Revision Team chair  
January 28, 2026

## Introduction to the 9<sup>th</sup> Edition of the *Handbook for Judges and Show Officials*

The ninth edition of *Handbook for Judges and Show Officials* has been approved by the American Iris Society and is the authority for evaluating iris in the garden and exhibitions. It is referred to throughout simply as the *Handbook*.

The *Handbook* is available online free, as a digital copy or a paper copy for purchase from the AIS Storefront.

### FORMAT

The *Handbook for Judges* is available as both a printed and a digital document. The decision to format a digital edition of the *Handbook* was easy. The entire digital edition of the *Handbook* can be downloaded to a computer for home reference or to a tablet which can be carried into the garden. Single chapters, appendices, and activity sheets are also available for download and easy to print. Because it is in a digital format, single chapters and appendices can be revised and inserted into existing copies of the *Handbook* without having to publish or purchase the entire *Handbook*. This facilitates keeping the *Handbook* up to date. Revised and approved chapters will be accessible almost immediately for download or purchase.

Hyperlinks have been added in the table of contents of the digital version of 9.0 edition. Instead of scrolling and scrolling through the digital copy of the *Handbook*, you can use the hyperlinks to easily jump to any desired chapter, appendix, or glossary.

Because single chapters can be revised and replaced in the *Handbook*, a unique page numbering system was employed: each chapter begins with page 1. This system of pagination produces an interesting Table of Contents, with each chapter beginning on page one. To avoid any craziness, page numbers are not included in the Table of Contents. To help with navigation, each page has a header with an abbreviation of its chapter title. A suggestion is to add a set of 31-tab dividers to your *Handbook*, one tab for each chapter. These 31-tab dividers are called “daily dividers” and are available for purchase on-line.

The digital version of the *Handbook* will print on standard sized paper, 8.5 by 11 inches, making it fit into a regular 3-ring binder. Again, this will facilitate keeping the *Handbook* up to date because single chapters can be replaced. To ensure that the judges have the latest edition, the most recent date of revision can be found in the footer of each page.

## CHANGES in edition 9.0

The primary purpose for publishing *Handbook 9.0* was consolidation of all the recent changes and additions that have been made to the *Handbook*. Since *Handbook 8.0* was published in July 2021, there have been changes or additions to 12 chapters and one appendix, plus the addition of two chapters and two appendices. It was time for a new complete edition.

There are no new chapters in *Handbook 9.0*. However, the chapters have been renumbered due to the addition of the two Virtual Show chapters last year. Changes to “Chapter 3: Awards” include replacing “cup” with “award” for the Lloyd Zurbrigg-Clarence Mahan Seedling Award; a clarification of the Gerald Richardson Award; the addition of a section, “Honoring Irisarians”; and the removal of the section, “The Symposium”. The information and guidelines of the in-person and virtual show chapters were aligned and the chapter titles changed. The division, Educational Exhibit, was added to the virtual show and show schedule template. The reorganized guidelines for the Exhibition Certificate were added to the show chapters. Eligibility, rather in-eligibility, of single blossom entries for awards was clarified in Chapter 29. Two new appendices, G & H, are diagrams showing the path of a cultivar to the Dykes Medal. The definition of “halo” on the flower of a Japanese iris was clarified in the glossary. The appendices have been reordered and the Judge’s Activity Record is now at the end of the *Handbook*.

## PROCESS

The 9<sup>th</sup> Edition of the *Handbook* was completed in several steps. Suggestions for changes to the *Handbook* were collected throughout 2024. The Handbook Revision Team, consisting of Bonnie Nichols, Jody Nolin, Andi Rivarola, Gary White, and Claire Schneider (chair), reviewed each suggestion and incorporated most of them. A final draft of each revised chapter was posted online for the AIS Board of Directors to review. At their March 26, 2025 meeting, each revised chapter was reviewed and approved.

## FUTURE PROCESSES

Future meetings to review the *Handbook* will be scheduled annually. The deadline for the submission of additions and changes to the *Handbook* is September 30 of each year. The Handbook Revision Team will review those recommendations and present revisions to the AIS Board of Directors for approval no later than the following May AIS Board Meeting. With these deadlines, future revisions of any chapter or, if needed, the entire *Handbook*, should be ready for release on July 1<sup>st</sup>.

Send all corrections, changes, and revisions to the scribe, Claire Schneider, [itsaclearday.claire@gmail.com](mailto:itsaclearday.claire@gmail.com)



## Chapter 1

### ACCREDITATION OF JUDGES

Approved by the AIS Board of Directors, January 5, 2021  
Revision approved by the AIS Board of Directors, May 25, 2022

The judges training program is one of the most vital parts of the American Iris Society. Members who serve as judges have duties and responsibilities to fulfill. Accomplishing those duties and responsibilities, requires a judge to study, visit gardens and grow a representative collection of irises.

The accredited judge is the backbone of the American Iris Society (AIS) judging program and is responsible for the selection of award winners. It is the judges' votes that determine which irises receive awards and thus are recommended to the public. Serving as a judge is a privilege and the duties should be fulfilled with dedication. Because they represent the American Iris Society, judges should conduct themselves in a manner which will bring credit to the organization.

Because the judge is, in many ways, the most important official of the AIS, guidelines have been established for the training and selection of judges. The regulations are a minimum standard and the conscientious judge will usually exceed the requirements.

### APPOINTMENT OF JUDGES

Annually, regional vice presidents (RVPs) or designee (e.g., regional judges training chair) recommend members from their region to be AIS judges for the following year. These recommendations are sent to the AIS chair of judges for presentation to the AIS Board of Directors. The board has the sole authority to approve the appointment of judges and when opposing facts are presented, the board may choose to nullify an appointment.

Those persons recommended as judges must have held continuous membership in the AIS for the past three years and must have completed all other requirements. Appointments are made for one year, beginning on January 1 after the AIS fall board meeting. Reappointment for each succeeding year is based on satisfactory performance and continuous membership in AIS.

## REGIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES

The regional responsibility ultimately resides with the regional vice president (RVP) but may be delegated to the designee by the RVP if the region has a judges training chair.

Each region is responsible for carrying out its judges training program. It is necessary that each region maintain records of the work of each judge and prospective judge. Some regions do not have a large membership, availability of instructors, financial resources or a geographical area that affords development of a truly comprehensive training program. Therefore, the AIS requirements for judges training are the minimum requirements that each region can meet. It is expected, however, that some regions will require more than the minimum and some regions do have far more extensive requirements. All training sessions must be approved in advance and copies of all training rosters should be sent to and retained by the RVP or designee.

Each region should establish training guidelines which are in agreement with those of the AIS. In regions where approved requirements for the judges training program are more demanding than those of the AIS, the AIS will recognize the additional requirements and will support them. Each region is required to send an activity report to each judge annually. Emeritus judges are not required to return these reports, but all other judges must complete the report and return it to the proper regional official. These reports enable the regional vice presidents or designee to keep accurate records so they will know when a candidate or apprentice has completed the requirements for advancement to the next level and will know the training status and performance of their accredited judges.

Regions should seek the most qualified members to become judges. Recruitment should be based on finding those with knowledge of irises and a willingness and ability to serve the AIS. No person should be appointed as a judge unless qualified. The RVP or designee has the responsibility to see that guidelines are followed in the training of these judges.

The AIS chair of judges will send each RVP or designee a packet of information each year. The packet is to be used in making the recommendations for judges for the coming year and is to be returned to the AIS chair of judges by a date set by the AIS chair of judges, usually in the fall. It is imperative that the RVP or designee return this information in a timely manner in order to avoid any delay in approval of judges for that region.

## GUIDELINES FOR APPROVAL AND REPORTING OF JUDGES TRAINING

1. Judges training sessions are to be approved in advance by the RVP or by the designee when so authorized by the RVP.
2. An approved judges training class is defined as a structured in-classroom or in-garden instruction for two or more participants and presented by a fully accredited AIS judge. A written test of at least ten questions for each hour of training credit shall be administered, discussed and filed with the RVP or designee.
3. Fully accredited judges may judge an accredited show. They also may conduct for-credit judges training courses. A retired judge may not conduct a for-credit judges training course. The retired judge may serve as a show judge on a panel with at least one fully accredited judge at an accredited show.
4. A report of the training session is to be forwarded to the approving RVP or designee within two weeks following the session. The report should state the region, sponsoring group, date, subject, instructor, hours of credit and include a list of attendees showing their name as given on AIS membership records, type of judge and the judge's region.
5. A written test containing a minimum of twenty questions on areas to be covered in a two-hour or longer session must be prepared by or under the supervision of the instructor and completed by the attendees at the conclusion of the session. Sessions of less than two hours may have fewer questions with a minimum of ten questions for a one-hour session. A blank copy of the test is to accompany the report sent to the RVP or designee. Completed judges training tests should be kept by the RVP or designee for a minimum of three years.

## THE CANDIDATE FOR JUDGESHIP

Any AIS member may study to become a judge. After three years of continuous AIS membership and ten hours of judges training, the candidate may apply to become an apprentice. Continuous membership is maintained by paying dues on time. If dues are not received within the grace period, the three-year membership requirement must begin anew. The membership of the candidate must be in the person's name. Credit cannot be given for membership carried in the name of a garden, commercial enterprise or another person's name.

Members who join the judges training program should contact the RVP of their region or the designee to learn the region's policies. Training sessions consist primarily of lectures, practice judging in the garden and simulated show judging. With the permission of the current regional vice-president (RVP) or designee it is permissible for an individual or group to take a training session remotely without an instructor present, in the form of an electronic presentation (e.g., PowerPoint, video program) and/or via an electronic chat room (e.g., Skype, Zoom). A candidate for judgeship must complete a written examination on the material covered in the training session, which may be of the open book type if the instructor wishes. The candidate must receive a passing grade on the exam to get full credit for the session. To ensure an accurate record of their training sessions, candidates should verify that their attendance and test scores have been forwarded to their RVP or designee.

A minimum of two sessions of structured classroom training for a total of ten hours is required, with a passing score on the written examinations for each session. The training courses must be conducted by an approved instructor from the AIS in order for the candidate to receive credit. For sessions attended outside the home region, candidates should verify that the RVP or designee has been notified of the training received, subject matter, hours of attendance, location of school and instructor's name. The ten hours of required training must have been completed within the three-year period immediately preceding recommendation for appointment as an apprentice judge.

Anyone interested in becoming an AIS judge must have a copy of the latest edition of the *AIS Handbook for Judges and Show Officials*. Judges and potential judges should study this book to keep themselves informed of their duties and responsibilities. Other publications of AIS might be beneficial, but the *Handbook for Judges and Show Officials* is to be used as the guideline for judging and should never be out of the working judge's reach.

A candidate for judgeship must arrange for five accredited judges each to write a recommendation to the RVP or designee supporting the candidate's advancement to the apprentice status. Forms might be provided by the region for this purpose. If none are available a letter of recommendation is satisfactory.

The judges training year of record is August 1 through July 31 of the following year, e.g., August 1, 2018 through July 31, 2019. For persons who are moving to a higher judge level (candidate to apprentice, apprentice to garden/exhibition, and garden/exhibition to master) and who will have completed the requirements by July 31, any more judges training completed during the remainder of the calendar year will be counted towards

the requirements of the level to which they are being moved, pending AIS Board approval of their move to the higher level.

## THE APPRENTICE JUDGE

After successfully completing all the required training, a candidate will be recommended for appointment as apprentice judge. By this time the candidate should have learned the duties and responsibilities of serving as a judge; should have grown and studied enough irises to be familiar with different classifications, varieties/cultivars and their characteristics; and should know the qualities of a good iris well enough to make a conscientious evaluation. The apprentice judge has three years in which to complete the requirements for becoming a garden/exhibition judge.

Each apprentice judge is required to judge seedlings or named varieties in bloom in the garden on two separate occasions under the tutorship of two different fully accredited AIS judges. Each tutoring session must be for a minimum of two hours. This tutoring must be more than just a stroll through the garden. The time should be spent in truly evaluating iris plants: the plant vigor, the stalk, branching, substance, durability, bud count, form, etc.

The AIS chair of awards will send each apprentice judge a copy of the official AIS Ballot which will be marked “Void.” The apprentice should use it as a study guide during visits to gardens for garden training. This ballot is not to be returned to AIS.

Each apprentice judge is required to receive exhibition training at two different accredited shows under the tutorship of different fully accredited AIS judges on each occasion. The apprentice is only a student and cannot participate in the selection of “Best Specimen of Show” or help to break ties when the other judges disagree on the ribbon to be awarded. The apprentice judge is to listen to the evaluations being made by the judges of the show and learn from their deliberations. Apprentices should be given the opportunity to evaluate one or more specimens. Apprentices have no vote, and the ribbons are awarded by the accredited judges. Only one apprentice is to be assigned to each panel of judges. Under no circumstances is the apprentice to serve as a clerk while receiving this training. If more than one apprentice needs training, the panel of judges may be divided so there is still only one apprentice per panel. Apprentices may also receive this training under simulated show conditions if the training cannot be received at a regular exhibition. Training at a simulated show may only be given if the apprentice has no other means of obtaining proper training and it must be approved in advance by the RVP or designee.

The tutor of garden training or exhibition must never be a family member of the apprentice judge. The apprentice judge should ask the tutor to report to the RVP concerning the apprentice's judging performance. Forms for this purpose are usually provided by the region. The apprentice judge should provide the supervising judge with a stamped envelope, properly addressed to the regional authority, to ensure the report is sent to the correct person.

All apprentice judges must also attend a training session on AIS awards and balloting and pass a written examination on this training session. This session is to be at least two hours in length and shall be taught by an approved instructor. A training session on awards and balloting may be counted towards apprenticeship credit if taken within the three years immediately prior to appointment as an apprentice judge and provided the ten hours of training requirements have been completed.

After completing twenty hours of training (ten hours as a candidate and ten hours as an apprentice judge), the apprentice judge is eligible for appointment as an accredited garden/exhibition judge. Apprentices who do not complete requirements within the three-year period must wait a full year before again being eligible to seek appointment as an apprentice. No credit is given for hours completed in the three years. (See a summary of requirements to be completed as an apprentice judge at the end of this chapter.)

## FULLY ACCREDITED JUDGES

A fully accredited AIS judge is any currently approved judge in the following categories: garden/exhibition (G/E), master (M), emeritus (E), and overseas (OS).

Eligibility for this important position is based not only on the completion of the apprentice requirements, but continuous AIS membership as well. To remain accredited, the judge must maintain AIS membership, vote the official AIS Ballot, attend training sessions, and complete the annual regional activity report. Additional requirements established by the region must also be met.

**Garden/exhibition judges:** During each three-year period, garden/exhibition judges must complete or conduct judges training and/or conduct tutoring sessions that total five hours. Of those five hours, the G/E judges must attend at least one judges training session. Two hours of the training sessions and tutoring must be in-garden training. To

receive credit for any training session, the garden/exhibition judge must take and pass a written examination for that session.

Failure to vote the official AIS Ballot in a timely manner for two consecutive years will result in automatic disqualification as a judge. Failure to submit a timely activity report for two consecutive years will result in automatic disqualification as a judge. It is the responsibility of the RVP to report any other unsatisfactory performance which could result in disqualification of the judge.

**Master judges:** A person who has served the AIS as a judge for fifteen years is elevated to the status of master judge. These fifteen years are counted from the time the judge is first approved by the AIS Board of Directors as an apprentice. If there is an interruption in service, the judge does not lose the years served before the interruption. Master judges are required to earn credit totaling three hours (one hour must be in-garden training, which may be tutoring) during each three-year period. This credit must be earned by attending or teaching an approved judging training session. When a master judge tutors an apprentice judge, both master judge and apprentice receive training credit.

Master judges are required to submit an activity report each year to the region. Failure to return a timely activity report for two consecutive years will result in the judge being dropped from the official roster of accredited judges. Master judges will receive the official AIS Ballot. Failure to vote the AIS ballot in a timely manner for two consecutive years will result in the judge being dropped from the official roster of accredited judges.

**Retired Judges:** A retired judge is a master judge who has requested to be removed from the active judges list. This request should be made to the RVP or designee. They must maintain their AIS membership to be considered retired.

Requests to change from retired judge to active master judge are to be made through the RVP or designee. The change in status will be approved if the judge has met all the requirements of the master judge.

**Emeritus judges:** An emeritus judge is appointed by the AIS Board of Directors after being recommended by the AIS chair of judges and approved by three-fourths (75%) of the directors who are present. Emeritus judges are fully accredited AIS judges but are not required to visit gardens, vote the ballot or complete an activity report. This honor is given to judges who have rendered outstanding service to the Society. Nominations for emeritus judge may be made by the RVP or other AIS members. The nominating letter is sent to the AIS chair of judges and must contain a full statement of the nominee's

record of service to the AIS. The nomination must be supported by written statements of endorsement from four fully accredited judges, at least two of whom must be from outside the nominee's region.

Appointment as an emeritus judge is based on service at the national level that goes far beyond the expected conscientious performance as an AIS judge. To be considered for appointment, one should be a judge whose leadership and dedication to the ideals of the AIS are of genuine and obvious distinction. The honor is accorded only to persons who have served as fully accredited judges for a minimum of ten years except in the most unusual circumstances.

The AIS requires that an annual activity report be sent to every judge by each region. Emeritus judges are not required to return these reports. Apprentice judges, garden/exhibition judges and master judges must complete their activity report and return it to the proper regional official by the specified deadline.

## APPOINTMENT OF ARTISTIC DESIGN JUDGES

### Guidelines for Certification as an Artistic Design Judge

A person interested in becoming certified as an artistic design judge should notify the appropriate regional AIS judges training chair and ask about the region's policies regarding this category of judge.

To qualify for this certification, the person must already be an AIS accredited judge. In some cases, an AIS member with vast experience in artistic design or with other floral certifications or awards may qualify for this certification. Eligibility will be determined by the regional AIS judges training chair.

The person must have the current edition of the *AIS Handbook for Judges and Show Officials* in order to study the chapter on Artistic Design.

Training hours required:

- One hour covering Principles of Design, Chapter 30 in the *AIS Handbook*.
- One hour covering the Scale of Points, Chapter 30 in the *AIS Handbook*.
- Two hours of instruction that covers the rest of Chapter 30 in the *AIS Handbook*.
- Two hours of apprenticeship, watching judging of artistic designs at a show.

- Two hours of actual hands-on designing with a design judge (AIS or National Council of State Garden Clubs) or proof of winning a Best Design of Show or a Best of Design Sweepstakes.

Tests given at training sessions must be passed and reported to their regional AIS judges training chair.

An activity report must be completed on a yearly basis until all requirements are met. There is no time limit for completing the eight hours of training. The RVPs will collect the activity report information and pass it along to the appropriate regional AIS judges training chair in a process similar to the other judge categories (G/E, master, etc.)

Once a certificate for AIS artistic design judge has been given, nothing else is required unless The Principles of Design change, which is unlikely.

### Guidelines for being Grandfathered in as an Artistic Design Judge

Any AIS judge or other floral society member judge may be grandfathered in as an AIS artistic design judge if specific requirements have been met. Being a florist may or may not qualify. Qualification will depend on how familiar the person is with “Chapter 30: Artistic Design” in the *AIS Handbook for Judges* especially when specific florist design techniques are not in line with the principles outlined in the chapter.

A person interested in being grandfathered as an artistic design judge should notify the appropriate regional AIS judges training chair and ask about the region’s policies regarding this category of judge.

The person must have the current edition of the *AIS Handbook for Judges and Show Officials* and be familiar with “Chapter 30: Artistic Design”, specifically the Artistic Design Point Scale. A written statement that verifies this requirement will be requested by the regional AIS judges training chair.

To demonstrate love of judging design, the regional AIS judges training chair will request proof of the person’s record of judging artistic design shows, leading design training sessions, attending design training sessions, awards for Best Design of Show or artistic sweepstakes, or other relevant activities.

The person may be contacted by an AIS judge or the regional AIS judges training chair to answer other questions before being grandfathered in as an artistic design judge.

Once a certificate for AIS artistic design judge has been given, nothing else is required unless The Principles of Design change, which is unlikely.

## APPOINTMENT OF OVERSEAS JUDGES

A candidate for overseas judgeship must have expressed an interest and willingness to be appointed an AIS judge. A letter of nomination must be submitted to the AIS chair of judges by an AIS judge outlining the qualifications of the proposed overseas judge. The letter of nomination must be endorsed by a minimum of three additional accredited AIS judges when it is submitted to the chair of judges. There must also be a letter of concurrence from the proposed judge's national society if that society has a formal judge's program. Those nominees properly recommended and endorsed will be included in the annual report of the chair of judges when it is presented to the AIS Board of Directors for approval at the fall meeting.

## REINSTATEMENT OF JUDGES

In special circumstances a judge might need to resign. The resignation must be in writing and sent the judge's RVP or designee.

An apprentice judge who has been dropped from the judge's roster or resigns can be reinstated only under the guidelines for new candidates for judgeship. The apprentice must receive the recommendation for reinstatement from the RVP and five other judges in the region and must meet all other requirements of a newly appointed judge.

A fully accredited judge can be dropped from the judges roster for any of these causes: failure to complete the required training hours in a timely manner, failure to submit a timely activity report for two consecutive years, failure to vote the official AIS Ballot for two consecutive years or resignation. The fully accredited judge can be reinstated upon completion of the required hours in approved training sessions and upon the written recommendation of the RVP and five other judges in the region, who are familiar with the activities of the accredited judge seeking reinstatement.

If a master or emeritus judge is dropped for failure to pay dues on time, they may be reinstated upon payment of dues if reinstatement is requested. An apprentice judge or garden/exhibition judge who has been dropped for allowing AIS membership to lapse must wait three full years before applying for readmission to the program. The

apprentice must begin anew on requirements. The garden/exhibition judge must have earned the required hours of approved training since being dropped.

For reinstatement to be granted, the judge must receive the recommendation of the RVP and approval of the AIS Board of Directors.

A retired judge may serve as a show judge as long as they serve on a panel with at least one fully accredited judge. Only one retired judge may serve on a panel. Retired judges may not conduct for-credit judges training course.

## Summary

Requirements to be completed as a candidate for judgeship:

1. Maintain three years of continuous AIS membership.
2. Make application for entry into the judges training program.
3. Successfully complete a minimum of two training sessions for a total of ten hours, passing written examinations on each session.
4. Obtain the recommendation of five fully accredited judges.
5. Complete any additional regional requirements.

Requirements to be completed as an apprentice judge:

1. Maintain continuous AIS membership.
2. Complete two two-hour sessions of garden training under different AIS fully accredited judges.
3. Complete two two-hour sessions of show judging under different AIS fully accredited judges.
4. Successfully complete a two-hour course, Awards and Ballot. (A training session on Awards and Ballot taken within the three years immediately prior to appointment as an apprentice judge can be counted to satisfy this requirement.)
5. Complete all requirements within three years after being appointed an apprentice judge.
6. Complete the annual activity report.
7. Complete any additional regional requirements.

Requirements for maintaining status as a garden/exhibition or master judge:

1. Maintain continuous AIS membership.
2. Vote the official AIS Ballot each year before the deadline. Failure to do so for two consecutive years will result in automatic disqualification.

3. Attend and successfully complete refresher courses during each three-year period. Five hours credit (two of which must be in-garden training) is required for garden/exhibition judges and three hours credit (one of which must be in-garden training) is required of master judges.
4. Complete the annual activity report. Failure to do so for two consecutive years will result in automatic disqualification.
5. Complete any additional regional requirements.

Emeritus judges maintain their status as judges by maintaining continuous membership in the American Iris Society.

Requirements for becoming a certified artistic design judge  
(the following section is new as of May 2022):

1. Be an AIS accredited judge or an AIS member with extensive experience which would be evaluated by the regional AIS judges training chair.
2. Possess a current copy of the *AIS Handbook for Judges and Show Officials*.
3. Complete four hours of instruction on “Chapter 30: Artistic Design”, in the *AIS Handbook for Judges* and four hours of apprenticeship and hands-on designing with a design judge.
4. Pass the tests given at training sessions.
5. Complete an annual activity report until all requirements are met and send this report to the regional AIS judges training chair.

Requirements for being grandfathered as a certified artistic design judge  
(the following section is new as of May 2022):

1. Be an AIS accredited judge or other floral society judge with specific requirements which would be evaluated by the regional AIS judges training chair.
2. Possess a current copy of the *AIS Handbook for Judges and Show Officials*.
3. Proof of diverse experience with artistic design including judging design, winning design awards or other design activities.

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## Chapter 2

### DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF JUDGES

Approved by the AIS Board of Directors, January 19, 2021  
Revisions approved by the AIS Board of Directors, May 25, 2022

Being appointed a judge of the American Iris Society is a distinct privilege. Being a judge means accepting the responsibility of serving the American Iris Society (AIS) and the gardening public which relies on the selection of irises made by the judges. No AIS member should accept an appointment as a judge without understanding the duties and responsibilities of that position. The judge must be willing to give time and sometimes spend money in an effort to be informed and qualified and to fulfill the duties of a judge. Judges should be willing to follow all rules and responsibilities concerning AIS judges or not accept appointment as a judge.

#### APPLICABLE TO ALL JUDGING

A thorough knowledge of irises is the first requirement for judging. This should include all types of irises. The second requirement is to understand the difference between judging on the show bench and judging in the garden.

The only way to know irises is to grow them. Judges have an obligation to maintain a representative collection of iris types that can be grown in their area and to add some new varieties each year. Since it is impossible to grow all irises that a judge might be asked to evaluate, visits to other gardens are necessary. During these garden visits, the judge should study new and unfamiliar iris varieties and compare the growth habits of familiar iris.

When planning visits to other gardens, the judge should keep in mind that seeing an iris once is not sufficient to truly evaluate the plant. For this reason, more than one visit should be made to all area gardens where newer varieties are being grown. Evaluation of all irises should be based on two years of observation. It is not possible to make

sound decisions regarding the performance of an iris without observing it for at least two seasons.

Every judge should continue to study written material and to attend training sessions to improve judging techniques. An exchange of ideas and opinions with other judges will improve one's knowledge of iris. There is always something new to be learned.

Being willing to spend time and money is part of the responsibility of being a judge. Visiting gardens, attending training sessions and meetings, and studying the *Handbook for Judges & Show Officials* are all part of being a well-educated judge.

Fully accredited judges should be willing to volunteer to help train, be a mentor to and help other judges who are working on their hours to become certified as garden/exhibition and artistic design judges.

As a representative of the American Iris Society, a judge should promote the organization by participating in local, regional, and national activities, writing for publications, and speaking to horticultural groups about irises.

## JUDGING IN THE GARDEN

The primary duty of the AIS judge is to evaluate iris in the garden. Every category of the official AIS Ballot is based on performance of irises in the garden. To vote intelligently, the judge must see as many varieties and classifications of irises in a garden as possible and evaluate them for a two-year period under varied weather conditions. Never should voting be based on shows, photos, publicity or the popularity of a hybridizer. AIS awards should be based totally on garden performance.

The judge should visit gardens of local hybridizers as often as possible. The judge should be honest, but tactful, in evaluating the seedlings, pointing out good traits as well as any shortcomings. The judge should always take notes when visiting a garden for review before the official AIS Ballot is cast.

When the judge evaluates the worthiness of an iris in the garden, it should be for its garden value. The most important aspects of judging in the garden deal with the plant: its ability to produce increase, to produce numerous blossoms of quality over an acceptable period of time, and to resist disease. Garden judging is very different from exhibition judging and judges should be sure they do not use exhibition techniques when judging in the garden.

When tutoring an apprentice in garden judging, the instructor should help the student to understand the importance of evaluating the entire plant. The apprentice should study the plant, stalk and branching, flower, substance and durability, bud count and all other things which make an iris worthy of garden awards. The apprentice training session is not just a visit to admire the beauty of new introductions. The instructor should ensure that proper training is given and then forward the evaluation of the apprentice's performance to the designated regional official immediately after the training session.

## JUDGING AN IN-PERSON IRIS SHOW

At no time is the work of a judge more in the public's eye than when working as an exhibition judge. As soon as judging ends, the decisions of the judges are open to public scrutiny. A thorough knowledge of irises and their characteristics is a necessity. Both new and old varieties will be on display at a show. The more varieties with which a judge is familiar, the easier is the task of exhibition judging which is why a judge should have visited as many gardens as possible. The show is one of the ways in which the public is educated about the qualities of a good iris. Poor judging is detrimental to this educational purpose.

Before arriving at an AIS sanctioned exhibition, the judge should have received and studied the show schedule and should be familiar with the classes and varieties being evaluated. The judge should review the following chapters of the *Handbook for Judges & Show Officials*: "Chapter 2: Duties and Responsibilities of Judges," "Chapter 4: Organizing and Presenting an Iris Show" and "Chapter 5: Show Schedule & Show Report". At the exhibition, the judge should have access to the current copy of the *Handbook for Judges and Show Officials* and the most recent AIS Check List(s), Registrations and Introductions (R&Is) or access to the online Iris Register. To assist with identification, judges are allowed to use electronic devices to access the *AIS Iris Encyclopedia*.

Judges should enter their own irises in shows regularly in order to be familiar with the process of selecting, transporting and grooming irises. Serving on show committees will also provide experience for becoming a better judge. Judges are strongly urged not to enter specimens in shows when serving as a judge for that show. However, some shows permit judges to enter their bloom stalks. In those cases, the judge should choose not to judge or give input when their own entries are being evaluated.

Whenever possible, the judge should accept invitations to judge shows. Continued refusal to judge when invited to do so is a neglect of duty. When judging in a panel, the judge should not be afraid to express an opinion. However, if the majority agrees that one specimen is better than any other, the dissenting judge should accept the decision of the other panel members and quietly concur. One judge should not dominate other members of the panel and it is a good idea to take turns in giving oral evaluations of a specimen.

After accepting an invitation to judge a show, it is acceptable for the judge to ask what expenses the hosting organization is planning to pay. If the judge cannot afford to make the trip and the host group is not paying travel expense, the judge may decline the invitation. It is permissible to accept mileage, but the judge should not expect to be paid a fee for the actual judging.

A primary consideration when judging a show is to follow the AIS rules for judging and giving awards. Personal preferences in color and form should not be allowed to interfere with selection of worthy specimens for awards. All classifications of irises eligible for awards must be considered. The judge must be careful not to award ribbons where they are not deserved. An entry should not be given an award if it is entered in the wrong class. If such an error is discovered prior to judging, the show chair should be asked to place it in its proper class. If the class has already been judged, it is up to the show chair to determine if the class should be rejudged or the misplaced specimen disqualified.

No grooming of entries is permitted after judging begins. The specimens are to be judged as they appear at the moment of judging. The judge should never touch the specimen in any way and certainly should not remove spent blossoms, force partially open buds or alter the entry in any way. The judge may ask a show official to move an entry to better to evaluate it, but judges are not allowed to touch or move any entry.

Any unnamed or misnamed specimen is not eligible for an award. The judge should use caution in determining that an entry is misnamed. Climate, growing conditions and other factors affect the way an iris appears. It is not the responsibility of the judge to provide a correct name for a misnamed entry. AIS Check Lists and Registrations and Introductions (R&Is) can and should be used as aids in determining the accuracy of the entry's identity and classification. The online Iris Register and the *AIS Iris Encyclopedia* can be used to assist with identification.

It is improper to award ribbons to every entry in a show and the judge should keep in mind that an inferior specimen should never be awarded a ribbon. Exhibition awards are

based on perfection for that particular variety and an entry which does not meet that criteria should not receive a ribbon. If adverse weather conditions have severely reduced the overall quality of show entries, this should be taken into consideration during judging.

The Exhibition Certificate (EC) is awarded to worthy seedlings entered in the Seedling Division of a show. The judges may select an entry as "Best Seedling of Show," and it will receive the EC automatically. In addition, all judges visiting a show may request a ballot on which they can vote for seedlings they consider worthy of an EC.

All Exhibition Certificate (EC) ballots must be turned in at the show and will be sent to the AIS exhibitions committee chair along with the show report. Any seedling receiving five or more votes nationwide in one year will receive an EC, but a judge is under no obligation to vote for any seedling unless it is worthy. An EC is not a recommendation for introduction. But the EC does indicate that the seedling showed exceptional merit as it appeared on the show bench.

If a problem or irregularity occurs during the judging process, a judge should handle it clearly and firmly and after the show send a report of the problem or irregularity to the AIS exhibition committee member in charge of show approval/schedules.

Any misconduct by a judge should be reported to the AIS chair of judges.

When an apprentice judge is assigned to accompany a panel of judges, it is the duty of those judges to follow the AIS guidelines as outlined in Chapter 1 while tutoring that apprentice. Each panel should have no more than one apprentice. The apprentice should have no other duties and must not serve as a clerk while receiving apprentice training. Judges must not ask an apprentice to settle differences of opinion because the apprentice judge is not yet qualified to make such decisions.

The judge supervising the apprentice should allow the apprentice to evaluate specimens during the judging. However, the final decision on awarding ribbons is determined by the fully accredited judges. In order not to disturb the judging, the apprentice should ask questions after the judging has been completed. Immediately after the show, the supervising judge should complete the report on the performance of the apprentice judge and mail to the designated regional official. An apprentice judge who cannot get the needed credit in an actual show can receive training under simulated conditions with prior approval of the RVP or designee. The AIS judge who conducts such a training session should ensure that the apprentice receives the correct training needed.

## VOTING THE OFFICIAL AIS BALLOT FOR GARDEN AWARDS

All awards voted on the official AIS Ballot are based on garden judging. The judge must be thoroughly familiar with the AIS rules regarding these awards and with the traits of a good iris in the various classifications. A vote should never be cast for an iris when it does not conform to the requirements of the class in which it is listed. The instructions on the official AIS Ballot should be read carefully so that the maximum number of votes allowed is not exceeded. Too many votes cast in a category by a judge will cancel all of the votes in that particular category.

When voting the official AIS Ballot, it is not necessary to vote in every category. If the judge has not seen a sufficient number of the irises listed to know that those listed are truly worthy, no vote should be cast. To vote, a judge must have seen the iris growing and blooming in a garden over a two-year period. Voting for an iris that does not grow in the judge's home area should be avoided unless sufficient evaluation has been made in gardens where these irises do grow.

The judge who only votes for irises from a few hybridizers might be voting for favorite hybridizers. The judge who votes only for irises from a particular region might not be visiting enough gardens and might be unable to fairly evaluate irises from many regions. To vote or to withhold a vote on the basis of the hybridizer or region of iris involved indicates the judge does not understand the duties of judging.

In order to eliminate the possibility of voting for too many in one category, the conscientious judge will plan before actually marking the official AIS Ballot. The judge should use a marker which makes dark, easy-to-read marks and then check that the marks do not bleed through to opposite side of the ballot page.

Reading the ballot instructions carefully will provide all the information needed to vote properly. No matter how much care is taken in evaluating the irises and marking the ballot, it is of no avail unless the ballot is mailed on time. The official AIS Ballot is void and the judge is considered as not to have voted if the ballot is postmarked after the deadline to vote, mailed to the wrong person, contains incorrect markings or is unsigned by the judge. A judge may feel unqualified to vote because of illness or other circumstances that prevent visiting gardens and evaluating irises. In that event, to be counted as having voted, the judge must sign or electronically submit the ballot, write the reason for not voting and submit the ballot before the deadline. Only serious illness

or extreme circumstances are considered valid reasons for not voting. Minor illness, a busy schedule and/or forgetfulness are unacceptable excuses for not voting.

In voting the High Commendation Award (HC) for numbered or named seedlings, it is imperative that the number or name is listed exactly as its owner listed it, the hybridizer's name is correct, and the writing is legible. If a seedling has been named, its name and number should be listed when both are known. The HC Award indicates that an iris is worthy of introduction. A judge should vote for an iris that is superior to others available in its class and color range; not just because the hybridizer is well-known, the seedling was produced locally, or because it is the only one in a class. Using the same rules for judging irises in its class, the vote for HC should be based on the entire plant including stalk, clump, and flowers.

A judge who does not receive an official AIS Ballot by April 15 should contact the RVP or designee of their region or the AIS awards chair immediately. A judge can vote the AIS Ballot by paper ballot or electronically using the online voting system. This is important because if a judge does not receive an official AIS Ballot and does not notify anyone in time for an adjustment to be made, then no valid excuse is available for not voting.

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## Chapter 3

### AMERICAN IRIS SOCIETY AWARDS AND HONORS

Approved by the AIS Board of Directors, February 2, 2021

Revisions approved by the AIS Board of Directors, January 28, 2026

The responsibility for setting policy, establishing rules and implementing procedures for the American Iris Society's awards for iris rests with the AIS Board of Directors. The Awards Committee of the American Iris Society is delegated the authority to coordinate, conduct, compile and report the results of the national competitions for garden awards, including the official AIS Ballot awards and the convention awards and honors. The symposium chair is responsible for the tall bearded symposium ballots. The Exhibitions Committee of the AIS is given the authority to administer and report the results of exhibition awards earned at AIS accredited iris shows.

#### I. AIS OFFICIAL GARDEN AWARDS

Each year the accredited judges of the American Iris Society (AIS), on the official AIS Ballot, cast their votes for the AIS garden awards and from this balloting, the AIS garden awards are decided. Voting the official AIS Ballot may be done using an official printed ballot or the on-line voting system. The emphasis is repeatedly placed on the word garden because this system of awards is based entirely on performance in the garden. All evaluations must be made of iris seen growing and in bloom in gardens, over a period of time, in different locations and under varying climatic conditions. When an iris variety is considered for an official garden award, its qualities as a cut flower, an exhibited specimen or from a photo must be disregarded.

At the present time, official garden awards of the American Iris Society have been established for the following classifications of iris:

- Miniature Dwarf Bearded (MDB)
- Standard Dwarf Bearded (SDB)
- Intermediate Bearded (IB)
- Border Bearded (BB)
- Miniature Tall Bearded (MTB)

Tall Bearded (TB)  
Arilbred (AB)  
Aril (AR)  
Japanese (JI)  
Siberian (SIB)  
Louisiana (LA)  
Pacific Coast Natives (PCN)  
Spuria (SPU)  
Species (SPEC)  
Inter-species (SPEC-X)

Including all categories of awards in every classification, an AIS accredited judge has the opportunity to cast several dozen votes on the official AIS Ballot. However, because of the iris season's time limitations and cultural demands or the lack of opportunities to see, study, and acquire sufficient knowledge of iris in all classifications, few, if any, judges will make all the selections permitted. A judge probably will cast votes for fewer than half those allowed. An AIS accredited judge expects to spend many hours and days visiting not only local gardens, but also private and display gardens in the area and region. If possible, the judge should visit gardens across the country, weighing the merits of eligible varieties.

The AIS' official garden awards are listed below with the conditions of eligibility, the number of votes the accredited judge may cast for each award, and the number of cultivars winning each award.

#### The High Commendation (HC) Award

The High Commendation (HC) Award is reserved for seedling iris, viewed in gardens under seedling number or registered name, which has not yet been introduced to commerce. A seedling in any of the established classifications listed previously is eligible for the HC Award. Judges are cautioned not to vote for a first-year seedling and to be certain that the seedling being considered conforms to the requirements of its designated classification.

The HC Award is granted to each seedling that receives five or more votes. It is acceptable for a seedling to win the HC Award more than once and as often as the judges award it. A seedling remains eligible up to the time of its introduction. In any award year, the HC Award is limited to iris that have not been introduced before the deadline date for filing the official AIS Ballot.

The maximum number of tall bearded seedlings that the judge may enter on the ballot is eight. For each of the other classifications the maximum number is three.

### The Honorable Mention (HM) Award

An officially registered and introduced iris in the classification of TB, BB, IB, SDB, MDB, MTB, Aril, Arilbred, becomes eligible for the Honorable Mention (HM) Award the second year after its year of introduction to commerce. All other classes, as registered by the introducer, become eligible for the HM Award the third year following introduction.

An introduction is defined as an offering for sale to the public by printed document such as a catalog or printed list, or by advertisement in the *AIS Bulletin* or on a website. However, to be eligible for official AIS awards above the level of High Commendation Award, the iris introduction must be recorded with the AIS Registrar.

Iris of each classification remain on the official AIS Ballot for a period of three years. Normally an iris is registered before introduction. In the case that an iris is registered after introduction, some HM eligibility may be lost. An iris can go on to the official AIS Ballot only if it has been both registered and introduced. The end of its eligibility is determined by its date of introduction. An iris variety may win the HM Award only once.

Occasionally a hybridizer realizes that an iris that has been registered (and perhaps also introduced) must be reclassified. For example, it might be a perfect border bearded iris in its home garden but grows to tall bearded size almost everywhere else. When this happens and the iris is re-registered, the iris must start over in the awards system in its new class, based on the dates of its re-registration and re-introduction, even if it already has won an award in its old class.

If there are three or more eligible cultivars for any Honorable Mention (HM), a judge is permitted to cast votes for ten percent (10%) of the iris (rounded to the next higher number) eligible to be voted for, with a minimum of two. If there are two eligible cultivars for any HM, a judge is permitted to cast a vote for one. If there is only one eligible cultivar for any HM, that HM will not be placed on the official AIS Ballot for vote until there are at least two eligible cultivars for that specific HM. Each eligible cultivar will continue on the ballot for the full three years of eligibility.

The number of HMs awarded is the same as the number of votes permitted for that class of iris, unless increased by ties.

### The Fred and Barbara Walther Cup

The Fred and Barbara Walther Cup is awarded annually by the American Iris Society to the originator of the iris variety that receives the greatest number of votes in the HM Award balloting, regardless of classification. All classifications of iris are eligible.

### The Award of Merit (AM)

One of the American Iris Society's most coveted awards is the Award of Merit (AM). The AM is given each year to a limited number of iris varieties in each of the recognized classifications of iris, but only after the eligible varieties have been marketed over a period of time. This assures wide distribution and thus affords the judges sufficient opportunities to properly evaluate the eligible varieties as worthy of the AM. Judges again are reminded that it is the responsibility of the individual judge to determine that the iris variety conforms to the requirements of the classification in which it is registered.

Eligibility for the Award of Merit begins the second year after the iris variety has received the HM Award and eligibility continues for three years. All eligible varieties are listed on the official AIS Ballot during the three years of eligibility. An iris may win an Award of Merit only once.

If there are three or more eligible cultivars for any Award of Merit, a judge is permitted to cast votes for ten percent (10%) of the iris (rounded to the next higher number) eligible to be voted for, with a minimum of two. If there are two eligible cultivars for any AM, a judge is permitted to cast a vote for one. If there is only one eligible cultivar for any AM, that AM will not be placed on the official AIS Ballot for vote until there are at least two eligible cultivars for that specific AM. Each eligible cultivar will continue on the ballot for the full three years of eligibility.

The number of AMs awarded is the same as the number of votes permitted for that class of iris, unless increased by ties.

### The Special Medal Awards

Each class of iris has its special medal, and they are as follows:

The CAPARNE-WELCH MEDAL is restricted to miniature dwarf bearded iris (MDB).

The COOK-DOUGLAS MEDAL is restricted to standard dwarf bearded iris (SDB).

The HANS AND JACOB SASS MEDAL is restricted to intermediate bearded iris (IB).

The KNOWLTON MEDAL is restricted to border bearded iris (BB).

The WILLIAMSON-WHITE MEDAL is restricted to miniature tall bearded iris (MTB).

The CLARENCE G. WHITE MEDAL is restricted to iris of one-half or more aril content that clearly exhibit at least three readily recognizable aril flower characteristics as defined and approved by the Aril Society International.  
(AR - pure aril & arilbred of  $\geq 50\%$  aril)

The WILLIAM MOHR MEDAL is restricted to iris of one-quarter or more aril content that do not meet the more restrictive requirements of the C. G. White Medal and that clearly exhibit at least two readily recognizable flower characteristics as defined and approved by the Aril Society International (AB of 25 to 49.9% aril).

The JOHN C. WISTER MEMORIAL MEDAL is restricted to tall bearded iris (TB).

The PAYNE MEDAL is restricted to Japanese iris (JI).

The MARY SWORDS DeBAILLON MEDAL is restricted to Louisiana iris (LA).

The SYDNEY B. MITCHELL MEDAL is restricted to Pacific Coast Native iris (Californicae) (PCN).

The MORGAN-WOOD MEDAL is restricted to Siberian iris (SIB).

The ERIC NIES MEDAL is restricted to Spuria iris (SPU).

The FOUNDERS OF SIGNA MEDAL is restricted to species iris (SPEC).

The RANDOLPH-PERRY MEDAL is restricted to interspecies iris (SPEC-X).

To become eligible for a special medal, an iris must have received the Award of Merit (AM) in its class. Eligibility begins the second year after the variety has received its AM and continues for a period of three years. Qualified varieties are listed on the official AIS Ballot during the three-year period of eligibility. Judges may vote for one choice for each of the special medals, except for the John C. Wister Memorial Medal, where a judge may vote for three choices.

Except for tall bearded iris, a special medal is awarded to the one iris in each classification that receives the most votes. The John C. Wister Medal is awarded to

each of the three tall bearded varieties that receive the most votes. In the case of a tie, those iris tied shall receive duplicate medals.

In any given year in which there are fewer than two eligible cultivars for a special medal, that medal will not be placed on the official AIS Ballot for vote until there are at least two eligible cultivars for that specific special medal. Each eligible cultivar will continue on the AIS Ballot for the full three years of eligibility.

The Knowlton, Hans and Jacob Sass, Cook-Douglas, and Williamson-White Medals are provided by the Median Iris Society for awarding by the American Iris Society. The Caparne-Welch Medal is provided by the Dwarf Iris Society. The Mary Swords DeBaillon Medal is provided by the Society for Louisiana Iris. The Morgan-Wood Medal is provided by the Society for Siberian Iris. SIGNA provides the Founders of Signa and the Randolph-Perry Medals. The Eric Nies Medal is provided by the Spuria Iris Society. The Payne Medal is provided by the Society for Japanese Iris. The Clarence G. White and William Mohr Medals are provided by the Aril Society International. The Sydney B. Mitchell Medal is provided by the Society for Pacific Coast Native Iris.

#### The Dykes Memorial Medal

The Dykes Memorial Medal is the highest award an iris can receive. The medal honors William Rickatson Dykes (1877-1925), the English botanist and author of the great monograph, *The Genus Iris*. The Dykes Medal for America is awarded annually by the British Iris Society through the American Iris Society and is restricted to iris which originated in the United States or Canada. The first Dykes Medal for America was awarded in 1927.

To become eligible for the American Dykes Medal, an iris must have received a special medal. However, not all special medal winners are eligible, since they might have originated outside of the United States or Canada.

The special medal winners become eligible for the Dykes Medal the first year after receiving a special medal. The period of eligibility is three years. All eligible varieties are listed on the official AIS Ballot during the three years of eligibility.

Each judge may cast one vote for the Dykes Medal. The iris which receives the greatest number of votes regardless of classification is designated the winner. In case of a tie, multiple medals shall be awarded.

## II. BOARD OF DIRECTORS AWARD

This distinctive award is neither a garden award nor an exhibition award. This award is made by the American Iris Society's Board of Directors to honor an iris which has not won a Dykes Medal, but which shows clearly in its progeny that it is among the greats of irisdome.

Candidate cultivars for this award are presented to the AIS Board of Directors by the Awards Committee or by nomination from any AIS member. A nomination should be sent to the honorary awards chair with supporting documentation. A simple majority of the AIS Board of Directors is required to give this award.

The Board of Directors Award, which is not an annual award, was established in 1972 and first awarded in 1975. Previous winners were 'Snow Flurry' TB in 1974, 'Tobacco Road' TB in 1975, 'White Swirl' SIB in 1987, and 'Chubby Cheeks' SDB in 2021.

## III. AIS CONVENTION AWARDS AND HONORS

The American Iris Society's national meeting, popularly known as the AIS national convention, is held annually in the spring of the year. Everyone attending the national meeting who has paid the convention's registration fees is entitled to cast ballots to honor outstanding iris seen in the convention's official tour gardens. The privilege is extended to all registrants without regard to status as an AIS member. In case of a tie, there can be multiple winners.

### The Franklin Cook Memorial Cup

The Franklin Cook Memorial Cup is awarded annually during the American Iris Society's national meeting. All introduced iris seen growing and in bloom in the official tour gardens of the meeting are eligible for the Franklin Cook Memorial Cup, except for iris that originated within the host region for that year's national meeting or originated by a hybridizer whose garden is included on the official garden tour, regardless of its location. Iris considered for this award may or may not be official guest iris. For the convention ballots, introduced iris will include all iris properly registered and offered for sale prior to or in the spring issue of *IRISES, the Bulletin of the American Iris Society* of the year of that national meeting.

Each convention registrant may vote for only one variety and the Franklin Cook Memorial Cup is awarded to the iris receiving the most votes. In case of a tie, there can be multiple winners.

### The President's Cup

The President's Cup is awarded annually during the American Iris Society's national meeting. Eligibility is restricted to introduced iris that originated within the host region for that year's national meeting or originated by a hybridizer whose garden is included on the meeting's official convention tour, regardless of its location. Iris must have been seen growing and in bloom in the meeting's official tour gardens but need not be official guest iris.

Each convention registrant may vote for one variety and The President's Cup is awarded to the iris with the most votes. In case of a tie, there can be multiple winners.

### Ben R. Hager Cup

The Ben R. Hager Cup is awarded annually during the American Iris Society's national convention. Eligibility is restricted to introduced median iris (e.g. SDB, IB, BB, MTB) seen growing and in bloom in the meeting's official tour gardens but need not be official guest iris.

Each convention registrant may vote for one variety, and the Ben R. Hager Cup is awarded to the iris with the most votes. In case of a tie, there can be multiple winners.

### Lloyd Zurbrigg-Clarence Mahan Seedling Award

This award is presented to the seedling at the AIS' national convention that receives the most votes by convention registrants. The seedling may be of any type and registered but not introduced. It is presented by AIS Region 4 in honor of two of its distinguished members, Lloyd Zurbrigg, a noted hybridizer of reblooming iris and Clarence Mahan, a hybridizer and past president of AIS. The Zurbrigg-Mahan Award was first presented in 2014 at the AIS national Convention in Dallas, Texas. Notably different from other AIS awards, the recipient retains the award and a new engraved award, which is donated each year.

### The Gerald Richardson Award

The primary consideration for the Gerald Richardson Award is to inspire the viewer to create their own integrated garden.

The Gerald Richardson Award may be awarded annually to the best integrated garden at an AIS convention. An integrated garden will showcase a variety of iris with

companion plantings and may be found on public or private property or in a commercial establishment. An integrated garden should have a holistic feel, a marriage of iris and companion plants with their physical environment. Elements of an integrated garden **might include** the use of other perennials; native and pollinator-friendly plants; water conservation strategies; artistic additions such as trellises and statues; and/or visually pleasing structures and hardscaping such as paths, raised beds, fences, etc. There are countless ways to interpret an integrated garden, but always, it should provide a tranquil, harmonious, and inspirational experience for the visitor.

### **Considerations for an Integrated Garden**

**Efficient use of space:** The integrated garden may employ a vertical or horizontal alignment to accentuate its purpose, even in small, constrained spaces.

**Aesthetic Appeal:** Its design is both appealing and functional. It may contain simple features that are pleasing to the eye but at the same time highly practical.

**Multi-purposed:** It may include different features, such as pathways, garden art, or raised beds for the production of vegetables.

**In summary**, an integrated garden is more than just a place to grow irises and companion plants. It is a blended system that nurtures the environment and the people who interact with it. It mirrors the gardener's inner spirit and inspires viewers.

The integrated garden does not display parallel rows of irises or other plantings.

Each convention registrant may vote for one garden. The Richardson Award is given to the garden with the most votes.

The first Richardson Award was given at the 2019 AIS Convention in San Ramon, CA.

### Favorite Guest Iris

The AIS' national meeting ballot for favorite guest iris allows each registrant the privilege of voting for up to fifteen outstanding guest iris. Eligibility is restricted to registered iris, introduced or not introduced, which are official convention guest iris. They must be listed in the meeting's program book and must have been seen growing and in bloom on the meeting's official garden tour. The meeting's official list of Favorite Guest Iris (usually 25) is made up of the varieties receiving the highest number of votes.

## IV. AIS OFFICIAL EXHIBITION AWARDS

### Iris Show Awards

The highly prized show awards of the American Iris Society are awarded by AIS accredited judges who are acting as official show judges at AIS accredited iris shows. Only AIS accredited shows which conform to the exhibition rules of AIS and which have been approved by the AIS Exhibitions Committee are eligible to give these awards.

AIS show awards range from the traditional ribbons and rosettes to sweepstakes awards and certificates. The list of show awards and the conditions under which they are awarded are presented in detail in Chapters 4 and 6.

### The Nelson Award

The Nelson Award was first given in 1966. This award honors the iris which has been selected Best Specimen of the Show in the most AIS accredited iris shows during the calendar year. In case of a tie more than one award may be given and the same variety may win more than once. The Nelson Award is determined by the AIS Exhibition Committee. The iris that wins the Nelson Award will be honored in *IRISES*.

### Regional and Affiliate Society Awards and Honors

Many AIS regions and affiliate societies have garden awards and honors that are not part of the AIS Awards and Honors system. Information and guidelines about these awards can be found in regional convention booklets.

### Exhibition Certificates (E.C.)

The Best Seedling of Show automatically receives an Exhibition Certificate (E.C.).

At the end of judging the in-person and virtual shows, the judges will view all seedlings and deliver their E.C. ballots to the show chair.

(1) An E.C. is awarded to any seedling of the in-person show that receives a total of five or more votes cast by the judges of this show and by any visiting certified judges. At the

virtual show, an E.C. is awarded to any seedling that receives five or more votes cast by the judges of the virtual show and only the judges of this virtual show.

(2) An E.C. will be awarded to any seedling that receives a cumulative total of at least five votes from all other AIS sanctioned shows, virtual and in-person shows, in this current calendar year.

(3) The count of E.C. votes from all sanctioned shows will be completed by the AIS exhibition reports chair.

(4) An iris can win only one E.C. in each show but can win multiple E.C.s when entered in multiple shows.

## V. HONORING IRISARIANS

The AIS has special awards for people. These honorary awards originate from nominations made by members of The American Iris Society (AIS). The immediate past AIS president and the Honorary Awards Committee review the nominations and present recommendations to the AIS Board of Directors for approval. Honorary awards are not necessarily given annually. In some years multiple awards are presented, while in other years no awards are presented. It all depends on the nominations received.

A nomination for a special award is made by stating the name of the award, candidate, and reasons for nomination (in as much detail as possible). Nominations need to be received by September 1 to allow time for the committee to review. Nominations should be sent to the Honorary Awards chair.

### AIS Distinguished Service Medal

The AIS Distinguished Service Medal is awarded to individuals who have rendered outstanding service to the AIS at a national level. Selection is based on the amount and quality of work done in such capacities as a member of the AIS Board of Directors, national officer, judges' training activity that is national in scope, writing for the national publication, and other less tangible yet vital acts of national service.

### AIS Hybridizer Medal

The AIS Hybridizer Medal is awarded to living hybridizers who have accomplished exceptional work in iris breeding. This may be based on the number of irises for which a hybridizer has won honors. The Medal may also be awarded when the ratio of award-winning irises to the total number of introductions is significant or when the hybridizer has made significant advancements in irises.

### The Bee Warburton Medal

The Bee Warburton Medal is awarded to an overseas irisarian for outstanding international contributions to the knowledge of the world of iris. It is the highest honor that AIS can bestow on an international irisarian.

### AIS Gold Medal

The AIS Gold Medal is presented to those who have provided highly exceptional service over a long period of time. It is the highest honor that the AIS can give, and consequently it is rarely given.

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## Chapter 4

### IN-PERSON IRIS SHOW: Organizing & Presenting

Approved by the AIS Board of Directors, March 9, 2021

Revisions approved by the AIS Board of Directors, March 26, 2025

An iris show has its beginning when a group of interested people decides to sponsor a show under the auspices of the American Iris Society (AIS). There are no requirements concerning the identity of such a group or organization. It may be a region, a local society, a garden club, or an informal group of interested persons. The important consideration is that they are willing to be governed by the official show rules and regulations of the American Iris Society.

The first item of business for the sponsoring group is to set the date and to select the location for the proposed show. The group should also project anticipated expenses and make arrangements for necessary financing. It is also the responsibility of this group to select a general show chair or two co-chairs. The general chair could be selected first in order to work closely with the sponsoring group to make the initial decisions.

The remainder of this chapter is a discussion of the major areas of responsibility involved in planning, organizing, and presenting an iris show. It should be kept in mind that show size varies greatly from location to location, as does the number of willing workers available for the various assignments. These items will affect the manner in which the major responsibilities are grouped and assigned to committees.

The number of committees may be consolidated or expanded to fit the circumstances peculiar to any given show. However, in order to stage a smoothly running, successful show, it is necessary to determine if one person will cover a single function or if it is to be divided among several people. The American Iris Society has not set rigid rules for governing the organization of a show or the assignment of various responsibilities. However, the following guidelines have proven successful over many years. Show committees should feel free to adapt them to the needs and requirements of their local group.

### A. Show Chair

The show chair has the ultimate responsibility for the success of all phases of the show from inception to cleanup. Major areas of responsibility are delegation, supervision, and coordination. The chair also has the responsibility for staffing the show committees with capable and willing workers and furnishing clear and concise descriptions of the tasks assigned to the respective committees. The show chair monitors progress on a continuing basis, offering advice, instruction and assistance when needed. On the day of the show, the chair is responsible for keeping the activities moving on a planned schedule and is available to solve problems during setup, with entries, and during judging. It is also the responsibility of the show chair or person appointed by the chair to complete and file the show report. The show chair has the final authority, within the limits set by the AIS and the show schedule, in all matters pertaining to the show.

### B. Show Schedule

The Schedule Committee is responsible for writing the show schedule. "Chapter 5: The Show Schedule & Show Report" should be studied carefully before drafting the schedule. The final draft must be sent to the AIS exhibition schedules chair at least two months prior to the date of the show. Once approved by the AIS exhibition schedules chair, the show schedule must be distributed to the show judges and should be made available to committee chairs, the general membership, potential exhibitors, and local garden clubs.

### C. Awards Chair

The awards chair keeps the records of the show and handles all necessary correspondence. This person also is responsible for ordering and dispensing all exhibition supplies and awards, including the Exhibition Certificate (EC) ballots for the seedlings. Care should be taken to see that all judges (those judging the show and any judges who might be visiting the show) have access to these ballots. When judging has been completed, the awards chair is responsible for making necessary tallies to determine the winners of the Silver and Bronze Medals and other awards that require a tally. A copy of the final show schedule and all EC ballots (regardless of the number of votes received by any one seedling) must be included with the show report submitted to the AIS exhibition reports chair.

#### D. Staging Committee

The major function of the Staging Committee is to display the entries and exhibits in the most attractive manner possible. The arrangement of the display area should be carefully planned to provide an overall impression of order and beauty.

A floor plan prepared in advance will save time when setting up the show. Tables should be arranged in a way that provides easy access for judges and a smooth flow of visitors. Aisles should be wide so that a person stopping to study an exhibit does not block the passage of others. Dead-end aisles should be avoided if at all possible.

Division of space should be balanced between the anticipated number of horticultural and artistic entries. In general, the artistic design division should occupy less than half of the exhibition space. Horticultural specimens should be displayed in uniform containers. Sections and groups should be arranged in the same order as listed in the schedule. The Best Specimen of Show and major winning exhibits should be separately displayed in a prominent location.

An area at the show should be set up to display and distribute free literature about the AIS and be staffed by someone who can provide further AIS information and membership applications. Affiliate, section and regional information and membership applications also should be available. Other iris culture information may also be available.

#### E. Properties Committee

The Properties and Staging Committees must work closely together. For a small show the Properties and Staging Committees could be consolidated. Major responsibilities include:

1. Securing all properties and materials necessary for staging the show such as display vases, trophies, banners, etc.
2. Transporting the properties from the storage location prior to the show.
3. Dismantling, packing, inventorying and returning properties to the storage location after the show.
4. Making any required construction or decorations for the show.

## F. Entry & Placement

The Entry and Placement Committee receives all qualified entries and assures that they are properly placed on the show bench. Careful and proper placement is of vital importance to the exhibitors and the judges. In the Horticulture Division, entries should be placed by a member of the committee. Each variety is placed by name in alphabetical order. In the Artistic Design Division, exhibitors should place their own entries in the designated space.

Entry tags should be checked for correctness and completeness, then folded to conceal the identity of the exhibitor. For horticultural entries, tags are fastened to the container by the exhibitor to indicate the direction of placement on the bench. For artistic entries, tags are placed by the exhibitor next to the entry.

This Committee may designate an entry clerk who is responsible for recording entries in the method adopted for the show as well as making certain that limitations imposed by the schedule are followed by the exhibitors.

## G. Classification Committee

The responsibilities of the Classification Committee fall into two areas: horticultural and artistic.

1. The Horticultural Classification Committee members should be able to recognize many types and varieties of iris and make sure each iris has been entered in the correct class. However, the Committee is not obligated to identify unnamed or incorrectly named specimens.
2. The Artistic Classification Committee is responsible for making certain each entry fulfills the requirements of the show schedule as to type of exhibit, plant and accessory materials used, etc.

## H. Judges Committee

The Judges Committee is responsible for securing, assigning, instructing and hosting the judges of the show. A list of accredited judges is published annually by the American Iris Society. While judges should not expect to be paid a fee for judging a show, the judges committee chair should be clear when inviting a judge to judge a show exactly what expenses will be covered such as mileage, over-night expenses, meals, etc.

Judging panels for the horticulture division must consist of a majority of AIS accredited judges. A retired judge may serve as a show judge as long as they serve on a panel with at least one fully accredited judge. Only one retired judge may serve on a panel. The artistic panel should be qualified to judge in this highly specialized field. There are AIS judges who have training and expertise in this area. See “Chapter 30: Artistic Design” for more information about the composition of the judging panel for the artistic division.

Prior to judging, the judges committee chair should instruct the judges of any special problems, changes, or circumstances that would affect the quality of the show.

### I. Clerks Chair

The chair of the clerks selects, instructs, and supervises the clerking staff. Usually, two or three clerks are assigned to each panel of judges.

The clerks should be familiar with the show area and know the location and size of the groups of iris assigned to their panel of judges. Each panel of clerks should be supplied with a hand punch for marking entry tags, a supply of ribbons and writing materials for the judges to use. (It is acceptable for the judges to punch the tags if they wish.)

As judges complete a group of iris, a clerk should carry those specimens designated by the judges to a prearranged table. A clerk should always be available to perform other services for the judge, for example to summon a show official, rearrange specimens in a group to permit better viewing by the judges, etc.

When judging has been completed and winners of major awards have been selected, the chair of clerks or an appointed clerk is responsible for opening the entry tags and removing the lower portion of the tags. These are delivered to the award chair, who tallies them to determine the winners.

Clerks should be instructed on the proper etiquette of observation during judging. They must keep a comfortable distance from the judges and not engage in conversation with the judges or question the judges’ decisions. In addition, clerks must be careful not to expose the name of an exhibitor on the entry tag until judging has been completed and the top winners are selected. Clerks should speak only in response to questions from a member of the panel or Show Committee. A clerk should never greet a judge’s decision

with visible delight or dismay. It is unethical for a clerk to repeat any comments or deliberations overheard during the judging process.

#### J. Hospitality Committee

The Hospitality Committee acts as gracious hosts to those visiting the show and makes certain that the local society and the American Iris Society are presented in the best possible light.

A time table should be prepared for members of the Hospitality Committee, assigning specific hours of duty. Shifts should run for two to three hours and there should be at least two persons on duty at all times. A larger number is recommended whenever possible, particularly for large shows or those spread over large areas. Those on duty should be prepared to welcome visitors, answer questions, discuss exhibits and supply other information of interest about the local society and the American Iris Society. Other functions of this group are to guard the property of exhibitors and assure that exhibits and awards are not removed until the appointed time. The Hospitality Committee might also provide a light breakfast or lunch refreshments for the workers and judges.

#### K. Publicity Committee

The Publicity Committee is responsible for creating public interest in the show as well as iris in general. They should also take this opportunity to promote the local society and the American Iris Society (AIS). This can be done through social media, websites, newspaper releases, radio and television announcements, paid advertising, posters, flyers and personal letters or emails to other garden clubs, organizations and friends.

News releases to newspapers and broadcasting facilities should be submitted several weeks in advance of the show. Contacting the news media in person can influence them to send a reporter and/or photographer to the show. A follow up news release immediately after the show, giving information on outstanding exhibits and names of winners of AIS awards, is an additional opportunity to call public attention to iris, the local society and the AIS.

#### L. Cleanup Committee

The Cleanup Committee is responsible for assuring that the show area remains clean and orderly during and after the show. Before judging begins, Cleanup Committee members should check the area and remove any debris that has accumulated. Care should be taken to mop up any spilled water, both for the sake of appearance and to avoid accidents caused by slipping.

At the close of the show, the Cleanup Committee should again clean the area, performing necessary chores and working closely with the Properties Committee in clearing the area. A member of the Cleanup Committee should be the last to leave the area so a final inspection can be made. The show is not over until the premises are clean and in good order with all furniture, equipment, and supplies having been returned to their proper places.

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## Chapter 5

# IN-PERSON SHOW SCHEDULE & SHOW REPORT

Approved by the AIS Board of Directors, March 2, 2021

Revisions approved by AIS Board of Directors, March 26, 2025

The American Iris Society (AIS) provides opportunities for members and the general public to display, view, have judged, and receive recognition for iris they have grown, entered, and displayed in an AIS sanctioned show.

## I. THE IN-PERSON SHOW SCHEDULE DETAILS

The show schedule defines the rules and regulations which govern how a show is organized and presented. It controls the activities of the show committees, exhibitors and judging panels. It is of utmost importance that the show schedule be written carefully and accurately in easily understood language. It must be in agreement with the official exhibition rules and regulations adopted herein by the American Iris Society. Careful study of these official rules and regulations should be made prior to drafting the schedule.

Official approval of an iris show cannot be granted until the schedules chair of the AIS Exhibitions Committee has been sent a draft of the schedule. After receiving approval, the sponsoring organization may order official AIS show supplies. However, exhibition entry tags may be ordered without official show approval.

The proposed schedule should be submitted, electronically or via U.S. mail, in draft form no later than two months prior to the show date. Even if the schedule closely follows that of a previous year, an updated and corrected copy of the show schedule must be submitted. The sponsoring organization must keep a copy of the submitted schedule because the material forwarded for approval becomes a part of the AIS Exhibitions Committee's files and will not be returned.

Upon approval of the draft schedule, the AIS exhibitions schedule chair will send to the sponsoring organization an approval package which contains the approval letter, show report forms, show certificates, Exhibition Certificate (E.C.) ballots, and a show supplies order form with current prices. Some of these materials may be sent to the sponsoring organization electronically whenever possible. With the exception of exhibition entry tags, a show supplies order cannot be accepted until the schedule has been approved.

The show schedule should contain the following basic information:

1. Title of the show (optional).
2. Name of the sponsoring organization.
3. Date(s) of the show.
4. State, city and address (location) where the show is to be held.
5. List of committee chairs. Phone numbers when advance reservations are required.
6. Statement of who may exhibit.
7. Date and time entries will be received.
8. List of all of the AIS awards offered and any club sponsored awards.
9. A list of general rules and specific rules for the Horticulture Divisions, and specific rules for other divisions included in the show, e.g., Artistic Division, Youth Division, Education and/or Commercial Division, etc.
10. Type of containers and bracing material, and if those materials are furnished by the Show Committee or by the exhibitor.
11. Number of entries allowed per exhibitor.
12. Hours the show will be open for public viewing.
13. Statement that the show is being held and judged under the rules and regulations of the American Iris Society.
14. Statement that official rules and regulations of the AIS cannot be violated.
15. An invitation to join the AIS should be included in all show schedules, along with appropriate membership information.
16. Statement as to whether show judges and/or their immediate family members may enter exhibits, and under what conditions.
17. Rules regarding correct identification and labeling of entries.
18. Statement that horticultural exhibits must have been grown and entered in person by the exhibitor whose name appears on the entry tag.
19. Disclaimer of responsibility for loss or damage.
20. Statement of affiliation with AIS if the sponsoring organization is an affiliate, region or section.

21. Statement that admission to AIS sanctioned shows is open to the public at no charge.

**See the Appendix In-Person Show Schedule Template for more information.**

At a minimum, the show schedule should provide for an Open Horticultural Division in which correctly registered and named varieties or properly identified species or interspecies crosses are exhibited as single cut specimen stalks. **[Note: by AIS Board action, November 2017, introduction is no longer required for exhibiting a registered named cultivar in the Open Horticultural Division.]** The Open Horticultural Division must provide for all types of irises grown in the area except in specialty shows that limit the types of irises accepted for competition. It also is advisable to include a miscellaneous group for any unexpected entries not specifically mentioned in the show schedule. Show Committees are also encouraged to include divisions for youth horticultural exhibits, seedlings, educational exhibits, commercial exhibits, and artistic exhibits.

## II. JUDGES FOR THE SHOW

A rule must be included in the show schedule saying whether judges may judge a show in which they or members of their immediate families have entries, and under what circumstances. Judging ethics would indicate that a judge should not serve in such a situation. However, scarcity of judges, emergency situations, or other extenuating circumstances might necessitate allowing a judge to both judge and exhibit.

Before judging begins, the show chair may brief judges on any favorable or adverse environmental conditions affecting the quality of the exhibits. However, judges must not give awards to any exhibit they consider unworthy. Judges also cannot bar single entries in a group from consideration or awards simply because they are the lone entry in that group.

### III. DIVISIONS, SECTIONS, AND GROUPS

#### A. Open Horticultural Division

The Open Horticultural Division should be divided into sections or groups arranged alphabetically by cultivar name. Within each section and group, each variety constitutes a separate class. Color classification shows are no longer recommended.

Show Committees are encouraged to include sections within the Open Horticultural Division for bulbous irises, collections, container-grown irises, and English boxes. The bulbous irises, collections, container-grown irises and English boxes are eligible to receive award ribbons, special section awards and section rosettes. Award ribbons for these sections are included in the overall tally for Silver and Bronze Medals and certificates. However, these entries are not eligible for the Best Specimen of Show Award. Single blossom classes, if the Show Committee includes this section in the show schedule, may not have award ribbons counted for Silver and Bronze Medals/Certificates and are not eligible for the Best Specimen of Show Award.

The show schedule empowers the Show Committee to combine groups with few entries; to subdivide those groups with excessive entries; to create new groups for exhibits which do not fit scheduled groups; and to correct errors in entry, classification and identification of irises whenever possible.

Exhibition privileges must be available to anyone who grows irises. However, the schedule can prohibit judges and members of judges' immediate families from exhibiting. When limitations are necessary to control the number of entries, limit the allowable number of entries per exhibitor, not the number of exhibitors.

All exhibits in the Open Horticultural and Youth Horticultural Divisions must have been grown and entered in person by the exhibitor whose name appears on the entry tag. Under no circumstances may an individual transport and enter for competition specimen stalks for another person, because 25 of a possible 100 points are assigned for grooming and condition. Single family gardens are generally the exhibitor unit. However, local Show Committees have the option of permitting family members to enter as separate exhibitors from the same garden, provided they work in the garden and/or maintain separate iris collections, in which case, this should be stated in the show

schedule. Family members may enter exhibits as a unit or individually, but not both, in the same show.

All entries must be correctly, clearly and completely identified and entered in the proper division, section and group. Each exhibitor is permitted to enter only one stalk of any particular registered variety in any one of the single-stalk sections of a sanctioned show. In addition, it may be entered in any of those sections not eligible for Best Specimen of Show (e.g., Collection, English Boxes, Container-Grown Iris and Single Blossom Entry). No restrictions can be placed on cultural conditions or methods used in growing the irises.

When a cultivar can be exhibited in more than one section or group, the exhibitor chooses in which section to enter the exhibit. For example, a cultivar that is historic, TB and novelty, can be exhibited in any one of those sections. If two or more exhibitors enter such a cultivar in different sections or groups, each is judged in the section or group where it is entered. In this case, it is possible for two or more stalks of the same cultivar to receive first-place ribbons and potentially compete against each other for higher awards.

Unnamed stalks, potted exhibits (except for entries in the container section) or labeled irises grown by another person are not eligible for AIS ribbons and awards, but tables should be provided for these irises and plainly marked "For Display Only".

#### B. Youth Horticultural Division

Exhibition privileges in the Youth Horticultural Division are limited to persons under 19 years of age. These exhibitors may enter either the Youth Division or the Open Horticultural Division, but never in both divisions at the same show. Depending on the number of entries, a Youth Horticultural Division may be organized by age of the exhibitor, and/or sections. Groups in the Youth Horticultural Division may be subdivided or combined. All youth horticultural entries, except for bulbous irises, collections, English boxes, container-grown irises, and single blossom entries, are eligible for Best Specimen of Show Award.

#### C. Seedling Division

Entries in the seedling division consist of any un-introduced iris of any type. An exhibitor may enter a seedling originated or grown by another person, but the entry is made in the name of the originator of the clone (i.e., the hybridizer's name), seedling number or

registered name, and type of iris must appear on the entry card. The Show Committee can choose to cover seedling numbers (but not type of iris) during judging.

The exhibitor of an unIntroduced seedling with a registered name can elect to enter the seedling in the Seedling Division or the Open Horticultural Division but not both. Such a seedling would receive awards appropriate to the division in which it is entered.

This is one instance where the same registered cultivar may be entered in more than one section of a show. For example, an exhibitor may enter 'Dusky Challenger' in the Tall Bearded Section (single stalk) and in the Collections Section (5 stalks or whatever quantity is required by the show schedule). This also applies to seedlings.

See chart below.

Eligibility of a seedling entered by one exhibitor:

	Eligible for Seedling Division only	Eligible for Seedling <b>OR</b> Open Horticultural Division	Eligible for Seedling <b>AND</b> Open Horticultural Divisions	Eligible for sections that are NOT competing for Best Specimen in Show
A seedling not registered and not introduced (i.e., seedling with number only)	yes	no	no	yes
A seedling registered (with a name) but NOT introduced	no	yes	no	yes

Since there can be only one Best Seedling of the Show, it is appropriate to award first-place ribbons and only first-place ribbons to other deserving seedlings. These seedling ribbons are not to be counted for the Silver or Bronze Medals tally.

In the event that no seedling has been deemed worthy, a Best Seedling of Show need not be awarded.

The Best Seedling of Show automatically receives an Exhibition Certificate (E.C.). At the end of judging the in-person show, the judges will view the seedlings and deliver their E.C. ballots to the show chair.

(1) An E.C. is awarded to any seedling that receives a total of five or more votes cast by the judges of this show and by any visiting certified judges.

(2) An E.C. will be awarded to any seedling that receives a cumulative total of at least five votes from all other AIS sanctioned shows in this current calendar year.

(3) The count of E.C. votes from all sanctioned shows will be completed by the AIS exhibition reports chair.

(4) An iris can win only one E.C. in each show but can win multiple E.C.s when entered in multiple shows.

#### D. Artistic Division

The show schedule should state a general theme for the Artistic Division and class titles within that division.

Specific rules included in the show schedule for the Artistic Division will vary depending on the requirements of the specific show. Any requirements or limitations regarding backgrounds, niches, pedestals, underlays, table covering, and size or color schemes or designs should be specifically stated. The show schedule should be clear on which specific items will be provided by the Show Committee and which by the exhibitor.

The show schedule should state whether the Artistic Division will be judged by judges from national garden clubs or by AIS judges who have experience working with design or by a combination of qualified judges.

**For more information, see “Chapter 30: Artistic Design.”**

Judges should be encouraged to write comments for each design on a 3 X 5 inches card that is provided by the Show Committee. This will encourage and educate the exhibitor. The judges should write at least one positive comment in addition to any constructive suggestions on the principles of design.

To encourage participation, the Show Committee is encouraged to add classes for novice design exhibitors or for a person never having won a first-place ribbon.

The following are suggested basic design rules. Specific rules will depend on the requirements for the specific show.

1. In order to give AIS ribbons in the Artistic Division, one or more iris bloom(s) must be used in each design and must be the dominant flower(s) in the design. The use of iris foliage in a design is the choice of the designer.
2. The design must be made by the exhibitor, but plant material used in a design does NOT have to have been grown by the designer.
3. Accessories are permitted in all classes unless otherwise stated in the show schedule.
4. Fresh plant material should predominate and may not be treated in any manner. A minimum of dried and/or weathered plant material is permitted. Treatment of dried material is allowed.
5. The use of any part(s) of plants on the appropriate state conservation list is strictly prohibited.
6. The use of the American Flag or any international flag is prohibited. The use of the colors or bunting is permitted and encouraged if it helps interpret the theme.
7. The Show Committee will endeavor to protect all exhibits but cannot be responsible for loss or damage to the exhibitor's property.

#### E. Educational Division

The Educational Division provides an opportunity to inform and instruct the public about the American Iris Society and the various aspects of growing and designing with iris. Potential topics could be: AIS organization and regions, with membership applications, and sample issues of *Iris*es, and regional newsletters; culture of individual and/or combined types of iris; landscaping with iris; iris diseases or pests and the recommended treatment; planting instructions with a display of rhizomes and soil; dividing and transplanting iris; the history of design, different types of designs; etc.

The objective of an Educational Exhibit is to convey a message quickly and clearly. Legible printing, descriptive pictures and/or objects and organization of the materials all

tell a story. An electronic program is acceptable in this division. Any video should have good resolution and if sound is included, it should be of good sound quality. Video education exhibitors must provide their own projection equipment. Dramatic impact can be attained with color combinations, humor, clever titles, etc., all designed to interest the viewer. The organization and placement of the materials should cause the eye to flow through the exhibit. Handouts are a plus.

For the Educational Division, the show schedule should state:

1. Table space or area dimensions assigned for a physical exhibit. Likewise, maximum duration of video exhibit should be included and a notice that projector and screen must be provided by exhibitor.
2. Whether or not reservations are required and appropriate contact information.
3. Whether or not the Educational Exhibit should tie in with the theme of the show, if there is one, through signs, show color combinations or some other way.
4. Whether or not this division will be judged. If judged, awards given should be listed in the awards section of the show schedule.

#### F. Commercial Division

Although the AIS does not endorse or support any commercial entity, the Commercial Division provides an opportunity for commercial iris growers in the area to display catalogs, price lists, or other educational and/or informative information related to their business.

The Show Committee will determine if an exhibitor is to be given commercial status and will decide whether or not exhibitors may sell plants or other products.

For the Commercial Division, the schedule should state:

1. Table space or dimensions allowed for commercial exhibits. Likewise, maximum duration of video exhibit should be included and a notice that projector and screen must be provided by exhibitor. Generally, this is the same as for educational exhibits.
2. Whether or not reservations are required and contact information if they are.
3. Whether or not the sale of plants or other products is allowed.
4. Whether or not these exhibits will be judged. If judged, awards given should be listed in the awards section of the schedule.

#### IV. AWARDS for the IN-PERSON EXHIBITION

Presentation of AIS awards is authorized at sanctioned shows which have complied with AIS rules and regulations as described in this handbook. Award ribbons and rosettes may be purchased from the AIS Exhibition Committee. Certificates are furnished without charge.

Award ribbons and rosettes, including the Best Specimen of Show Rosette, may be presented at any show regardless of the number of exhibitors and exhibits. However, awarding the AIS Silver and Bronze Medals and Certificates requires at least twenty cultivars and at least five exhibitors in the Open Horticultural Divisions for a spring show and at least ten cultivars and three exhibitors for a fall show. The cultivars and exhibitors are counted from entries in the individual stalk sections, collections, English boxes, container-grown irises, and bulbous iris sections. Silver and Bronze Medals and Certificates may be awarded in any Youth Horticulture Division if there are at least two exhibitors and at least ten cultivars entered in a spring show and at least two exhibitors and at least five cultivars in a fall show. See chart below.

##### Requirements for Awarding Exhibition Medals at AIS sanctioned shows

Show – Division	Minimum # of exhibitors required	Minimum # of cultivars required	Included in ribbon count for medals	<u>Not</u> included in ribbon count for medals
Spring – Open Division	5	20	Individual stalks, Collections, English boxes, Bulbous irises, Container-grown irises	Seedlings, Artistic designs, Single blossom exhibits, Commercial and Educational exhibits
Spring – Youth Division	2	10	Same	Same
Fall – Open Division	3	10	Same	Same
Fall – Youth Division	2	5	Same	Same

Note that ribbons and rosettes, including the Best Specimen of Show Rosette, may be presented at any show, regardless of the number of exhibitors and exhibits.

Provided minimum requirements for number of exhibitors and cultivars are met, affiliate societies, sections, and regions that sponsor shows are entitled to one adult and one youth Silver Medal and one adult and one youth Bronze Medal per show without charge. Additional medals must be purchased.

No local organization sponsoring an AIS sanctioned show may make special rules for the presentation of official AIS awards, but they may adopt rules for giving local society awards which do not conflict with AIS regulations.

#### A. Award Ribbons

Only one first-place award ribbon, one second-place ribbon, and one third-place ribbon may be awarded to each cultivar in any given section (except collections.) As many honorable mention ribbons as quality merits may be awarded. In the Seedling Division, only first-place ribbons are awarded, when merited.

Single entries in a section or group must not be barred from consideration for awards simply because they are the lone entry in that section or group.

If point scoring in an exhibition show, the judges might wish to follow the following guidelines: a cultivar scoring 90 to 100 points merits a first-place ribbon, a cultivar scoring 80 to 89 points merits a second-place ribbon, and a cultivar scoring 70 to 79 points merits a third-place ribbon. The judge should not treat these point-score guidelines as requirements for awarding ribbons because they do not take into consideration the qualitative evaluations that a judge might make.

#### B. Rosettes

AIS rosettes may be presented to exhibits of unusual merit in all divisions. The rosette may be imprinted for a specific award as described in the order form for show supplies. However, awarding of the Section Medal Certificate for most first-place ribbons in a

section and of the Best Specimen of Section Rosette requires at least three exhibitors and at least five cultivars in the section.

### C. Exhibition Certificates

An Exhibition Certificate (EC) will be awarded to the seedling or collected species selected as Best Seedling of Show provided any are deemed worthy of this award.

Additional ECs may be awarded to any seedling which receives a cumulative total of five or more votes from AIS judges attending the show or any other AIS sanctioned shows in a calendar year. Therefore, all AIS judges present at the show should study the seedlings. If any seedlings exhibit superior qualities that would merit the EC Award, the judge should complete and submit an EC ballot voting for those seedlings. After the show the completed ballots are sent to the AIS exhibition reports chair along with the show report. This should be done whether or not any seedling receives five votes since votes can be accumulated over multiple shows in a calendar year.

Upon receipt of a properly completed show report, the AIS exhibitions reports chair will issue any AIS Exhibition Certificates supported by the EC ballots and will mail the ECs to the show chair for forwarding to the hybridizer(s) of the seedling(s).

### D. Silver & Bronze Medals

The AIS Silver Medal is awarded to the exhibitor winning the most first-place ribbons in the Open Horticultural Division of the show, provided minimum requirements are met. A Silver Medal is awarded at a spring show with a minimum of twenty cultivars exhibited by at least five exhibitors. A Silver Medal is awarded at a fall show with a minimum of ten cultivars exhibited by at least three exhibitors.

The AIS Bronze Medal is awarded to the exhibitor winning the second most first-place ribbons in the Open Horticultural Division of the show, provided the show has at least twenty cultivars exhibited by at least five exhibitors for a spring show and at least ten cultivars exhibited, by at least three exhibitors for a fall show.

AIS Silver and Bronze Youth Medals are awarded to the winners of the most and second most first-place ribbons in the Youth Horticultural Division, provided the minimum qualifications have been met (i.e., at least ten cultivars exhibited by at least

two exhibitors for a spring show and at least five cultivars exhibited by at least two exhibitors for a fall show.)

The Bronze Medal may be awarded to the exhibitor of a commercial or educational exhibit found to be of outstanding merit by the judges of the show.

In the event of a tie for any medal or certificate award, second-place ribbons will be counted. If a tie still exists, third-place ribbons will be counted, and if a tie still persists, honorable mention ribbons will be counted. If such procedure does not determine a winner, duplicate Silver Medals (and NO Bronze Medal) will be awarded. If the tie involves the Bronze Medal, duplicate Bronze Medals will be awarded.

#### E. Show Certificates

AIS provides at no charge printed certificates that match most of the rosettes and medals given at shows. These are AIS awards, and if used should be included in the description of awards in the show schedule (a simple “and certificate” following the matching award is usually sufficient).

### V. SHOW REPORT

After the show has ended, the show chair or designee should complete the show report and send it electronically or by mail to the AIS exhibitions report chair. It is not necessary for the show judges to sign the show report. For the show to be properly reported, a copy, electronic or printed, of the final show schedule and any EC ballots must accompany the report. A copy of the show report should also be sent to the RVP and a copy retained for the local files. If a sanctioned show is cancelled, a cancellation notice should be sent in writing or via email to the AIS exhibition reports chair and RVP.

Exhibition Certificates and/or medals will be issued and forwarded to the sponsoring organization by the AIS exhibitions reports chair after the properly completed show report has been received and accepted. The AIS Board of Directors, upon the recommendation of the exhibitions reports chair, may reject an application for awards when the proper rules and regulations have not been followed. The AIS Exhibitions Committee may place a sponsoring organization on probation pending correction of violations.

## VI. SUMMARY

1. The preliminary schedule for a sanctioned show must be submitted to the AIS exhibitions schedules chair at least two months prior to the show date.
2. Show ribbons and rosettes may be awarded at any AIS sanctioned show.
3. The Silver and Bronze Medals may be awarded only at a sanctioned show with at least five exhibitors and at least twenty cultivars entered. For a fall show there must be at least three exhibitors and at least ten cultivars entered.
4. The Silver and Bronze Youth Medals may be awarded in the Youth Horticultural Division only if there are at least two exhibitors and at least ten cultivars entered. For a fall show there must be at least two exhibitors and at least five cultivars entered.

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## Chapter 6

# A VIRTUAL IRIS SHOW: Organizing & Presenting

Approved by the AIS Board of Directors, February 28, 2024

Revisions approved by the AIS Board of Directors, March 26, 2025

**Definition:** A virtual show is one in which specimens are not taken to a physical location for exhibit. Instead, they are exhibited and judged via photographs.

A virtual iris show sanctioned by The American Iris Society (AIS) has its beginning when a group of interested people decides to sponsor a show under the auspices of the AIS. There are no requirements concerning the identity of such a group or organization. It may be an AIS region, section, local society, or garden club. The important qualification is that they are willing to be governed by the official show rules and regulations of The AIS.

### Why A Virtual Iris Show?

Virtual iris shows have many benefits. People who are unable to travel to an in-person exhibition can enter their iris in a virtual show. Clubs that do not have the personnel or resources to put on an in-person show may find a virtual show more feasible. Entries in the virtual iris show are photographs, meaning that stalks of iris remain in gardens, transportation of flowers to the show is unnecessary, and exhibition containers are not required. Exhibitors are not rushed to groom all their flower stalks in just a few hours before an exhibition is judged. Exhibitors can avoid inclement weather and shadows, leisurely choosing the perfect time and angle for taking their photographs. Youth members and novice exhibitors might find the virtual iris show less intimidating than a full-on, in-person exhibition. If the entry period of a virtual show extends for several months, many classes of irises are likely to be entered in the virtual show, including early and late blooming classes of iris. Because virtual shows require no rented show space, no printed materials, and no purchased ribbons and rosettes, clubs will find a virtual show less expensive to sponsor than an in-person show.

A virtual iris show may be organized, presented, and completed by several committees or just a few people. Although not required, the people who work on the virtual iris show should have computer skills and be able to attend online meetings. This chapter suggests a process for organizing, presenting, and completing a virtual iris show.

## I. ORGANIZING THE SHOW

1. Select a show chair.
2. Select a name or theme for the virtual iris show. (optional)
3. Choose a date or range of dates for the virtual iris show that includes the times. For example, Jan 1, 2023 (noon) until July 1, 2023 (11:59 pm). Be clear about the deadline.
4. Choose which divisions, sections, or groups to offer in the virtual iris show.
5. Establish the quantity and type of picture images required for an entry in each division, section, group, or category. **Suggestions to include:**
  - Picture quantity (e.g., 4)
  - Picture format (e.g., 4 X 6, square, unrestricted, etc.)
  - Views of the iris (e.g., four photos: one FRONT with a standard in center, one SIDE view with a fall in center, one TOP DOWN view of flower stalk, one best view of CLUMP.)
  - File type (e.g., JPG, PNG, HEIC, PDF, etc.)
  - File size (e.g., unrestricted size, less than 5 MB, smaller than 2 MB, etc.)
6. Determine which AIS and affiliate awards will be offered. Examples of virtual awards might be virtual rosettes, ribbons, and certificates. (Note: After the virtual show schedule has been approved, the exhibition schedules chair will include in the approval packet templates for the virtual show ribbons, rosettes, and certificates.)
7. Examples of real awards might be medals, iris cultivars, gift cards, etc. AIS will provide medals: one Open and one Youth Horticultural Silver medal, and one Open and one Youth Bronze medal for each AIS sanctioned show that has met the minimum requirements of exhibitors and entries. (Note: After the show report has been accepted, the exhibition reports chair will send any appropriate Exhibition Certificates and sweepstakes medals.) Winning exhibitors with an address outside of North America will receive only virtual awards.
8. Investigate the cost of procuring, creating, and distributing the awards.
9. Establish a budget that includes the expenses of awards and other potential costs.

10. Select a registrar who will check registration forms and cultivar names for correctness and completeness and sort entries into appropriate folders.
11. Select a publicity chair to be responsible for designing and distributing information about the virtual show. A timeline for notices and a list of outlets would be helpful.
12. Select an awards chair to be responsible for organizing and sending awards to winners.
13. (optional) If a video of show winners is planned, select a videographer to create and produce a program of show winners that can be made available to other clubs, local news centers and/or YouTube.
14. **Draft a show schedule and submit it to the AIS exhibition schedules chair at least four weeks before the show begins.** Carefully read “Chapter 7: A Virtual Iris Show Schedule & Show Report.” **See the Appendix: Virtual Iris Show Schedule template.**
15. Tasks such as staging, clerks, hospitality, properties, and cleanup are unnecessary for a virtual iris show.

## II. FINALIZING THE DETAILS

After the show schedule has been approved, the AIS exhibition schedules chair will send an approval packet which will contain an approval letter, show report form, Exhibition Certificate ballots, and templates for the virtual awards. Now it's time for the virtual show committee to finalize the show details.

16. Design the registration form for entries.
17. Develop a detailed instruction sheet for the registration form entry submission process.
18. Establish a naming protocol for the photographs. In some cases, abbreviations might be required. Descriptors such as, but not limited to, might be: the complete AIS registered name of the iris, spelled correctly. Division, class, section, or group in which the photograph will be judged.
19. Establish the format and content of the email that contains the registration form and photo entries that will be sent to the registrar. Include the required wording in the subject bar of the email (e.g., name of iris, category, section).
20. Create a system of folders in the computer to hold the entries. One system might be to have folders for each section that contains one folder for each exhibitor.
21. Establish a judging panel with the name of the head judge. Confirm that each judge is able to work in a virtual iris show.

22. The publicity chair begins a campaign to promote the virtual show.
23. As requests are received, registration numbers are emailed by the registrar to participants, as well as unique registration forms, instructions for completing the registration forms, and a copy of the virtual iris show schedule that includes all the rules and a list of the divisions.
24. The email system is checked daily by the registrar and questions are answered promptly.
25. Entries, as they are received, are placed in their appropriate folder by the registrar.
26. To make judging more efficient, the photos of one entry should be combined onto one page.

### III. AFTER THE ENTRY SUBMISSION DEADLINE

27. The registrar creates a TOTAL registration spreadsheet of all the entries that includes entry numbers, sections, cultivar names, seedling numbers, etc.
28. Instructions on how to view the entries are emailed by the registrar or show chair to the head judge. Alternatively, the registrar or show chair may invite the judges to a Zoom meeting to go over instructions.
29. Exhibition Certificate (E.C.) ballots are distributed to the judges.
30. The judge or judging panel should meet within a week of the entry submission deadline to decide how to evaluate entries. They might choose to judge as a group while on ZOOM or they may judge individually recording their votes on a total registration sheet. If judging is done by ZOOM, the show chair(s) could act as clerk(s).
31. After judging is completed, the judge or judges return the file or files to the registrar with the ribbons and awards listed.
32. The registrar should create files for ribbons by section and cultivar, entry number with ribbons and awards listed, and one file of all 1<sup>st</sup>-place ribbon winners by section by cultivar.
33. For choosing the Best Entry in Show and Best Entries of Section, ask the judge or judges if they would like to use the file of 1<sup>st</sup> place ribbon winners by section and cultivar to assist in their final judging.

#### IV. AFTER SELECTION OF WINNERS

34. After receiving the file of winners, the awards chair uses the template to craft each virtual certificate award and sends them to the appropriate person.
35. The awards chair attaches virtual rosettes and ribbons to each appropriate entry/photograph.
36. The show chair collects the E.C. ballots and completes all necessary show forms and submits them to the AIS exhibition reports chair.
37. (optional) The volunteer videographer produces a video of picture entries and uploads it to YouTube.
38. (optional) The publicity chair writes an article for the club newsletter, local newspaper, and/or club's AIS region that includes the pictures of some of the section winners and best of show.
39. (optional) The show chair along with members of the Virtual Show Committee meet to evaluate the show, discussing things that went well and things that need improvement.

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## Chapter 7

# VIRTUAL SHOW SCHEDULE & SHOW REPORT

Approved by the AIS Board of Directors, February 28, 2024

Revisions approved by the AIS Board of Directors, March 26, 2025

The American Iris Society (AIS) provides opportunities for members and the general public to display virtually irises they have grown and have those irises judged in an AIS sanctioned show.

## I. THE VIRTUAL SHOW SCHEDULE

The schedule defines the rules and regulations which govern how a show is organized and presented. It controls the activities of the show committees, exhibitors, and judging panels. It is of utmost importance that the show schedule be written carefully and accurately in easily understood language. For a sanctioned show, the show schedule must be in agreement with the official exhibition rules and regulations adopted by The American Iris Society.

For the virtual show to be sanctioned by The American Iris Society, the show schedule must be approved by the AIS exhibition schedule chair. The proposed schedule should be submitted, electronically, in draft form no later than four weeks prior to the show date. Even if the schedule closely follows that of a previous year, an updated and corrected copy of that schedule still must be submitted. A copy of the submitted draft show schedule should be kept by the show chair because the material submitted for approval will be retained by the AIS exhibition schedule chair and will not be returned.

The AIS exhibition schedules chair will review the draft show schedule and prepare an Evaluation/Approval form detailing any required modifications. Once the draft schedule has been approved, the AIS exhibitions schedule chair will email to the sponsoring organization an approval package which contains the approval letter, show report forms, Exhibition Certificate (E.C.) ballots, and a show supplies order form with the current prices. Also supplied are templates for virtual certificates, show ribbons, and rosettes.

The show schedule should contain the following basic information:

1. The title of the show (optional).
2. The name of the sponsoring organization (e.g., affiliate, region, section).
3. Date(s) of the show. A virtual iris show may run for several days, weeks or months. Deadlines of date and time must be clearly stated. For example, March 1, 2023 (noon) until July 1, 2023 (11:59 p.m.)
4. The name of the show chair with a contact email address. It is recommended to use the sponsoring organization's email address and avoid using personal email addresses.
5. A statement that the show is sanctioned by The American Iris Society.
6. A statement of who may enter the virtual show.
7. A list of all awards offered including the AIS awards plus any club or organization awards.
8. A list of general and specific rules for each Horticultural Division. A list of the rules for any other division in the virtual show such as Artistic Design, Youth, Seedling, etc.
9. Rules regarding the correct identification of irises.
10. A detailed description of the photograph standards for each entry that includes but is not limited to:
  - 10a- quantity of photos,
  - 10b- precise description of each required photo in an entry, and
  - 10c- photo type and size limits of photo.

An example of photograph standards might be:

“Four photos are required for each entry in the Horticultural Division:

A- One front view of stalk and flower,

B- One top-down view of the flower,

C- One closeup side view of the flower that allows the best view of the inside of the flower,

D- And one best view of the entire clump with bloom stalk(s).

Each photo must be a jpeg, smaller than 6000 MB and should be larger than 500 MB.”

11. Photographs that contain an identifiable image of a person will be disqualified.
12. A detailed description of how to name photographs.
13. The number of entries allowed from each exhibitor in each section, class, group, or category.
  - 13a- An exhibitor may have multiple entries in the Horticultural Division, but they must be of different cultivars.
  - 13b- An exhibitor may have multiple entries in the Artistic Design Division, but only one entry in each class.
14. A description of the format and content of the email that contains the entry or entries including what goes into the subject line of the email.
15. An email address for registering and submitting entries to the virtual show. It is recommended to use the sponsoring organization's email address and avoid using a personal email address.
16. A statement that all photographs must be taken by the exhibitor, of irises grown by the exhibitor, during this current year.
17. Entries in the Artistic Design Division must be designed and photographed by the exhibitor.
18. Photographs become the property of the sponsoring organization (affiliate, region, section, etc.).
19. Credit for each photograph will be given to the photographer when a picture is used for publicity or in any article or video.
20. A statement that the virtual iris show is being held and judged under the rules and regulations of The American Iris Society and that judging is being done by AIS Judges.
21. A statement that official rules and regulations of The American Iris Society cannot be violated.
22. A statement as to whether show judges and/or their immediate family members may enter the show.
23. A statement of affiliation with AIS, if the sponsoring organization is an affiliate, AIS region, or section.
24. An invitation to join The AIS should be included in the show schedule along with membership information.
25. Local membership information should be included along with contact information for club officers and virtual show chairs.

**See the Appendix Virtual Show Schedule Template for more information.**

## II. JUDGES FOR THE VIRTUAL SHOW & JUDGING

A rule in the show schedule must be included to say if and under what circumstances judges may judge a show in which they or members of their immediate families have entries. Judging ethics would indicate that a judge should not serve in such a situation. However, the scarcity of judges, emergency situations, or other extenuating circumstances might necessitate allowing a judge to judge while having entries in the virtual show. This decision is left to the virtual show chair.

Before judging begins, the show chair will describe the format of the entries and any special conditions or circumstances that could affect the quality of the exhibits. Regardless of special circumstances, judges must not give awards to entries they consider unworthy. Judges also cannot bar single entries in a group from consideration for awards simply because they are the lone entry in that group.

The virtual iris show could be described as an exhibition show as viewed through photographs. For in-person exhibition judging, 75% of the points are given to cultural perfection or how well the iris has been grown and 25% given to condition and grooming by the exhibitor. In the virtual iris show, the distribution of points must take into consideration the quality of the photograph. Photographs taken in dim light, with distracting shadows and awkward framing, or out-of-focus greatly diminish the ability to see cultural perfection in any iris. Professional quality photographs are not expected, but clear, in-focus, well-lit, pleasantly framed photos of the iris are expected. **In order to have a complete image of the entry, all the required photos need to be included in each entry.** In the virtual iris show, on a scale of 100 points, 50% of the points are for cultural perfection, 25% for condition and grooming, and 25% for the quality of the photograph. The required photographs in an entry should clearly document how well the iris has grown compared to the maximum typical performance of the variety being judged. In addition, consideration is given for the appearance of the iris (i.e., condition and grooming).

Entries are disqualified when they are entered in the wrong section or are misnamed. Entries that contain identifiable images of people or photographs of one cultivar from multiple clumps will not be judged. If an entry is missing one of its required photographs or contains a photograph that is blurred or otherwise unusable, the highest ribbon it can receive is 3rd place. An entry missing more than one of the required photographs or has more than one blurred or otherwise unusable

photograph, will not be judged. Cropping and enhanced contrast will be allowed because this makes judging easier.

### III. DIVISIONS, SECTIONS, & GROUPS

#### A. Open Horticultural Division

At a minimum, the show schedule should provide for an Open Horticultural Division in which correctly registered and named varieties or properly identified species or species crosses are entered. **[Note: by AIS Board action, November 2017, introduction is no longer required for entering a registered cultivar in the Open Horticultural Division.]** The Open Horticultural Division must plan to accept all types and classes of irises except in specialty shows that limit the types of irises. For example, a beardless iris show would be limited to the classes of beardless irises.

**All entries in the Open Horticultural and Youth Horticultural Divisions must have been grown and photographed by the exhibitor whose name appears on the entry tag. Exhibition privilege is available to anyone who grows irises.**

The Open Horticultural Division should be divided into sections (e.g., tall bearded, Louisiana, spuria, novelty, etc.). Within each section and group, each cultivar constitutes a separate class and should be arranged alphabetically by cultivar name. The Open Horticultural Division of the virtual show may include bulbous iris, container-grown irises, collections, English boxes, and single blossom entries.

The show schedule must allow the show chair to combine groups with few entries, to subdivide those groups with excessive entries, and to create new groups for entries which do not fit scheduled groups. Some sections might be better judged if they are subdivided into groups or when smaller groups are combined. For example, when there are few entries in all the median classes, the show chair might combine into one median section the entries of standard dwarf bearded, miniature tall bearded entries and other median irises. When limitations are necessary to control the size of the show, limits can be placed on the number of entries, but should not be placed on the number of exhibitors.

The show schedule should clarify how family members may participate in the virtual iris show. Entries from the same family can be made of iris grown in the same garden.

To qualify for awards, entries must be correctly, clearly, and completely identified. Entries must be entered in the proper division, section and group. **Each exhibitor is permitted to have only one entry of any registered cultivar in any section, class, or group of an AIS sanctioned show. However, the exhibitor may enter the same cultivar in other sections NOT eligible for Best Specimen of Show (e.g., collections, English boxes, and single blossom entry.)**

When an entry of a cultivar can be exhibited in more than one section or group, the exhibitor chooses in which section to enter the exhibit. For example, a cultivar that is historic, tall bearded, and novelty, can be exhibited in any one of those sections. If two or more exhibitors enter such a cultivar in different sections or groups, each is judged in the section or group where it is entered. In this case, it is possible for two or more entries of the same cultivar to receive first-place ribbons and potentially compete against each other for higher awards.

The show schedule should include a section “For Display Only” where entries can be viewed but are not judged or eligible for awards.

## B. Youth Horticultural Division

Exhibition privileges in the Youth Horticultural Division are limited to persons under 19 years of age. These exhibitors may enter either the Youth Division or the Open Horticultural Division, but never in both divisions at the same show. Depending on the number of entries, a Youth Horticultural Division may be organized by the age of the exhibitor, and/or sections and groups. The virtual show chair may subdivide or combine groups as needed.

All youth horticultural entries, except for bulbous irises, collections, English Boxes, and single blossom entries, are eligible for Best Entry of Show Award.

C. Seedling Division

Entries in the Seedling Division consist of any un-introduced iris, named or unnamed, of any type. An exhibitor may enter a seedling originated by another person, but the entry is made in the name of the originator of the clone, i.e., the hybridizer's name must appear on the entry form in addition to the photographer's name. At least one photograph in the entry must show the seedling's entire bloom stalk. The exhibitor of an un-introduced seedling with a registered name can elect to enter the seedling in the Seedling Division or the Open Horticultural Division but not both. Such a seedling would receive awards appropriate to the division in which it is entered.

This is one instance where the same cultivar may be entered in more than one section of a show. For example, a seedling could be entered in the Seedling Division AND in any section of the Open Horticultural Division that is not competing for Best Entry of Show. See chart below.

Eligibility of a Seedling Entered by One Exhibitor

	The seedling is eligible for Seedling Division only	The seedling is eligible for Seedling <b>OR</b> Open Horticultural Division	The seedling is eligible for Seedling <b>AND</b> Open Horticultural Divisions	The seedling is eligible for sections that are NOT competing for Best Entry in Show (e.g. collections iris)
An unnamed seedling not registered and not introduced (i.e., <b>seedling with number only</b> )	yes	no	no	yes
A <b>named seedling</b> , registered but NOT introduced	no	yes	no	yes

Since there can be only one Best Seedling of Show, it is appropriate to award first-place ribbons and only first-place ribbons to deserving seedlings. At least one photograph in the entry must show the entire bloom stalk of the seedling.

**Seedling ribbons are NOT counted in the Silver and Bronze Medals tally.**

The Best Seedling of Show automatically receives an Exhibition Certificate (E.C.). At the end of judging the virtual show, the judges will deliver their E.C. ballots to the virtual show chair.

(1) An E.C. is awarded to any seedling that receives a total of five or more votes cast by the judges of this show.

(2) An E.C. will be awarded to any seedling that receives a cumulative total of at least five votes from all other AIS sanctioned shows in this current calendar year.

(3) The count of E.C. votes from all sanctioned shows will be completed by the AIS exhibition reports chair.

(4) An iris can win only one E.C. in each show but can win multiple E.C.s when entered in multiple shows.

#### D. Artistic Design Division

The virtual show schedule should state a general theme for the Artistic Design Division and class titles within that division. Specific rules included in the show schedule for the Artistic Division will vary depending on the requirements of the show. Any requirements or limitations regarding backgrounds, niches, pedestals, underlays, table covering, and size or color schemes or designs should be specifically stated.

All Artistic Design entries must have been designed and photographed by the exhibitor.

The show schedule should state whether the Artistic Division will be judged by judges from national garden clubs or by AIS judges who have experience working with design or by a combination of qualified judges.

For more information, see “Chapter 30: Artistic Design.”

Judges should be encouraged to post comments for each design. This will encourage and educate the exhibitor. The judges should write at least one positive comment in addition to any constructive suggestions on the principles of design.

To encourage participation, the show schedule might add classes for novice design exhibitors or for a person who has never won a first-place ribbon.

The following are suggested basic design rules. Specific rules will depend on the requirements for each virtual show.

1. In order to give AIS ribbons in the Artistic Design Division, one or more iris bloom(s) must be used in each design and must be the dominant flower(s) in the design. The use of iris foliage in a design is the choice of the designer.
2. The design must be made and photographed by the exhibitor, but plant material used in a design does NOT have to have been grown by the designer.
3. Accessories are permitted in all classes unless otherwise stated in the show schedule.
4. Fresh plant material should predominate and may not be treated in any manner. A minimum of dried and/or weathered plant material is permitted. Treatment of dried material is allowed.
5. The use of plants or plant parts that are on your state's conservation list or are illegal is prohibited.
6. The use of the American Flag or any international flag is prohibited. The use of the colors or bunting is permitted and encouraged if it helps interpret the theme.

#### E. Educational Division

The Educational Division provides an opportunity to inform and instruct the public about the American Iris Society and the various aspects of growing and designing with iris. Potential topics could be: The AIS organization and regions with links to websites and applications for membership, sample issues of *Irises*, and regional newsletters; culture of individual and/or a combination of types of iris; landscaping with iris; iris diseases or pests and the recommended treatment; planting instructions with a display of rhizomes and soil; dividing and transplanting iris; the history of design, different types of designs; etc.

The objective of an Educational Exhibit is to convey a message quickly and clearly. The organization of the video or PowerPoint slides should be logical and engaging.

A video should be high resolution with an audible narrative. Less text and more illustrations tend to be more appealing to the viewer of a slide show.

For the Educational Division, the show schedule should state:

1. The maximum dimensions of the educational exhibit. For example, the duration of a video, number of slides in a PowerPoint, etc.
2. Instructions for submitting the educational exhibit.
3. Whether or not the educational exhibit should be related to the theme of the show, if there is a theme.
4. Whether or not this division will be judged. If judged, awards given should be listed in the awards section of the show schedule.

#### IV. AWARDS FOR VIRTUAL SHOW

The AIS awards offered at AIS sanctioned virtual shows, which have complied with AIS rules and regulations as described in this *Handbook*, include ribbons, rosettes, certificates, and medals. The Silver and Bronze Medals will be actual, standard AIS Horticultural Sweepstakes Medals while the award ribbons, rosettes and certificates will be virtual. Provided the minimum requirements for the number of exhibitors and entries are met, organizations that sponsor sanctioned shows are entitled to one Open and one Youth Horticultural Silver Medal and one Open and one Youth Horticultural Bronze Medal per show without charge for each sanctioned virtual and in-person show. Additional medals must be purchased.

After the show schedule has been approved, the AIS exhibition schedules chair will send an approval packet that will contain among other things, templates for the virtual certificates, ribbons, and rosettes. The certificate template can be used to craft multiple virtual certificates by filling in appropriate details of winning entries.

Virtual AIS award ribbons, rosettes, including Best Entry of Show Rosette, and certificates in the Open and Youth Horticultural Divisions may be presented at any show regardless of the number of exhibitors and exhibits. Awarding the Silver and Bronze Medals requires at least five exhibitors and twenty entries representing

twenty different cultivars in the Open Horticultural Divisions. The Youth Silver and Bronze Medals and certificates may be awarded in any Youth Horticultural Division if there are at least two exhibitors and at least ten entries representing ten different cultivars. The exhibitors and entries are counted from the individual cultivar sections, collections, English boxes, container-grown irises, and bulbous iris sections. See chart below.

Requirements for Awarding Exhibition Medals

(the Horticultural Sweepstakes Awards), Silver and Bronze, at AIS sanctioned shows

Show – Division	Minimum # of exhibitors required	Minimum # of entries/ cultivars required	Included in ribbon count for Silver & Bronze Medals	<u>Not</u> included in ribbon count for medals
Open Division	5	20	individual cultivars, collections, English boxes, bulbous iris, container-grown iris	seedlings, artist designs, single blossom
Youth Division	2	10	same	same

Note that virtual AIS ribbons, and rosettes, including Best Entry of Show Rosette, and certificates may be presented at any show, regardless of the number of exhibitors and exhibits.

Local organizations that sponsor an AIS sanctioned show may NOT make special rules for the presentation of official AIS awards. However, they may adopt rules for giving local society awards as long as they do not conflict with AIS regulations.

A. Virtual AIS Award Ribbons

Only one virtual first-place award ribbon, one virtual second-place ribbon, and one virtual third-place ribbon may be awarded to a cultivar in any given section. As

many virtual honorable mention ribbons as quality merits may be awarded. In the Seedling Division, only first-place ribbons are awarded, if merited.

Single entries in a section or group must not be barred from consideration for awards simply because they are the lone entry in that section or group.

### B. Virtual AIS Rosettes

The virtual Best Entry of Show Rosette and certificate may be presented at any show, regardless of the number of exhibitors and exhibits. Virtual rosettes also may be presented to entries of unusual merit in any division.

The virtual Best Entry of Section Rosette and certificate also may be awarded provided there was a minimum of three exhibitors and five entries, represented by five cultivars in that section.

### C. Exhibition Certificates

The Best Seedling of Show automatically receives an Exhibition Certificate (E.C.). At the end of judging the virtual show, the judges will deliver their E.C. ballots to the virtual show chair.

- (1) An E.C. is awarded to any seedling that receives a total of five or more votes cast by the judges of this show.
- (2) An E.C. will be awarded to any seedling that receives a cumulative total of at least five votes from all other AIS sanctioned shows in this current calendar year.
- (3) The count of E.C. votes from all sanctioned shows will be completed by the AIS exhibition reports chair.
- (4) An iris can win only one E.C. in each show but can win multiple E.C.s when entered in multiple shows.

Upon receipt of a properly completed show report, the AIS exhibition reports chair will email any AIS Exhibition Certificates supported by the E.C. ballots to the show chair who will forward them to the hybridizer(s) of the seedling(s).

#### D. Horticultural Sweepstakes (Silver and Bronze Medals)

The AIS Silver Medal is awarded to the exhibitor winning the most first-place ribbons in the Open Horticultural Division of the show, provided the show has at least twenty entries represented by twenty cultivars, exhibited by at least five exhibitors.

The AIS Bronze Medal is awarded to the exhibitor winning the second most first-place ribbons in the Open Horticultural Division of the show, provided the show has at least twenty entries represented by twenty cultivars, exhibited by at least five exhibitors.

AIS Silver and Bronze Youth Medals are awarded to the winners of the most and second most first-place ribbons in the Youth Horticultural Division, provided the minimum qualifications have been met: two exhibitors and ten entries represented by ten cultivars.

In the event of a tie for any medal or certificate award, second-place ribbons will be counted. If a tie still exists, third-place ribbons will be counted, and if a tie still persists, honorable mention ribbons will be counted. If such procedure does not determine a winner, duplicate Silver Medals (and NO Bronze Medal) will be awarded. If the tie involves the Bronze Medal, duplicate Bronze Medals will be awarded.

#### E. Virtual Show Certificates

AIS provides a template for virtual show certificates. The show chair or designee is responsible for filling out the template for each winner of a virtual show certificate. These might include but are not limited to Best Entry of Show, Silver and Bronze Medals, and any Best in Section awards. These are AIS awards and if offered in the virtual show, should be included in the description of awards in the show schedule (a simple "and certificate" following the matching award is usually sufficient).

### V. SHOW REPORT

The virtual show chair or designee should complete the show report and send it electronically to the AIS exhibition reports chair. It is not necessary for show judges to sign the report. For the show to be properly reported, a digital copy of the final

show schedule and the E.C. ballots must accompany the report. A copy of the show report should also be sent to the regional vice president (RVP) and a copy retained for the local files. If a sanctioned show is canceled, a cancellation notice should be sent to the AIS exhibition reports chair and RVP.

After the properly completed show report has been received and accepted by the AIS exhibition reports chair, Exhibition Certificates (E.C.s) will be emailed to the show chair. Medals will be mailed.

The AIS Board of Directors, upon the recommendation of the exhibition reports chair, may reject an application for awards when the proper rules and regulations have not been followed. The AIS Exhibitions Committee may place a sponsoring organization (affiliate, region, section, etc.) on probation pending correction of violations.

## VI. SUMMARY

1. The preliminary schedule for a sanctioned show must be submitted to the AIS exhibition schedules chair at least four weeks prior to the show date.
2. The Best Entry in Show Rosette and show ribbons may be awarded at any sanctioned AIS show, regardless of the number of exhibitors and entries.
3. The Silver and Bronze Medals may be awarded only at a sanctioned show with at least five exhibitors and at least twenty entries representing twenty cultivars.
4. The Silver and Bronze Youth Medals may be awarded in the Youth Horticultural Division provided there are at least two exhibitors and at least ten entries representing ten cultivars.
5. The Best Entry of Section Rosette may be awarded provided there are at least three exhibitors and at least five entries representing five cultivars in the section.

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## Chapter 8

### SELECTING BEST SPECIMEN OF SHOW

Approved by the AIS Board of Directors, March 9, 2021

The selection of the Best Specimen of Show is the most important evaluation judges will make. This selection should be made carefully and conscientiously.

A candidate for Best Specimen of Show must be a variety with a registered or verifiable name, or a properly identified species (SPEC) or interspecies cross (SPEC-X) which best exhibits the characteristics most typical and nearly perfect in its classification. The choice is made from single specimen sections. The candidate for Best Specimen of Show must have won a first-place ribbon and a Best Specimen of Section Rosette (when the minimum section requirements are met: at least three exhibitors and at least five cultivars). However, outstanding first-place specimens in sections that do not meet the minimum requirements for Best Specimen of Section Rosette are still eligible for Best Specimen of Show. The candidate for Best Specimen of Show should meet the size limits described in its official registration. All youth horticultural entries are eligible for Best Specimen of Show. In the event that two specimens are judged equal, after point scoring all characteristics, the newer variety by year of introduction (or year of registration when no introduction date can be determined) should be placed higher because it represents to the public the closest current standard of perfection.

An iris with an AIS-registered name that has not yet been introduced (usually a new variety) is eligible for Best Specimen of Show if it is entered in the horticultural division. However, if such an iris is entered in the seedling division, it is not eligible for Best Specimen of Show.

The following exhibits are NOT eligible for Best Specimen of Show:

- Artistic and Educational entries

- English Box

- Single Blossom Entries

- Container-Grown Iris

- Bulbous iris entries

- Seedlings

- Iris from a section where another iris was awarded the Best Specimen of Section Rosette

Misclassified or misnamed iris entries  
Collection entries  
“For Display Only” entries

For unique details on species (SPEC) or interspecies crosses (SPEC-X) in exhibition judging, see “Chapter 20: Species & SPEC-X Iris.” For unique “original registration” guidelines on historic iris in exhibition judging, see “Chapter 24: Historic Iris.”

If it is necessary that the top winners be chosen by the same judges who have evaluated the sections, the show chair should attempt to make the process as efficient as possible. One clerk on each panel could transport Best Specimen of Section winners to a previously designated table where they will be considered for higher honors. For those sections that did not qualify for Best Specimen of Section, the show chair or judges panel can decide which first-place winners will be considered for Best Specimen of Show along with the other specimens. With the first-place winners grouped on one table, the final selection is much easier.

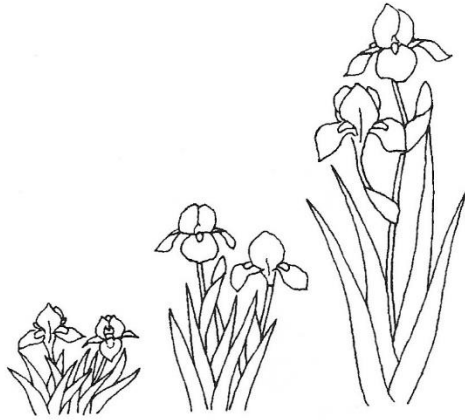
In very large shows, one additional panel of judges can be assigned to select the better ones and send the others back to their proper sections. As the judging of the sections progresses, this elimination process is continued. The judges may retain as many first-place winners as they deem advisable for further evaluation. When judging of the specimen sections is finished, it should require minimal time to determine the top award winners. Such procedure often contributes to a timely show opening. The additional panel must be very careful to make consistent and accurate decisions, using point scoring as often as necessary.

It is recommended that a written ballot be used by the judges for selecting the best specimen of the show. This procedure prevents one judge from being verbally dominating and ensures a fair and democratic selection. The winner of Best Specimen of Show is determined by a simple majority of the judges’ votes.

Hybridizers serving as judges in the show may elect not to participate in this process when their introductions are under consideration. Likewise, if the show allows judges to enter exhibits, any judge whose entry is under consideration for Best Specimen of Show should not participate in the selection.

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## The Bearded Irises



**MDB**

**SDB**

**IB**



**MTB**

**BB**

**TB**



## Chapter 9

### TALL BEARDED IRIS

Approved by the AIS Board of Directors, March 30, 2021

Revisions approved by the AIS Board of Directors, January 28, 2026

**Definition:** Bearded iris taller than 27.5 inches (taller than 70 cm) in height with branched stalks and typically blooming later than most of the smaller bearded iris.

#### GARDEN JUDGING:

##### Introduced Tall Bearded Iris Varieties & Seedlings

Garden judging of tall bearded iris is based totally on performance in the garden. A well-trained judge can immediately recognize a quality cultivar and should never reward varieties with glaring deficiencies.

Competent evaluation of any tall bearded variety demands that the clump be observed **over two consecutive bloom seasons**. Evaluation of first year plants results in incomplete data. Inferior rhizomes do not produce mature plants the first season of bloom, while those plants with excessive growth habits provide good bloom only on one-year clumps. The ultimate objective for the judge is to seek and cast votes for those varieties of exceptional quality that will consistently perform for consecutive seasons with little pampering.

The judge must make every effort to eliminate any ideas or opinions that reflect personal preferences. The judge must evaluate the growing plant a number of times during every bloom season.

It is vital that the judge be properly informed about iris in order to recognize good qualities as well as the inferior. Good garden judges develop after years of experience of growing iris and evaluating them.

Point scales for garden judging are used to encourage consistent evaluation of specimens. Swift and quality performance is demanded of the judge, making it impractical to point score every iris. The point scale is useful to the student judge in learning the special requirements of the class. Consistency must be observed in judging all classes.

## SCALE OF POINTS

### Garden Judging of Tall Bearded Iris

1. Plant			30
	a. Foliage	10	
	b. Durability/perennial qualities	15	
	c. Floriferousness	5	
2. Stalk			35
	a. Proportion	5	
	b. Strength	10	
	c. Branching	5	
	d. Bud Count & Bloom Sequence	15	
3. Flower			25
	a. Color	5	
	b. Form	10	
	c. Substance & Durability	10	
4. Distinctiveness			10
TOTAL			100

#### 1. Plant – 30 points

**a. Foliage** (10 points). No plant is worthy of consideration if its foliage is floppy, narrow, or sparse. Each leaf should be crisp, erect, and of sufficient width. The foliage should not display excessive discoloration or leaf spot if neighboring varieties appear vibrant and healthy. It is the foliage which remains during the entire growing season, and the judge should search out those varieties which maintain foliage of exceptional quality. Skimpy or floppy foliage will require that the variety be penalized the full ten points.

**b. Durability** (15 points). An iris variety should perform dependably as a clump for three consecutive bloom seasons. Only the serious iris fancier will be willing to replant more frequently.

The plant should display vigor and good health. It should thrive under good cultural conditions, but it must not demand pampering. A tall bearded iris variety should produce between 3 and 5 increases per rhizome per year. If it does not, it should lose most of the 15 points.

How well does the variety perform in spite of temperature extremes? Colder climates are disastrous for some varieties, while others might brown and shrivel in intense summer heat. A hardy perennial must never be a temperamental one.

Under adverse conditions, iris can develop problems. Good drainage is an absolute requirement for tall bearded culture. By comparing surrounding varieties grown under similar cultural conditions, one can determine if the variety should be penalized. Obvious susceptibility to disease is cause for disqualifying the variety from any consideration for awards.

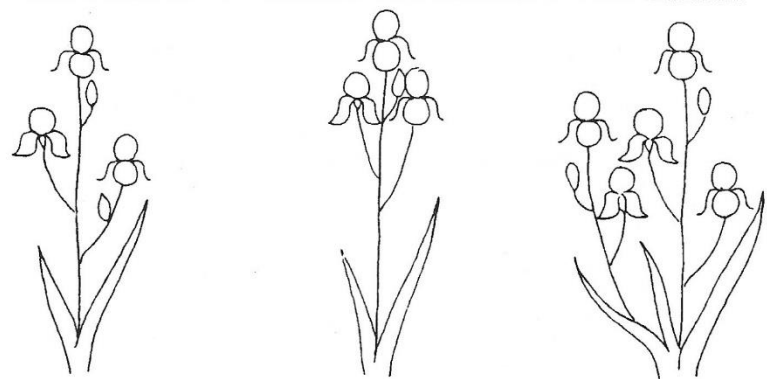
**c. Floriferousness** (5 points). How many days does the variety provide abundant bloom? A variety must remain in bloom over two weeks to receive credit for floriferousness. This trait cannot be judged by a single garden visit but requires observation over two bloom seasons. The plant must produce a sufficient quantity of bloom to assure that the clump does not appear sparse. Adequate increase should also remain after bloom to produce bloom the following season.

The ratio of stalks to the number of fans must be at least 25%. Fewer stalks will result in plants seriously lacking in color display. Should the ratio exceed 75%, flowers will become crowded, and few plants will remain, resulting in “bloom out.” For example, if the iris clump has 20 fans, the ideal number of bloom stalks would be between 5 and 15.

## 2. Stalk – 35 points

**a. Proportion** (5 points). No arbitrary formula can be used to determine good proportion. Taller and thicker stalks with wide branching are required to display large flowers properly, while those varieties with smaller blossoms are best displayed on smaller stalks with less dramatic branching. The stalk must hold the flowers well above the foliage but must not suspend them awkwardly at excessive heights.

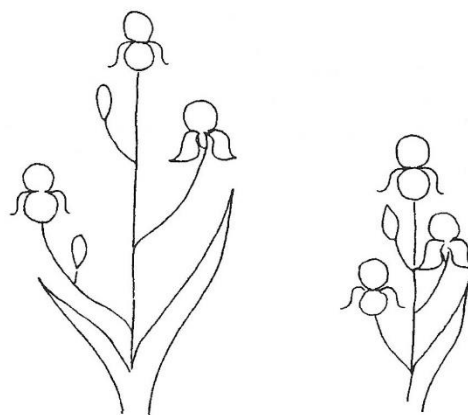
**b. Strength** (10 points). Of what value is an iris flower if its stalk will not support it? It is often difficult to evaluate the stalk’s strength fairly on a first-year plant, as its root system may not anchor it sufficiently. Do not expect an iris stalk to survive flood, hail, or high winds. Unless there has been severe weather, the stalk should remain fully upright. Staking is obvious proof of a weak stalk, so penalize that variety the full ten points.



2 branches & spur

high branching  
"Bunched"

secondary bloom stalk



wide candelabra

short

TYPES OF BRANCHING

**c. Branching** (5 points). It is the branching that displays the individual flowers, holding each one so that it does not interfere with another. Wide candelabra branching is very attractive on a one-year plant with one or two stalks. However, it is rarely preferred on iris growing as a clump because it creates interference between flowers on adjacent stalks.

Modified candelabrum type branching is usually best in the garden. The stalk must have at least two branches plus the terminal, pleasingly and evenly arranged on the upper two-thirds of the stalk. If properly positioned, an additional branch on the stalk is ideal. The single bud (referred to as a spur) which often appears just below the terminal

bud socket is not to be considered a branch. However, the spur is very desirable as long as its flower is not crowded.

Poor branching is evidenced in many ways. Branches that “toe in” can distort flower form by holding the blossoms too tightly against the stalk. Excessively long branches might display flowers at approximately the same level, creating an unpleasant effect. Sometimes branches are spaced over the upper one-third of the stalk, resulting in unbalanced top branching, severely reducing the probability that the stalk will remain erect.

**d. Bud count and bloom sequence** (15 points). This deficiency in tall bearded iris is widely and justly criticized. A variety must remain in bloom over two weeks, or it should receive few points. The number of buds can be determined easily by observation. If the total is fewer than seven, fewer points should be given, and the variety should be seen growing again for further evaluation.

The sequence of bloom is as critical as bud count. Ideally, the terminal socket at the tip of the stalk and of each branch should contain at least three buds that will produce full sized flowers in an extended time sequence. A stalk which consistently opens three or more blooms at once almost never meets the 14-day minimum requirement for bloom. Such a stalk in a clump usually results in crowding of the flowers.

A variety which displays two or fewer open flowers at once prevents crowding in the clump. Flowers that open singularly on the stalk will extend the season of bloom. Some tall bearded varieties produce additional stalks after the initial bloom stalk, which will extend the bloom season significantly. There is no preference for stalks which open three or more flowers at once. The critical need in the garden is to extend the bloom season.

### 3. Flower – 25 points

**a. Color** (5 points). It is the color which attracts us. The iris flower itself is large and the single blooms should be individually attractive.

The flower must be free from any colors which strike a discordant note. Muddy, dull colors cannot be brilliant, delicate, or rich and are lacking in good color clarity. Blended colors can create difficulty for the judge. They should produce a bright and pleasing appearance as opposed to the dull and drab.

In amoenas, bi-colors, bi-tones, and variegatas either sharp or subtle contrast is acceptable, but it is important that the colors create harmony.

Plicata patterns should be distinct and not appear as stains. In plicatas with standards and falls of a nearly solid color pattern, the ground color can almost be obscured; in others, the ground color shines brightly.

The color of the beard can contribute significantly to the beauty and brightness of the flower. Beard colors can match the flower. A beard with a sharp color in contrast to the petals can result in a striking garden subject. A fat beard of generous proportion is usually preferred to a straggly, sparse one.

A new color, if pleasing, is an asset and should receive favorable ratings from judges. An iris must always be judged on its total garden qualities. Color alone is insufficient justification for an award.

Colors that fade rapidly or in an unpleasing series of variations is unacceptable. A flower that fades before maintaining three days of pleasing appearance should be heavily penalized.

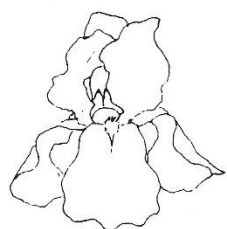
Haft colorings must be judged on the basis of whether they add to or detract from the appearance of the flower.

**b. Form** (10 points). Flower form has made tremendous advancements in recent years. Variability in form is acceptable as long as the standards and falls meet minimum requirements, producing flowers of good balance and proportion. Varieties which normally produce a beard projection (e.g., horns, spoons) are totally acceptable and should be evaluated accordingly. (Refer to "Novelty Bearded Iris")

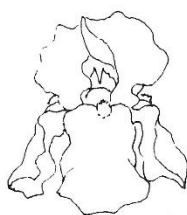
The standards may be erect or domed, open or closed, touching or overlapping. Domed standards are rounded with the petal tips either touching or slightly overlapping, while erect describes those standards which remain upright and do not necessarily touch at the top. In all cases, the standards must be held firmly in position.

Strong midribs are vital assets to form and are an absolute necessity if the standards are erect and open, lest wind and rain distort the bloom quickly. Touching, closed or overlapping standards often provide self-bracing, adding strength and the ability to withstand the elements. The contour of each standard on a particular bloom should always be identical.

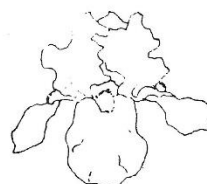
## TB Flower Forms



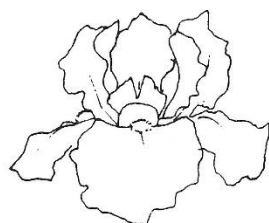
**narrow haft  
tucked falls**



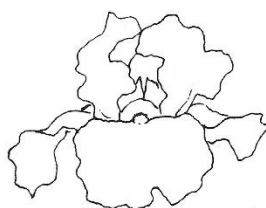
**hanging, narrow,  
pinched falls**



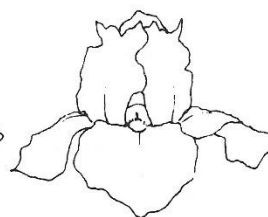
**narrow falls**



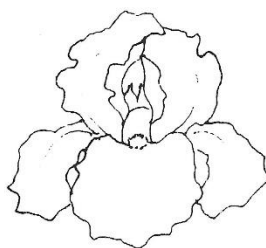
**open standards**



**wide, flaring falls**



**conical standards**



**domed standards**

The falls should be large enough in relation to the standards to produce good balance, but not so large that they dominate the standards and destroy proportion. Variability of shape is inevitable, appearing as rounded, oval, or triangular. A fall is considered to be “pinched” when the sides appear to have been squeezed. Pinching is considered inferior even if heavy ruffling attempts to conceal it.

Broad falls are more effective as an area for display of color than the narrower ones. Rounded falls are highly regarded, but if the shape approaches a circular form, it should be ruffled. Narrow, rectangular or strappy falls are not acceptable. Wide and overlapping falls are much acclaimed, and the judge should be ever watchful for narrowness of hafts, strap-like falls or falls which appear to have been “pinched”.

The position of the falls can be flaring, hanging, or tucked. As in the standard, a strong midrib is all important. Flaring falls are preferred to those that hang excessively, and the degree of flare is closely related to stalk height. A short plant may have flowers with horizontally flaring falls since they are observed from above, but such flaring would not be as effective on a tall plant. If the falls hang vertically without swirl or lilt, this detracts from the flower and should be penalized in relation to the degree that the falls hang. If the tip of the falls tuck under, this is a serious fault (not to be confused with the “recurving” of aril and arilbred iris).

The haft is that portion on the falls where it connects to the body of the flower. A narrow haft is detrimental to the appearance of the flower.

The shape, structure and position of the flower’s petals and the quality of substance present determine form. If balance, proportion, garden value or attractiveness are adversely affected by form, the flower should be penalized.

**c. Substance and durability** (10 points). Substance is the inner tissue structure that determines how long the flower can maintain its color and symmetry of form.

Petals with poor substance cannot possibly maintain their shape, regardless of weather conditions, and a flower should not tatter and flop after a spring downpour. Compare the clump with others in the same garden. Tall bearded flowers of today should withstand all variations of weather except the extremes.

Substance aids in retention of color. Flowers that develop white spots and burn in the sun possess an obvious lack of substance and durability. Freezing temperatures can cause a “crepe-like” texture on the petals. A flower that does not maintain its form and color saturation for at least three days should lose the entire ten points.

#### 4. Distinctiveness – 10 points

An iris deserving of awards should have individual appeal and personal charm. It should possess individuality and exhibit unique qualities which draw the observer from across the garden.

An award-winning iris is immediately recognized in the garden. -An iris may have every asset previously discussed, but if it lacks attractiveness, it will be of little value in the garden. Distinctiveness accounts for only 10 points and awards should not be given to a variety simply because of its individuality. Awards must always be based on the total iris: plant, stalk, and flower.

### SUMMARY

Consider the entire plant as you approach it. Observe the plant at a distance of 4 to 5 yards (3.7 to 4.6 meters) to determine if all parts combine to present a well-proportioned plant with superior landscape value.

Two primary areas that demand special attention are length of bloom season and the iris foliage as it appears throughout the growing season. The ability to re-bloom dependably should also be rewarded when the quality of the flower is acceptable.

Fragrance is subjective. What smells heavenly to one individual may be offensive to another. If the judge detects a pleasing fragrance, rejoice! Remember, what is objectionable to one may be pleasing to another.

Texture is a surface characteristic of the petals that is difficult to evaluate. It plays a significant part in perception of color by the judge, but to declare that one texture is superior to another is presumptuous. Any texture (whether leathery, satiny, silky, velvety, or waxy) is acceptable if it is visually pleasing.

Arrive at your composite judgment of the entire iris as a garden plant. Do not be influenced by the opinions of others. Casting a vote for an iris is your endorsement for introduction and higher awards. Be certain to evaluate the plant over two bloom seasons before determining its qualities. Grow whatever varieties you wish but cast ballots for only those varieties which clearly excel in all areas.

## EXHIBITION JUDGING: Horticultural Entries of Tall Bearded Iris

Exhibition judging of iris is distinctly different from judging in the garden. On the show bench a judge is not trying to determine the qualities and attributes of a particular variety. Rather, the exhibition judge must pass judgement in two areas:

1. Cultural perfection - how well the specimen has been grown by comparing it to the maximum typical performance of the variety being judged.
2. Condition and grooming - how well the specimen was prepared for entry into the exhibition.

Exhibition judging evaluates the specimen as it is shown at the moment the judge sees it.

Point scales are used to encourage consistent evaluation of specimens on the show bench. Swift and quality performance is demanded of the exhibition judge, making it impractical to point score every entry. The point scale is useful to the student judge in learning the special requirements of the class. It is especially useful in selecting the best specimen of the show. Consistency must be observed in judging all classes.

### SCALE OF POINTS Exhibition Judging of Horticultural TB Iris

1. Cultural Perfection					75
	a. Flower			45	
		i. Color	15		
		ii. Size	5		
		iii. Substance	10		
		iv. Form	15		
	b. Stalk			30	
		i. Open Blooms	15		
		ii. Branch Balance & Bud Placement	15		
2. Condition & Grooming					25
TOTAL					100

## 1. Cultural Perfection - 75 points

It is here that the exhibitor's performance as a horticulturalist is being evaluated. The use of point scales is for comparison of relative values of the characteristics which make a good specimen. The best way to learn to point score is to take one characteristic and decide what each specimen lacks in perfection for its variety, subtracting points for deficiencies. As there is no set rule which specifies the exact number of points to deduct for every fault, one must assess penalties for each defect in proportion to its deviation from typical performance of that variety. Over-emphasis on any particular characteristic must be avoided.

**a. Flower** (45 points). It should be noted that color, substance, and form are separate and distinct characteristics of the flower but are closely related and interdependent. To score a flower at half value for substance but full value for form and color would be inconsistent. If the blossom has lost substance, it is obvious that its form and color have deteriorated. A deformed flower that scores no points for form should be penalized for color and substance, too.

i. Color (15 points). The intensity of color is determined by the conditions under which the variety was grown. Soil type, fertility and moisture levels, amount and intensity of sunlight, garden temperatures and the cultural practices of the grower all affect color. Because the color of a cultivar can vary, judges must be especially hesitant to declare that a specimen is misnamed. Color intensity, one of the ways a cultivar is identified, varies greatly even in small geographical areas.

Obviously, the color must be typical of the variety or else it is incorrectly named. This knowledge is available only to the judge who has grown the variety and/or seen it growing in other areas.

The flower's color should be clear with no discoloration. Occasional splotches and patches of untypical color will sometimes occur in the petals due to weather vagaries or virus. Flowers that appear on the specimen stalk must show no signs of aging either from natural processes or the environment. The judge must refrain from accusing an exhibitor of over-refrigeration or forcing, as these accusations are impossible to confirm. One fading flower on a stalk will also cost the exhibitor the loss of a substantial number of points since all flowers should be of similar color intensity.

ii. Size (5 points). The size of the flower is primarily determined by the care of its grower. If a flower appears larger than you remember, do not fault it if the stalk is also proportionately large. Proportion is genetically determined and is altered only in the rarest circumstances. Undersized flowers clearly indicate the stalk is not well grown and must be penalized.

iii. Substance (10 points). Substance is the inner tissue structure which determines the durability of the flower. It sustains the form and color of the flower. Lack of substance causes degeneration of the flower form as well as fading or streaking of color.

As a flower ages, slightly detectable watery areas near the petal edges might become visible and might be responsible for some curling of the petal. Substance is not to be confused with texture which is a surface characteristic. Never touch or feel the blossom. Evaluate substance as it appears at the moment of judging.

iv. Form (15 points). Form must be typical of the variety in order to receive the full 15 points, and it can only be properly evaluated if the judge is familiar with the variety as it grows in the garden. There must be no distorted flower parts.

The standards and falls must hold themselves firmly in a manner that is characteristic of the variety. A bad tear in a petal seriously affects the form and must be heavily penalized. Flowers with heavy lace or extreme ruffling complicate the judging process. Unless one has grown these varieties, it is nearly impossible to determine if a small serration in the petal edge is a sign of damage or if it reflects the flower's typical form. A severely damaged standard or fall will cause the specimen to lose the 15 points.

A partially open bloom must be evaluated as a fully opened flower. This specimen can receive a maximum of 10 (from a possible 15) points for form because a partially opened flower cannot be thoroughly examined.

A flower beginning to age will not be of acceptable form and will also be heavily penalized for loss of color.

**b. Stalk** (30 points).

i. Open blooms (15 points). If a variety typically opens only one blossom at a time in the garden, it should receive the full 15 points on the show bench. Multiple blooms on an exhibition stalk are required only if such performance is typical for the variety.

A stalk with one or two open blooms is just as ideal as one which bears more. As the number of open flowers on a stalk increases, so does the possibility for penalties against color, size, substance, form, and condition.

ii. Branch balance and bud placement (15 points). Again, this trait should be typical for the variety being evaluated. A well grown stalk is more likely to have the best possible branch balance and bud placement than a poorly grown one. This characteristic is especially dependent on horticultural expertise.

Evaluate the specimen at some distance for overall balance and proportion. Verify your impression with a closer examination.

Height of the stalk and branching are genetically controlled, but the judge can penalize any stalk that has been carelessly allowed to grow in a semi-horizontal position, causing it to display distorted branching. Such a stalk will lose all 15 points.

## 2. Condition and grooming – 25 points.

The skills of the exhibitor are evaluated here. The specimen should reflect visible improvement in the flower and stem resulting from the exhibitor's grooming. This includes neat removal of diseased or damaged foliage; cleanliness of the stem and flower; absence of insect infestations; firm upright positioning of the specimen; facing of the specimen; and a neat removal of spent blossoms, including the ovaries, with no damage to the spathes. The result should be a specimen being presented in its best possible appearance.

A judge may encounter trickery such as pinning or taping of flower parts, flower replacement from another stem, splicing of stems, unattached leaves or leaf spathes, cracking of stems to make them appear straighter, or hidden supports and wedges. If any such alterations are found, the entry is to be disqualified from competition.

Here the judge is evaluating the skills of the exhibitor in preparing the stalk for entry. Condition refers to the degree of visible improvement in the appearance of the specimen stalk as a result of grooming. Grooming involves those finishing touches the exhibitor makes so that the entry presents its best possible appearance. Judges must never perform any act of grooming nor should they knowingly permit it to be done during judging. Such procedure could cause damage to the specimen. More importantly, it is totally unethical because it is the exhibitor's grooming skills that the judge is evaluating. These 25 possible points cannot begin to overcome the liabilities of a culturally deficient

specimen. The points are to be awarded only to the specimen that has been properly prepared for entry by the exhibitor.

**Stalk Height.** It is generally recommended that a stalk be exhibited at an appropriate height that is proportional to container. Indeed, proportion is an individual perception, and the suggestion here is only to avoid extremes. Stalks can behave unpredictably in strange weather or differing climates, so very few points can be subtracted under such circumstances.

**Foliage.** Was all diseased foliage neatly removed or trimmed? Trimming is necessary when there is faint discoloration, disease, or injury to leaf edges. Such procedure should remove less than one-fourth inch of foliage edges and should follow the natural contour of the leaf in its entirety. When the tip of the leaf is brown, removing that tip bluntly or trimming of more than one quarter of an inch from the leaf edge is unacceptable.

**Spathes.** If a flower has been removed, ascertain that the spathe has not been damaged and is intact. Detectable trimming of the spathe is unacceptable.

**Branches.** A branch can be removed where a leaf conceals its connection to the stalk, but the stalk and foliage should not display any visible damage.

**Cleanliness.** The stalk, flower and blossoms should be clean with no dirt, dust, or spray residues, if possible. Slight smudges or fingerprints on the stalks demand little penalty and are easily removed when the exhibitor gently wipes the stalk with soft tissue. There is no penalty for the removal of the bloom (i.e., white powder) from the stalk.

**Insects.** The presence of one or two aphids or other insects is no cause for alarm, as these creatures can travel from stalk to stalk during or after entry. Infestation, however, is a totally unacceptable condition.

**Position in Container.** The bottom branch should be exhibited above the container's opening. If a stalk is leaning badly, the judge should check to see if it was originally wedged properly by the exhibitor. If that is the case, the judge should ask the clerk to reposition the stalk, realizing that it could have been jarred by a placement clerk.

## EXHIBITION JUDGING

### Tall Bearded Iris Seedlings

In judging seedling classes, judges should remember that they are not seeking a superior horticultural specimen. But rather a new cultivar which not only conforms to the guidelines for the class, but exhibits desirable qualities comprising improvement and/or innovation. Condition is not a factor in judging seedlings. In fact, it is preferable that the stalks are not groomed, so that the judge can more easily evaluate such features as branching and bud count.

The Exhibition Certificate (EC) is awarded to the “Best Seedling” if one is chosen. The certificate is not a recommendation for introduction, since on the show bench it is not possible to evaluate plant qualities. The Best Seedling award should not be given when no entry is worthy. Exhibition Certificates are also awarded to seedlings that receive votes from at least five judges on special seedling ballots in a calendar year at AIS sanctioned shows. Judges visiting a show are urged to review the seedling entries and use these ballots to reward excellence where they find it.

### SCALE OF POINTS

#### Exhibition Judging of Tall Bearded Iris Seedlings

1. Flower			40
	a. Color	15	
	b. Form	15	
	c. Substance & Durability	10	
2. Stalk			35
	a. Poise & Balance	15	
	b. Number of Buds	10	
	c. Branching	10	
3. Distinctiveness			25
TOTAL			100

A prepared judge should have received and studied the show schedule well in advance of the show. A copy of the *Handbook For Judges* should always be present, along with a copy of the AIS Check List(s), Registrations and Introductions booklets (R&Is), or access to the online AIS Iris Register and the Iris Encyclopedia. Carefully review the portion of “Duties and Responsibilities of Judges,” “Organizing and Presenting an Iris Show” and “Rules and Regulations of an Iris Show” that pertain to exhibition judging before arriving at the show. To assist with identification, judges are allowed to use electronic devices to access the AIS Iris Encyclopedia and the most recent AIS checklist.

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## ESSAY: Comparison of BB, IB and MTB Iris Prelude to Chapters 10, 11, and 12

Approved by the AIS Board of Directors, March 30, 2021

Although border bearded (BB), intermediate bearded (IB), and miniature tall bearded (MTB) iris all have the same height range, the classes have a number of distinctions that should be emphasized to the judges. This essay will assist the judge with understanding those distinctions. Judges are encouraged to review this chapter before working with Chapters 10, 11, and 12.

### Border Bearded Iris (Chapter 10)

BBs were originally small cultivars chosen from pure TB breeding. As a consequence, they bloom with the tall bearded iris (TB), have the sophisticated flower forms and branch habit of the TBs, and are as fertile as the TBs from which they were derived. More recently, hybridizers have added species such as *Iris aphylla*, *I. balkana* and *I. reichenbachii* or utilized some of the fertile IB plants in crosses with BBs or TBs. These sorts of crosses have helped improve the vigor and branching of the plants. However, finished BBs are rarely from first-generation crosses with species. BBs that include species in the pedigree should have the sophisticated flower forms that are found in the BBs derived from straight TB breeding.

Because BBs generally bloom with the TBs, they are suitable for planting in front of TBs in the iris beds or at corners of beds. In windy climates, BBs are useful alternatives to TBs because their shorter stalks rarely fall over even when in full bloom. Although some BBs are as vigorous as the IBs, most good BBs have the vigor of typical TBs.

Both IB and BB classes have similar requirements for proportion. Roughly the height of the stalk should equal three to three and a half times the sum of height and width of the blossom. In other words, the best overall proportion should be:  $3 \text{ to } 3.5 \times (\text{height} + \text{width of blossom}) = \text{the height of the stalk}$ .

### Intermediate Bearded Iris (Chapter 11)

IBs are intermediate in size and bloom season between the standard dwarf bearded (SDB) and tall bearded (TB) classes. This intermediate bloom season is

relatively well defined in the East and Midwest, where they fill in the two- to three-week gap between the main SDB peak bloom period and the TB peak. However, the intermediate bloom season is blurred both in warmer climates and where seasonal weather is highly variable.

IBs are generally hybrids that contain a dwarf species or members of the miniature dwarf bearded (MDB) or SDB classes, and a TB or BB parent, if not in the first generation then in previous generations. This hybrid nature results in plants that are characterized by tremendous vigor, competing well with other perennials in mixed perennial borders and producing abundant bloom. Early IBs were derived from TB crossed with *chamaeiris*-type dwarfs and were nearly sterile. Most present-day IBs are first-generation hybrids between TBs and SDBs. These are not quite as sterile as earlier IBs, but they are not easily fertile, thus there are few IBs that are derived from IB X IB crosses.

As the flower form of SDB and TB parents has improved, present-day IBs have been developed with more sophisticated flower forms, appearing more like the BBs. However, there is no preference for this type over IBs with less sophisticated flowers which are more typical of the dwarfs. Another line of IBs has been derived from *Iris aphylla*. These IBs often have a balanced set of chromosomes and improved fertility, enabling the development of advanced-generation hybrids. The *aphylla*-derived hybrids are often very well branched and can even have the extra basal branch typical of the species. This branching habit is distinct from the straighter, more closely-branched stalk typical of IBs from a TB X SDB breeding.

This complexity of background produces a variety of acceptable IB forms, in terms of flower form and branch habit. These give the gardener a whole series of looks, from plants ranging in height from not much taller than SDBs, with numerous straight stalks and limited branching, to plants at the upper end of the height range with proportionately larger flowers, with or without highly branched stalks. All fall within the IB class as long as the core requirements for vigor and abundant bloom are met.

Thus, the BBs and IBs differ in terms of origins, bloom seasons, garden uses, and sophistication of the flower.

## Miniature Tall Bearded Iris (Chapter 12)

The MTB class is distinct from both the IB and BB classes in terms of flower size and the thinness of the stalk, for an overall look that is dainty. Flowers should have a combined height + width (measured from fall tip to fall tip in its natural position) of 6 inches (15 cm) or less. A rough rule of thumb for proportion is 4 or 4.5 X (height + width of blossom) = height of the stalk.

In general, the flowers of the diploid MTBs resemble delicate versions of the diploid TBs of the early 20th century and have a wildflower look. Most are tailored or only lightly ruffled. Tetraploid MTBs derived from crosses involving BBs and species such as *Iris aphylla* will have wider flower parts and more of the colors and patterns seen in the BBs and TBs. As long as the flowers measure in class and the overall proportion is good, these wider and fuller flowers should not be penalized.

Stalks should be pencil slim, about ¼” in diameter below the terminal flower, and the stalk should be relatively flexuous, with branches well-spaced and above the foliage. Tetraploid MTBs derived from *I. aphylla* and diploids derived from *I. astrachanica* may have a basal branch at the bottom of the stalk, making them broader at the base, but the stem should be suitably narrow at all points above this point. Although most of the diploid MTBs are good fits for the class, many tetraploid MTBs will grow taller or produce bigger flowers than is acceptable in the class. If they are consistently out of class, they could be re-classified as IBs or BBs rather than MTBs and should not win awards as MTBs. Many of the newer tetraploids are conforming more closely to the conception of the class as originally established by Williamson and White.

MTBs can be very effective plants in the mixed perennial border and in smaller or narrower beds where larger iris would be too large for the space. Although the diploid MTBs bloom mostly within the TB season, many of the tetraploid varieties start blooming with the late IBs and extend into TB season. Because of their thin, flexuous stalks, MTBs are one of the best bearded iris for those who work with flower arrangements. In fact, their original name of “table iris” reflects this important use of these flowers.

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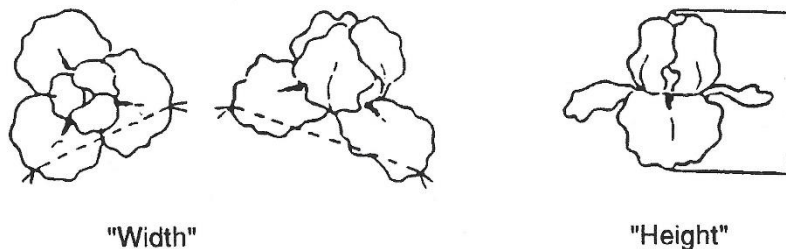


## Chapter 10

### BORDER BEARDED IRIS

Approved by the AIS Board of Directors, February 2, 2021

**Definition:** Erect with branched stems from 16 to 27.5 inches (40 to 70 cm) in height, bearing flowers no more than 5 inches (13 cm) in width, measured in the natural position from center fall tip to center fall tip and overall size ideally no more than 8.5 inches (22 cm) in combined width and height, measured on the vertical from the highest point of the standards to the lowest point of the falls [see illustration below]; leaves erect, in scale with and not obscuring the inflorescence; typically blooming with the tall bearded iris, which they closely resemble except that all plant and flower parts are reduced in size to balance the reduced height.



Maximum overall size on the BB flower: width + height = 8.5 inches (22 cm)  
Measured on fully expanded, fresh flowers in their natural position.

### GARDEN JUDGING

Any bearded iris conforming to the definition is eligible for registration as a border bearded (BB). There is no preference between the taller, larger examples and the shorter, smaller border bearded iris. However, judges must understand the need for proportion and balance in an ideal specimen. For example, the maximum permitted flower size is not suitable for border bearded iris at the lower end of the plant height range. Flower size, length and width of foliage and diameter of stem need to be

reduced proportionally with plant height in order that the whole plant be harmoniously in balance. Studies of proportion of stems and flowers in existing plants indicate that height should be approximately 3 to 3.25 times the overall size of the flowers. Equally important but more difficult to analyze is the balance between flower stalk and plant. In general, both thickness of stem and length and width of foliage must balance visually with stalk height and flower size. The border bearded iris in many ways resembles the tall bearded iris in color, finish and style, but is smaller, more delicate, and demonstrates good balance. The ideal border bearded iris has a distinctive character of its own and must never appear to be merely a foreshortened tall bearded.

Conformity to height and size limitations should be judged on the basis of typical performance. Plants consistently exceeding the height and/or flower size maximums are disqualified. However, a variety with an occasional slightly taller than normal stalk, but which is usually in class, should not be removed from consideration for awards, particularly if the plant has normal flowers. Judgment of such a variety should be withheld until it can be observed in other gardens and/or other seasons to determine its typical performance.

The first border bearded iris were bred and isolated from tall bearded lines. Typically, the border bearded iris bloom at the same time as the tall bearded iris. However, as fertile intermediates, tetraploid species and reblooming lines become more heavily involved in border bearded families, the season of bloom becomes more difficult to define. For that reason and because the flowering sequence of the classes in various climates might vary, season of bloom must be considered a continuum with no sharply defined parameters and an outstanding border bearded specimen should never be penalized for blooming earlier or later than the norm, as long as it fits the class in every other particular.

## GARDEN JUDGING

### Introduced Cultivars and Seedlings of BB Iris

The point scales are useful as guidelines in giving relative value to the specific characteristics being judged. The point scales can be of immense value to the student and even to the experienced judge when faced with evaluating iris that appear to be essentially equal.

## SCALE OF POINTS

### Garden Judging of Introduced Cultivars & Seedlings of BB Iris

1. Overall Proportion			25
2. Flower			30
	a. Color & Finish	10	
	b. Form	10	
	c. Substance & Durability	10	
3. Stalk			20
	a. Proportion	10	
	b. Branching & Buds	10	
4. Plant & Foliage			10
5. Distinctiveness			15
TOTAL			100

#### 1. Overall Proportion – 25 points

Each part of the plant, including flower size and style, stem height and thickness and foliage length and width, should be considered in relation to each other part. Points will be awarded or deducted according to how well the parts of the plant fit the whole. Nevertheless, because good proportion and balance are essential to the basic character of the border bearded iris, a pronounced lack of overall proportion disqualifies the plant from consideration for any award.

#### 2. Flower – 30 points

**a. Color and Finish** (10 points). The border bearded color palette is virtually limitless, including all colors and patterns available in tall bearded iris as well as variations derived from species or from other median classes. Whatever the color or pattern, it must be pleasing to the eye. It is probably true that the smaller the flower the more important color is. It is essential to assess the color of the flowers from across the garden and equally important to view color close up. Some iris, notably the subtle blends, are appreciated for their gentle nuances of color, even though they have no compelling garden presence. Whether strong or subtle, color should hold well throughout the life of the flower. Some colors naturally lighten a bit as the flower expands but unstable color which results in unsightly bleaching is a serious fault. Finish

or texture (type of petal surface, e.g., matte, velvety, satiny, crystalline) is an important color adjunct and should be considered to the extent it enhances or detracts from the underlying color. Beard color, which might blend, harmonize or sharply contrast with the color of the petals, should also be judged in terms of its contribution to the total color effect.

**b. Form** (10 points). Good basic architectural form is of paramount importance. While decoration such as ruffling and lace is generally considered an asset, smaller iris flowers require a certain restraint in order that decoration never overwhelms the underlying shape. Unusual beard variations, such as horns, spoons and flounces, are permitted but should be similarly restrained. Due to the compactness of the border bearded iris flower, there is a tendency toward shorter and consequently more open standards. Closed or arched and nearly closed standards are preferred. However, flowers with somewhat more open standards are acceptable provided that the standards are at least erect or cupped and firmly held, and that the overall flower shape is pleasing, and the form and color of any inner parts displayed truly merit attention. Standards which spring wide open from the base or twist in an unattractive manner, resulting in structural imbalance and disharmony, are severely penalized. Iris in the border bearded height range require some flare in the falls. The degree of flare should be appropriate to the height of the flower stalk. It is important that close scrutiny of such details be supplemented by viewing the stalk of flowers from a sufficient distance to gain perspective. No individual structural quality is as important as its contribution to the overall design.

**c. Substance and Durability** (10 points). Substance is the tissue structure which lends strength or firmness to the flower parts and renders them able to withstand the caprices of weather over a period of time. Substance includes but is not limited to thickness of petal. The compact structure of border bearded iris generally results in excellent substance. However, petal thickness per se is a dimension. For best proportion, all dimensions should be in scale. Extreme thickness of the petal is superfluous in small flowers and might result in rigidity, which detracts from the charm or personality of the flower. It might even interfere with the unfurling of the petals or render them unduly subject to fracture. Either of these effects is an extremely serious fault. The border bearded flower should have sufficient substance to support its form. It should be able to flutter a bit in a breeze but return to its pose in calm and not look permanently disarranged. Durability of flowers should be judged over a period of several days in order to determine resilience and lasting quality. Normal durability varies from climate to climate. But barring extreme weather conditions, a flower with adequate substance generally can be expected to remain in good condition for about three days.

### 3. Stalk – 20 points

**a. Proportion** (10 points). The ideal border bearded iris stalk is relatively slim and graceful but must be strong enough to support the blossoms. In addition, both the diameter of the stalk and the type and placement of its branches must visually balance both the plant from which it emerges and the size and style of the flowers which it displays. Excessively thick, clubby stems with branches so short as to crowd the blossoms are to be severely penalized. A guideline and formula to proportion is suggested in “About IB-BB-MTB Iris.” (See Fact Sheet) It is based on a study of existing border bearded iris, most of which present one or two open flowers at a time. However, the underlying principle involves not merely flower size, but the relationship of the total color mass to the stalk which displays it. For that reason, certain flowers with extremely wide parts might appear too large for their height even though conforming to the suggested measurements. Likewise, very small flowers presented in profusion on multi-branched stems might produce sufficient color mass to balance stem height and give a pleasing effect, even though they measure much smaller than the formula suggests. In summary, no formula can or should be substituted for an innate sense of good proportion, which is developed only through broad experience with the border bearded class.

**b. Branching and Buds** (10 points). A border bearded iris stalk should have, at a minimum, two well placed branches with a terminal, with a total of seven buds. Particularly in taller specimens, more and wider branching is preferred, with a corresponding increase in the number of buds. Generally, more generous branching and greater bud count prolong the season of bloom and are to be encouraged. However, care should be taken not merely to reward these qualities for their own sake. The sequence of flowering should be observed to be sure that the blossoms are presented attractively on the stalk without crowding and that the variety does not open so many buds concurrently that its season of bloom is actually curtailed rather than prolonged. These judgments should not be made on first year plants because only in established clumps can the sequence of stem production and placement of stalks be observed. Flower stalks maturing in sequence can greatly extend season of bloom and are an important asset. However, great numbers of stalks in flower at one time, particularly those presenting many flowers simultaneously, might result in an untidy appearance of the clump as a whole. Branching and bud count should be considered not just quantitatively, but as they affect both artistic presentation and duration of the bloom season.

#### 4. Plant & Foliage – 10 points

The foliage is an important component of overall balance and must be in harmony with the inflorescence. It must be neither scanty nor too lush and with its height and width must complement the flower stalk. It should be erect in habit. The leaves of some varieties are slightly falcate (curved like a sickle or scythe) or exhibit a slight twist. These characteristics in moderation do not detract from the overall appearance of the clump. However, weak foliage that folds over at the tips presents an extremely messy appearance and should be penalized accordingly. The foliage should be of good color and not overly susceptible to damage from weather or disease. Many border bearded iris are quite vigorous while others are not. Some of the border bearded iris, those coming primarily from tall bearded lines, tend to be slow or finicky growers. No matter how beautiful or excellently proportioned the plant, it will not be useful in the garden if it grows poorly or produces stalks on all of its increase, resulting in bloom-out. These faults should be heavily penalized. Border bearded iris should be expected to perform as well in the garden as quality tall bearded. Those which exceed this expectation, particularly those capable of producing especially generous bloom, sequential stalks or true rebloom without sacrificing increase for the subsequent year, should be duly rewarded for superior performance.

#### 5. Distinctiveness – 15 points

Distinctiveness is defined as those characteristics which set something apart from others of its kind. By definition, a border iris should be instantly recognizable as such, but to receive points under this attribute, it must also differ from existing members of the class in some positive way. Distinctiveness includes such qualities as a new and beautiful combination of petal and beard color or a new pattern or combination of patterns. In the broader sense, however, the term could apply to a new iris similar in color and form to an existing one but having far superior plant habit, or one with outstanding petal finish which sets a plentiful color aglow.

In order to evaluate distinctiveness, it is necessary that the judge be familiar with a great many varieties of border bearded iris so as to be able to make valid comparisons. As the border bearded class expands and progresses, some important and desirable qualities which would be considered distinctive today might and hopefully will become commonplace!

## EXHIBITION JUDGING

### Horticultural Entries of Border Bearded Iris

Exhibition judging of iris is distinctly different from judging in the garden. On the show bench a judge is not trying to determine the qualities and attributes of a particular variety. Rather, the exhibition judge must pass judgement in two areas:

1. Cultural perfection - how well the specimen has been grown by comparing it to the maximum typical performance of the variety being judged.
2. Condition and grooming - how well the specimen was prepared for entry into the exhibition.

Exhibition judging evaluates the specimen as it is shown at the moment the judge sees it.

The specimen must be correctly identified. It should appear well grown and exhibit no sign of disease or insect damage. It should be neither grossly oversize (over-fertilization is not good culture) nor undersize for the cultivar. Faults inherent in the variety itself (e.g. imperfections of form, branch placement) are not penalized on the show bench. But an exception is made regarding exhibits which are out of class in any respect. Such exhibits might, if judged optimally grown and typical of the cultivar exhibited, be awarded a first-place ribbon. But they are not eligible for Best of Section or higher awards, since they would inaccurately represent the border bearded class to the viewing public.

In addition to cultural perfection of the specimen, presentation skills of the exhibitor are judged. The specimen should be clean and free of mechanical injury and groomed to show it at its best advantage. Any removal of spent blooms or trimming of foliage must be inconspicuous. The blossoms should be unquestionably fresh and, if there are two or more displayed on the stalk, they should be in harmony with one another. Flowers which show marked signs of aging detract seriously from the exhibit and are to be penalized. In evaluating condition, some allowance may be made for the negative effect of extreme weather conditions in the area at the time of show especially if large numbers of the exhibits are affected. However, the judge may not evaluate the stalk in terms of how it appeared when cut or anticipate its appearance later on the show day. It must be judged as it appears at the moment of judging.

Although TBs that are larger than normal might be awarded points for an especially well-grown specimen, stalks of BB cultivars should clearly be in class in terms of both

flower and stalk. Flowers and stalks that are out of class should not receive any points for cultural perfection.

Point scales are used to encourage consistent evaluation of specimens on the show bench. Swift and quality performance is demanded of the exhibition judge, making it impractical to point score every entry. The point scale is useful to the student judge in learning the special requirements of the class. It is especially useful in selecting the best specimen of the show. Consistency must be observed in judging all classes.

### SCALE OF POINTS Exhibition Judging of Horticultural BB Iris

1. Cultural Perfection			75
	a. Flower	45	
	b. Stalk	30	
2. Condition & Grooming			25
TOTAL			100

### EXHIBITION JUDGING BB Iris Seedlings

In judging seedling classes, judges should remember that they are not seeking a superior horticultural specimen as defined in horticultural judging. Rather, they are judging a new cultivar which not only conforms to the guidelines for the class, but exhibits desirable qualities comprising improvement and/or innovation. Condition is not a factor in judging seedlings. In fact, it is preferable that the stalks are not groomed, so that the judge can more easily evaluate such features as branching and bud count.

The Exhibition Certificate (EC) is awarded to the Best Seedling if one is chosen. The certificate is not a recommendation for introduction since on the show bench it is not possible to evaluate plant qualities. The Best Seedling Award should not be given when no entry is worthy. Exhibition Certificates are also awarded to seedlings that receive votes from at least five judges on special seedling ballots. Judges visiting a show are urged to review the seedling entries and use these ballots to reward excellence where they find it.

**SCALE OF POINTS**  
**Exhibition Judging of BB Seedling Entries**

1. Overall Proportion			30
2. Flower			30
	a. Color & Finish	10	
	b. Form	10	
	c. Substance	10	
3. Stalk			20
	a. Proportion	10	
	b. Branching & Buds	10	
4. Distinctiveness			20
TOTAL			100

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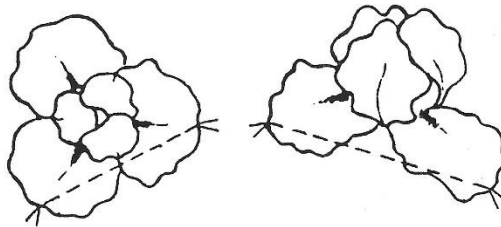


## Chapter 11

### INTERMEDIATE BEARDED IRIS

Approved by the AIS Board of Directors, February 9, 2021

**Definition:** Plants with bloom stalks 16 to 27.5 inches (41 to 70 cm) in height; leaves substantially erect; stalks branched and preferably extending above the foliage far enough to display the blossoms without interference; blooms 3.5 to 5 inches (9 to 13 cm) in width (see illustration below); typical blooming period is between that of standard dwarf and tall bearded iris.



"Width"

[Fully expanded but fresh flowers measured in natural position]

Intermediate bearded (IB) and border bearded (BB) iris have the same height range but because of the diverse species background of the intermediate class, the criteria for judging the IB iris, particularly with regard to branching and bud count, are somewhat less restrictive. In addition, the season of bloom for IBs typically commences earlier than BBs, although some intermediates having large numbers of buds or producing sequential stalks might continue their bloom period into the tall bearded/border bearded season.

Also, because of the diversity of genetic background, a great variety of plant, stalk and flower types is found that fits the IB class. There are some, usually smaller and earlier flowering, which, except for their greater height and flower size, resemble standard dwarfs in style as well as habits of growth and bloom. Some of the IBs approach the miniature tall bearded in size, proportion and branching while others are virtually indistinguishable from BBs except in season of bloom. This diversity should be encouraged and no one type is preferred over

any other, so long as the cultivar meets all other standards of quality. Neither is there any specific penalty for bloom occurring somewhat earlier or later than is typical for the class, since “season of bloom” is at best an estimate, and actual performance might vary greatly from climate to climate and from season to season.

Among bearded iris, intermediates are unexcelled as versatile and obliging garden subjects, typically having great vigor and being especially generous of bloom. Judges have a responsibility to see that such vigor and reliable bloom, as well as diseases resistance and neat growth habits, are maintained in the class, and their absence must be severely penalized. Rapid advancement has been and is being made in the intermediate class, giving a full range of color and pattern as well as high quality in other respects. For this reason, no allowances should be made in matters of overall quality.

A pleasing fragrance is an asset, both indoors and in the garden and the judge may consider it in making an overall evaluation. However, many iris have little or no fragrance, thus its presence is not required, nor should its absence be penalized.

## GARDEN JUDGING

### Introduced Varieties and Seedlings of IB Iris

The intermediate bearded (IB) iris must conform to the definition of its class but should also have all the general attributes of a fine garden iris.

In judging this class, which is noted for its excellent growth habits, emphasis must be placed upon overall desirability as a garden subject. The same criterion applies to judging seedlings. In addition, judges must seek varieties that are recognizably different from and/or better than varieties already in commerce.

The point scale shown below is intended not as a prescription for overall artistic merit, but as a guideline which the judge may use in giving relative emphasis to the specific qualities of the variety being judged. The scale is useful to the student judge in learning the special requirements of the class and to the experienced judge in comparing varieties which appear at a glance to be essentially equal in quality.

## SCALE OF POINTS

### Garden Judging of Introduced Cultivars & Seedlings of IB Iris

1. Overall Proportion			20
2. Flower			35
	a. Color & Finish	15	
	b. Form	10	
	c. Substance & Durability	10	
3. Stalk			20
	a. Proportion	10	
	b. Branching & Buds	10	
4. Plant & Foliage			10
5. Distinctiveness			15
TOTAL			100

#### 1. Overall Proportion – 20 points

A pleasing, well-balanced relationship among foliage, stalk and flower is essential in iris of all types, but even more critical for the median classes, whose smaller flowers require proportionally more refined stalks and foliage in order to achieve artistic balance. Roughly 3 to 3.5 x (height + width of blossom) = the height of the stalk gives plants the best overall proportion. All parts should contribute harmoniously to the whole, with no one feature overwhelming another, and points should be awarded or deducted accordingly.

#### 2. Flower – 35 points

**a. Color and Finish** (15 points). A full range of colors can be found in intermediates, as well as a vast array of patterns. Some patterns, such as the *Iris pumila* spot and halo, are rarely found in other iris of similar stature. There is no preference between vivid colors and the more subtle shades, both of which have value in the garden. However, the colors should be harmonious. In general, clean, clear colors are more pleasing to the eye and are preferred. Finish or texture refers to the type of petal surface, e.g. matte, velvety, satiny or crystalline. Texture is important to the extent it enhances or detracts from the underlying color and/or pattern.

**b. Form** (10 points). Form is the means by which color and pattern are displayed and should be judged according to its value in that regard. Intermediates come in a variety of forms, and this diversity should be maintained and encouraged, so long as there is a harmonious balance between the standards and falls and the total visual effect is pleasing. Standards may be domed, cupped, erect or somewhat open, provided their contours suit the overall flower shape and their midribs are strong enough to hold them firmly in position. Angle of view often determines the suitability of a particular form. For example, extremely flaring falls might be a greater asset on smaller, shorter cultivars which are viewed from above compared to viewing at an angle such falls on a taller, larger flower. Decorations, including ruffles, lace and “space age” features such as horns and spoons, should enhance but never overwhelm the form. Judges should bear in mind that no decoration, however attractive or unusual, excuses serious faults in the underlying flower structure.

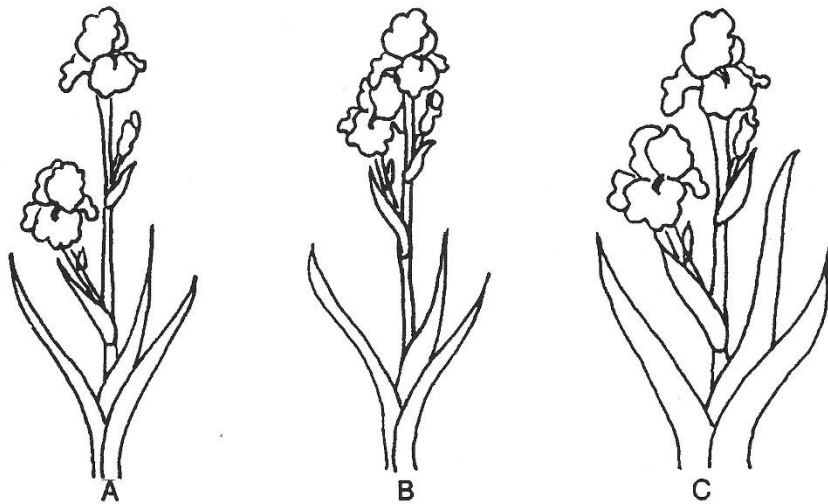
**c. Substance and durability** (10 points). Substance is a matter of tissue structure, including but not limited to petal thickness. Its purpose is to stabilize the flower form and to render the flower able to withstand weather conditions over a reasonable period of time. The eye can be fooled; many flowers with “heavy substance” (thick petals) are easily fractured or unable to withstand hot sun, while other, more fragile looking flowers can take adverse weather in their stride. For this reason, judgments should be made based upon the actual staying power of the blossoms rather than solely on their appearance when fresh. Flowers should last at least three days under normal weather conditions.

### 3. Stalk – 20 points

**a. Proportion** (10 points). Regardless of the branch habit, the height and diameter of the stalk must attractively balance both the flowers and the plant from which it emerges. Its failure to do so should be heavily penalized. Thick and clubby stalks should be heavily penalized.

**b. Branching and buds** (10 points). Many types of branching are found in the intermediate class, depending to a large extent on the species involved in the breeding. Derivatives of *Iris pumila* might have only two fairly short branches and four to five buds, whereas *Iris aphylla* hybrids often have very wide branching, sometimes with secondary branches originating close to the base of the stalk and correspondingly larger numbers of buds. In the interest of preserving diversity in this class, there is no preference between these two extreme types. Whatever

the branch habit, it should serve to present the flowers artistically throughout the bloom season without crowding. Generally, greater numbers of buds are preferred because they tend to lengthen the bloom season, but the buds should open in a sequence which displays each individual blossom attractively. Overall floriferousness of the clump is important. It should be kept in mind that plants which produce repeat or sequential stalks often give generous bloom for long periods of time despite having relatively few branches and buds per stalk. Such cultivars should not be penalized simply because of their lower bud count.



- A A nicely proportioned intermediate  
 B Branching too high; flowers bunched  
 C Flowers and foliage too large; stem too thick

#### 4. Plant and Foliage – 10 points

Plants should be healthy and disease-resistant, with foliage of good color and in proportion to the dimensions of the stalk and the size of the flower. Excessively wide foliage is unsuitable for the smaller stalks and flowers of IB iris and should be penalized accordingly. During the bloom season, the foliage should remain short enough so as not to interfere with the blossoms. A neat, compact plant is desirable. Vigorous growth is the norm for the intermediate class and is in large measure responsible for the popularity of these iris as garden subjects. A lack of vigor must therefore be severely penalized.

## 5. Distinctiveness – 15 points

Distinctiveness includes all characteristics which set a cultivar apart from others of its kind. Unusual qualities of flower shape, color and pattern immediately come to mind, but other qualities, such as particularly elegant branching or an especially appealing fragrance, can also render a plant distinctive. Personalities abound in the intermediate class, and anything new or different which gives a cultivar individuality is desirable, but never at the expense of overall quality.

### EXHIBITION JUDGING Horticultural Entries of IB Iris

Exhibition judging of iris is distinctly different from judging in the garden. On the show bench a judge is not trying to determine the qualities and attributes of a particular variety. Rather, the exhibition judge must pass judgement in two areas:

1. Cultural perfection - how well the specimen has been grown by comparing it to the maximum typical performance of the variety being judged.
2. Condition and grooming - how well the specimen was prepared for entry into the exhibition.

Exhibition judging evaluates the specimen as it is shown at the moment the judge sees it.

Placement in the class is determined by the official registration of the cultivar, even if the registered classification appears to be incorrect. The specimen must be correctly identified and should appear well grown and disease-free. In size and proportion, it should be typical of the cultivar as it performs in the geographical area where it has been grown. Faults inherent in the cultivar itself are not penalized, except that an exhibit which is “out of class” in any respect may receive no award higher than a first-place ribbon, even where the discrepancy is typical of the cultivar exhibited. Section and higher awards are withheld from such exhibits because any cultivar which does not conform to the intermediate bearded guidelines tends to misrepresent the class to the gardening public.

The exhibitor’s presentation skills are also judged. Specimens should be clean, free of mechanical injury and carefully groomed. Any removal of spent blooms or

trimming of foliage must be inconspicuous. Blossoms should be fresh and if two or more are displayed on the stalk, they should balance one another attractively. Entries must be evaluated as they appear at the moment of judging. No assumptions may be made with regard to how the exhibit might appear later on the show day. However, when severe local weather conditions have damaged large numbers of entries in a particular show, the criteria for judging may be relaxed somewhat.

Although TBs that are larger than normal might be awarded points for an especially well-grown specimen, stalks of IB cultivars should clearly be in class in terms of both flower and stalk. Flowers and stalks that are out of class should not receive any points for cultural perfection.

### SCALE OF POINTS Exhibition Judging of Horticultural IB Iris

1. Cultural Perfection			75
	a. Flower	45	
	b. Stalk	30	
2. Condition & Grooming			25
TOTAL			100

### EXHIBITION JUDGING IB Seedlings

In judging seedling classes, judges should remember that they are not seeking a superior horticultural specimen. But rather a new cultivar which not only conforms to the guidelines for the class, but exhibits desirable qualities comprising improvement and/or innovation. Condition is not a factor in judging seedlings. In fact, it is preferable that the stalks are not groomed, so that the judge can more easily evaluate such features as branching and bud count. Spent flowers can be removed if done so that the ovary remains visible.

The Exhibition Certificate (EC) is awarded to the “Best Seedling” if one is chosen. The certificate is not a recommendation for introduction, since on the show bench it is not possible to evaluate plant qualities. The Best Seedling Award should not

be given when no entry is worthy. Exhibition Certificates are also awarded to seedlings that receive votes from at least five judges on special seedling ballots. Judges visiting a show are urged to review the seedling entries and use these ballots to reward excellence where they find it.

**SCALE OF POINTS**  
**Exhibition Judging of IB Seedlings**

1. Overall Proportion			25
2. Flower			35
	a. Color & Finish	15	
	b. Form	10	
	c. Substance	10	
3. Stalk			20
	a. Proportion	10	
	b. Branching & Buds	10	
4. Distinctiveness			20
TOTAL			100

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## Chapter 12

### MINIATURE TALL BEARDED IRIS

Approved by the AIS Board of Directors, February 9, 2021

**Definition:** Plants 16 to 27.5 inches (41 to 70 cm) tall; flowers not more than 6 inches (15 cm) of combined height and width; flowers borne on slender, wiry, flexuous or curving stalks 1/8 to 3/16 inch (3 to 5 mm) wide directly under the terminal flowers and increasing gradually to about 5/8 inch (16 mm) at the ground line. Although most miniature tall bearded iris bloom with the tall bearded iris, it is size and proportion that define this class, not season of bloom.

The active judge should be familiar with several in-class MTBs in the garden to understand the dainty nature of both the stalk and flower. When the class was created, the pioneers established clear maximum size for the flowers, slenderness of the stalks and height of the stalk. These criteria have served the class well and today we have a large variety of flowers that meet all of these expectations. MTBs may perform differently than expected, especially in very warm and very cold climates.

Any variety that consistently fails to meet guidelines for height, flower size and stem diameter should be penalized. Regardless of height, proportion and balance are essential for the ideal specimen. Flower size as well as width of foliage and diameter of stem need to be reduced proportionately as height is reduced in order that the whole plant be harmoniously in balance.

Conformity to height and size limitations should be judged on the basis of typical performance of the variety. The occasional occurrence of too tall stalks or too large blooms should be noted and considered but it should not remove an otherwise notable variety from consideration for awards.

Pleasing fragrance is an asset in miniature tall bearded iris because they are popular as cut flowers. A seedling with unpleasant aroma may be unacceptable for introduction unless it is a truly superior garden subject.

**GARDEN JUDGING**  
**Introduced Varieties & Seedlings of MTB Iris**

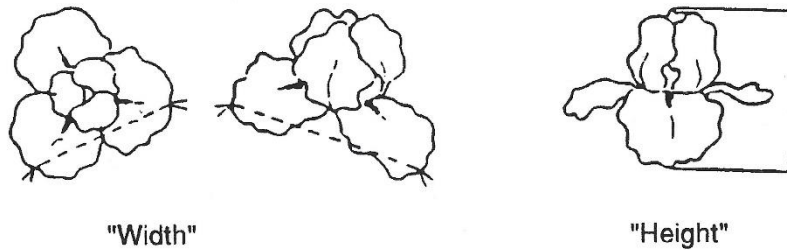
**SCALE OF POINTS**

1. Proportion			25
2. Flower			40
	a. Color & Finish	20	
	b. Form	10	
	c. Substance & Durability	10	
3. Stalk			15
	a. Buds & Branches	10	
	b. Characteristics	5	
4. Foliage			10
5. Distinctiveness			10
TOTAL			100

1. Proportion - 25 points

Miniature tall bearded (MTB) iris are not simply tall bearded iris with small flowers. All aspects of the plant are far daintier. Guidelines for stem diameter and the ratio of stalk to foliage have been set to reinforce this slender, graceful effect.

The MTB flower should be not larger than 6 inches (15 cm) of combined height and width (measured from fall tip to fall tip in the natural position of the flower). A number of measurement studies has established a ratio of 4 to 4.5:1 for height of the stalk to the height plus width of the flower as it naturally stands. Blossoms near the maximum of 6 inches of combined height plus width should thus be on stalks in the range of 24 to 27 inches tall and the size of the blooms reduced proportionately on shorter stalks. MTB-sized flowers on cultivars with heights over 26 inches look skimpy unless there is a large number of flowers on the stalk to compensate for the gaps.



Maximum overall size of MTB flower: width + height = 6 inches (15 cm)  
 Measured on fully expanded, fresh flowers in their natural position.

## 2. Flower - 40 points

**a. Color and Finish** (20 points). The color range in diploid MTBs is limited to white, yellow, variegatas, amoenas, neglectas, blues, orchids, purples, plicatas and variegata blends. In the tetraploid varieties, the color palette is opened up to the tangerine tones and some dominant bicolor combinations not found in the diploids. Because MTBs are small flowers, striking color combinations that might be less appealing in a larger flower are appropriate and even admired in these smaller flowers. Smooth, dark colors are needed, as well as red tones. Because many diploid MTBs are descended from *Iris variegata*, there are many varieties with flowers that have heavy striping, which is not a fault. However, the uneven and irregular coloration of some older blues and lavenders is considered a fault. Severe fading of the flowers in any color also is considered a fault. Purple tinted spathes may enhance the blooms.

**b. Form** (10 points). Tailored to lightly ruffled flowers might be more in keeping with the MTBs objective of daintiness than are heavily ruffled types. Flaring and semi-flaring falls are preferred; drooping falls detract. Closed or arched standards are preferred. Open standards may be acceptable if they are held erect and reveal attractively intensified or contrasting color in the center of the flower.

Due to the small size of MTB flowers, there is less "canvas" available for decorations (e.g., heavy ruffling, lace, horns). If present, such decorations should not overwhelm the small flowers. Many MTBs have a slight flip to their falls. This adds a bit of a ruffled look without adding ruffles per se and keeps a wildflower look to the flowers. In the tetraploids the flowers tend to be wider at the haft and the petals themselves are often wider and fuller. Some of these flowers may look out of class but actually measure in class. The judge should

not be too quick to dismiss these cultivars. Similarly, dark flowers can appear bigger than they are. The judge should resort to measuring the flowers of these cultivars if in doubt of their size.

**c. Substance and Durability** (10 points). A good MTB flower should last 3 days under normal weather conditions. Many MTB flowers, especially the diploids, although not stiff or highly-substanced, will remain in a fresh condition for the required 3 days. Conversely, some very heavily-substanced flowers might last only 2 days despite their more rigid petals. Thus, durability can only be determined by actual examination of the days a flower lasts rather than by feeling the petals.

### 3. Stalk - 15 points.

**a. Buds and Branches** (10 points). A minimum of two branches plus terminal with a total of seven buds. Eight to nine buds are preferred on all MTBs.

The stalks of diploid cultivars generally have two or three branches plus a terminal and minimum of seven buds. Cultivars with up to 14 buds are known. The tetraploid cultivars derived from *Iris aphylla* and diploid cultivars from *I. astrachanica* can have the basal branch typical of these species. Because of this basal branch, the area of the stalk right at the base might exceed the recommended maximum diameter but should be at the appropriate size just above this junction.

**b. Characteristics** (5 points). Stalks should be slender and flexuous, not ramrod stiff. Miniature tall bearded iris derived from *Iris aphylla* might have naturally straighter stems than those derived from *I. variegata*. The angle of branching should be graceful. Branches should not parallel the stem so closely that flowers are compressed, nor should they be so widely angled as to look awkward.

### 4. Foliage - 10 points

Foliage should be graceful and in proportion to other parts of the plant. The blooming plant should provide a floriferous display held well above the foliage. The foliage should be erect in habit. The leaves of some varieties are slightly sickle-shaped or exhibit a slight twist. These characteristics in moderation do not detract from the overall appearance of the clump.

Foliage should be no more than two-thirds the height of stems at bloom time, with leaves no more than approximately 1 inch (2.5 cm) wide at the base. The foliage should also be reduced in both width and length so that the flowers are out of the foliage mound. Wide, coarse and excessively tall foliage are all faults. Dark green to blue-green color is preferred to yellow-green. Purple leaf bases are a desirable feature. The plant should exhibit good health and vigor as indicated by increase and appearance. Disease resistance should be highly rated. Foliage should remain clean well beyond the bloom season.

#### 5. Distinctiveness - 10 points

Distinctiveness can result from improvement of any desirable quality of the plant (e.g., stem or flower) when compared to other similar varieties within the class. Improvements in color range and flower form rate high.

### EXHIBITION JUDGING Horticultural Entries of MTB Iris

Exhibition judging of iris is distinctly different from judging in the garden. On the show bench a judge is not trying to determine the qualities and attributes of a particular variety. Rather, the exhibition judge must pass judgement in two areas:

1. Cultural perfection - how well the specimen has been grown by comparing it to the maximum typical performance of the variety being judged.
2. Condition and grooming - how well the specimen was prepared for entry into the exhibition.

Exhibition judging evaluates the specimen as it is shown at the moment the judge sees it.

Although TBs that are larger than normal might be awarded points for an especially well-grown specimen, stalks of MTB cultivars should clearly be in class in terms of both flower and stalk. Flowers and stalks that are out of class should not receive any points for cultural perfection.

Point scales are used to encourage consistent evaluation of specimens on the show bench. Swift and quality performance is demanded of the exhibition judge, making it impractical to point score every entry. The point scale is useful to the student judge in learning the special requirements of the class. It is especially useful in selecting the best specimen of the show. Consistency must be observed in judging all classes.

### SCALE OF POINTS Exhibition Judging of Horticultural MTB Iris

1. Cultural Perfection					75
	a. Flower			40	
		i. Proportion	10		
		ii. Color & Finish	10		
		iii. Form	10		
		iv. Substance & Durability	10		
	b. Stalk			35	
		i. Proportion	10		
		ii. Branching	15		
		iii. Number of Buds & Blooms	10		
2. Condition & Grooming					25
TOTAL					100

## EXHIBITION JUDGING MTB Seedlings

In judging seedling classes, judges should remember that they are not seeking a superior horticultural specimen. But rather a new cultivar which not only conforms to the guidelines for the class, but exhibits desirable qualities comprising improvement and/or innovation. Condition is not a factor in judging seedlings. In fact, it is preferable that the stalks are not groomed, so that the judge can more easily evaluate such features as branching and bud count. Spent flowers can be removed if done so that the ovary remains visible.

The Exhibition Certificate (EC) is awarded to the “Best Seedling” if one is chosen. The certificate is not a recommendation for introduction, since on the show bench it is not possible to evaluate plant qualities. The Best Seedling Award should not be given when no entry is worthy. Exhibition Certificates are also awarded to seedlings that receive votes from at least five judges on special seedling ballots. Judges visiting a show are urged to review the seedling entries and use these ballots to reward excellence where they find it.

### SCALE OF POINTS Exhibition Judging of MTB Seedlings

1. Proportion			20
2. Flower			45
	a. Color & Finish	20	
	b. Form	15	
	c. Substance & Durability	10	
3. Stalk			20
4. Distinctiveness			15
TOTAL			100

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## Chapter 13

## STANDARD DWARF BEARDED IRIS

Approved by the AIS Board of Directors, February 9, 2021

**Definition:** Plants 8 to 16 inches (21 to 40 cm) in height; blooms up to, but not including, 4 inches (10 cm) wide; flowers with a combined width and height between 3.4 and 6.8 inches (8.6 and 17.2 cm); stems branched or unbranched, usually with two or more terminal buds; leaves essentially erect and no taller than the height of the bloom stalk; bloom season generally after the peak of the miniature dwarf bearded iris and before the peak of the intermediate bearded iris, but they can bloom earlier or later. There is no preference for time of bloom since the goal is to have the longest bloom season possible.



Width

Height

Minimum overall size: Width + Height = 3.4 inches (8.6 cm)

Maximum overall size: Width + Height = 6.8 inches (17.2 cm)

All measurements taken with the SDB flower in its natural position.

Traditional SDBs produce short clumps with flowers just above the foliage and three to four buds. These must be judged on their own merit and rewarded for their normal and usual performance.

Advancements in SDB breeding over the past 20 or so years have come partly from the use of intermediate bearded iris and more recently from *Iris aphylla*, *I. junonia*, and a few diploids. It is imperative to recognize the impact of this introduction on the class and to accept and reward that diversity. As an example, smaller flowered varieties on diminutive stalks should be evaluated as equal to traditionally sized varieties. These advances mean that it is now

possible to have stalks with two or three branches and eight to ten or more buds. While multiple open flowers on a traditional SDB stalk can cause crowding and a messy clump, newer SDB types can open multiple blooms to advantage because of the wider and better spaced branching. Foliage must remain short in order that all flowers are shown to advantage.

## GARDEN JUDGING Introduced Varieties & Seedlings of SDB Iris

Garden judging of standard dwarf bearded (SDB) iris must be done on two- or three-year clumps because first year plants are not likely to be representative of the variety. In the SDB class, considerable variations in flower form are acceptable and numerous stems per clump are expected. Flowers are smaller than those grown on intermediate, border or tall bearded iris and should be in proportion to their own stem height. SDBs should be very free-blooming and withstand adverse weather conditions better than most classes of iris. Because of their diverse parentage and the effects of weather in warmer and colder climates, some SDBs display unusual growth habits. For example, some have an initial bloom at under 8 inches with subsequent stems reaching 9 to 11 inches followed by blooms at 12 to 13 inches and a final wave of bloom at 14 to 15 inches. As this extends the bloom season, this characteristic should be rewarded. In this type of SDB the height for classification purposes should be determined at mid-season, when the clump is at peak bloom. In all phases of bloom, the flowers must remain above the foliage.

The following scale of points should be used only as a guideline in weighing the comparative importance of plant and flower characteristics. It can be a great help in acquiring judging skills and practice judging.

## SCALE OF POINTS

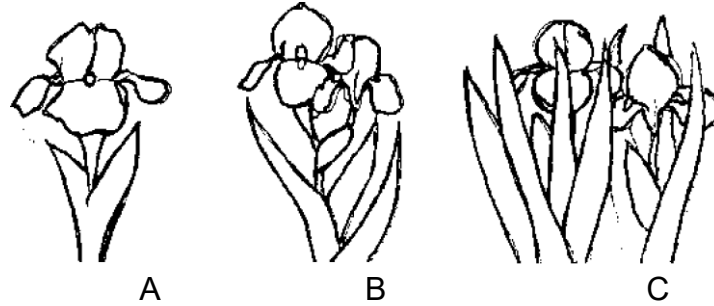
### Garden Judging of Introduced and Seedling SDB Iris

1. Proportion			20
2. Flower			40
	a. Color & Finish	15	
	b. Form	15	
	c. Substance & Durability	10	
3. Floriferousness			15
4. Foliage & Plant			10
5. Distinctiveness			15
TOTAL			100

#### 1. Proportion - 20 points

In judging the standard dwarf bearded (SDB) iris, the judge must consider the proportion of the plant at all times. Flower, stalk, foliage and clump must be evaluated together. Foliage should be no taller than the lowest flower on the stalk. The larger the entire plant, the more the flowers should rise above the foliage. Thick stalks are not appropriate on small plants. Foliage width and thickness should be proportional with its height. With the large variation permitted in both height of the stalk and width of the flower, it is essential that they be in proportion. While a 3.9-inch flower on an 8.3-inch stalk is definitely outside, a 2-inch flower on a 15.75-inch stalk might be considered out of proportion. If enough smaller flowers are present to create an acceptable mass of color, then there should be no penalty. The rule-of-thumb is a stalk height should be 3.75 to 4 times the width of the flower. Thus a 2.5-inch wide bloom on a 9.5-inch stalk, a 3-inch wide bloom on an 11.5-inch stalk, or the maximum 3.9-inch bloom on a 15.75-inch stalk would be considered to have good proportion. Additionally, the size of the flowers should be in harmony with the size and type of foliage. A very dainty flower on a tall stem with thick foliage is as out of place as a large flower on a delicate stem with minute foliage.

Absence of good overall proportion should be severely penalized and precludes it from receiving any awards. Iris larger than the maximum limits are not to be considered for awards.



Three common faults in standard dwarf iris.

- A. Flowers too large for stem height.
- B. Crowding of flowers.
- C. Flowers obscured by foliage (stalks too short and/or foliage too tall).

## 2. Flower - 40 points

As with other classes, standard dwarf bearded iris are garden and landscape plants and should be viewed both close up and from a distance. They should be judged from both perspectives.

**a. Color** (15 points). The color and pattern are major components of the total impact of the iris. Both should be viewed from a distance for overall garden effect and from close up for clarity, color distribution and saturation, and pattern. Spot, halo, plicata markings, haft markings, beards, and style arm color should be considered and evaluated from both close up and far away. Patterns should be distinctive and contrasts well defined. Gradual blending from color to color is different from a pattern and can be attractive. Soft and pastel colors are needed, as well as bright primary colors. Markings on the hafts or shoulders should be harmonious. Coarse markings or unpleasant color contrasts detract from the total effect. Extraordinary beard color can add substantially to the distinctiveness of the SDB iris. Finish (texture) is a surface condition of the flower and contributes to the effect of color. Smooth, silky, velvety and waxy surfaces contribute.

**b. Form** (15 points). Standards may be open, arched or domed, provided they are displayed neatly and precisely. The midrib of the standard must be sufficiently strong to keep the standard in its position and not permit it to flop. Open or erect standards should not collapse. Flaring or horizontal or arched falls display the color and pattern of the SDB iris to advantage. The falls should be relatively wide, but variations are acceptable if the form is pleasing. Neither narrow hafts with long parallel sides nor pinched or tucked falls are acceptable

forms. Ruffled and tailored forms are personal preferences, and neither should be overemphasized or disregarded, because either could be used as an excuse to overlook any basic faults of the flower. Overly flared or cupped falls are not acceptable since they distort the flower form and diminish the amount of color in the garden.

**c. Substance and Durability** (10 points). Since the standard dwarf iris can bloom early, the weather often is variable, with late frosts, rain, wind, and sun combining to provide a severe environment for the iris. Substance (tissue structure) in the standards and falls provides the crispness, stiffness and toughness to endure inclement weather beginning with the flower's opening bud to the completion of its bloom; and permitting it to fade out gracefully and not disintegrate into a shapeless blob. Thin, transparent or watery appearance is not acceptable for a good iris.

### 3. Floriferousness - 15 points

Because the standard dwarf iris traditionally has only three buds per bloom stalk, several stalks are necessary in a normal size clump to produce an acceptable garden effect. More stalks with fewer buds to each stem are acceptable if the buds bloom sequentially, giving an adequate period of bloom. Stems with only one or two blooms that quickly finish blooming should be penalized. Some varieties have more than two terminal buds and a bud on a branch or spur. If these flowers bloom sequentially, do not crowd other blooms and are not obscured by foliage, this should extend the length of bloom season and should be rewarded. An established (two- or three-year) clump should have a bloom period of at least 10 to 15 days. Individual blooms on newer varieties should last for three days. Allowances should be made in hot, windy climates that can substantially reduce this expected norm.

### 4. Foliage and plant - 10 points

Foliage should be dense and in proportion to stems and flowers. Stalks should be sturdy but not coarse. The flowers should be at or above the tips of the leaves. Coarse, overwide or untidy growth detracts from the garden effect and is unacceptable. Good color and disease resistance are essential. At least a third and no more than two-thirds of fans should bloom, which leaves sufficient fans in the clump to ensure continuation of the plant. A tendency to bloom out is a serious fault.

## 5. Distinctiveness - 15 points

Distinctiveness is one of the major features that attract attention. Poise, personality, proportion, charm, color and pattern combine with form to produce that distinctiveness. Color breaks, exotic patterns and new forms are distinctive and often desirable. However, they must never be rewarded at the expense of the basic qualities of beauty, grace and charm. Distinctiveness must not override the basic requirement of meeting the class specification.

### EXHIBITION JUDGING Horticultural Entries of SDB Iris

Exhibition judging of iris is distinctly different from judging in the garden. On the show bench a judge is not trying to determine the qualities and attributes of a particular variety. Rather, the exhibition judge must pass judgement in two areas:

1. Cultural perfection - how well the specimen has been grown by comparing it to the maximum typical performance of the variety being judged.
2. Condition and grooming - how well the specimen was prepared for entry into the exhibition.

Exhibition judging evaluates the specimen as it is shown at the moment the judge sees it.

Point scales are used to encourage consistent evaluation of specimens on the show bench. Swift and quality performance is demanded of the exhibition judge, making it impractical to point score every entry. The point scale is useful to the student judge in learning the special requirements of the class. It is especially useful in selecting the best specimen of the show. Consistency must be observed in judging all classes.

**SCALE OF POINTS**  
Exhibition Judging of Horticultural SDB Iris

1. Cultural Perfection					75
	a. Flower			55	
		i. Proportion	15		
		ii. Color & Finish	20		
		iii. Form	10		
		iv. Substance	10		
	b. Stalk			20	
		i. Proportion & Branching	10		
		ii. Number of Buds & Blooms	10		
2. Condition & Grooming					25
TOTAL					100

1. Cultural Perfection - 75 points

**a. Flower** (55 points). The flower should show pleasing proportion of all component parts as well as proper size for the stalk. The color should be clear, clean and typical of the variety, although some variation may be noted because of soil conditions or weather. A judge should use great caution when considering a disqualification of what they perceive as a misnamed variety. Weather and soil conditions can cause marked shifts in the color of SDBs. Late frosts can cause much lighter than normal colors, particularly in the blue, purple and violet range. Plicata markings also can vary markedly, sometimes within the same clump. Some flowers might have few markings, while others are almost completely marked overall. Form should be the best possible for the variety. The flower should have a typical substance for the variety being judged.

**b. Stalk** (20 points). The stalk should be typical for the variety and may be branched or unbranched, but height should be proportionate to flower size. Unbranched specimens are best displayed with one open flower and a bud. Branched stalks may have one open flower plus a mature bud, or two or more open flowers, provided they are well spaced and not bunched or out of proportion.

## 2. Condition and grooming - 25 points

The specimen should be well grown with no evidence of disease, damage or insect infestation. The stalk should be clean with all old, fading or damaged blooms inconspicuously removed. Leaves on the stem and spathes should not be removed but may be neatly trimmed into their natural shape. The flowers should be fresh and fully open with no abnormalities, signs of aging or mechanical damage. Partially opened blooms should be penalized, because their true form, color and substance are not accurately represented.

### EXHIBITION JUDGING SDB Iris Seedlings

In judging seedling classes, judges should remember that they are not seeking a superior horticultural specimen. But rather a new cultivar which not only conforms to the guidelines for the class, but exhibits desirable qualities comprising improvement and/or innovation. Condition is not a factor in judging seedlings. In fact, it is preferable that the stalks are not groomed, so that the judge can more easily evaluate such features as branching and bud count. Spent flowers can be removed if done so that the ovary remains visible.

The Exhibition Certificate (EC) is awarded to the “Best Seedling” if one is chosen. The certificate is not a recommendation for introduction, since on the show bench it is not possible to evaluate plant qualities. The Best Seedling Award should not be given if no entry is worthy. Exhibition Certificates are awarded to seedlings that receive votes from at least five judges on special seedling ballots. Judges visiting a show are urged to review the seedling entries and use these ballots to reward excellence where they find it.

**SCALE OF POINTS**  
**Exhibition Judging of SDB Iris Seedlings**

1. Flower			80
	a. Proportion	20	
	b. Color & Finish	20	
	c. Form	15	
	d. Substance	10	
	e. Distinctiveness	15	
2. Stalk			20
TOTAL			100

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## Chapter 14

### MINIATURE DWARF BEARDED IRIS

Approved by the AIS Board of Directors, May 11, 2021

**Definition:** Bearded iris up to 8 inches (20 cm) in height. Stems are usually unbranched; flowers are 1.6 to 3 inches (4 to 7.5 cm) wide; the earliest blooming of all bearded iris and with pure *Iris pumila* usually the first to bloom. Early bloom is a very desirable trait in the MDB class as it helps define the class.



Growth habits of *I. pumila*

*Iris pumila* is the most important species in the background of modern miniature dwarf bearded (MDB) iris. Most varieties are one-half to three-quarters *I. pumila*, and MDB iris of purely *I. pumila* origin are nearly a class in themselves. The balance of the parentage in hybrid miniature dwarf bearded iris is sometimes complex, deriving from several possible parental types including tetraploid tall or border bearded iris, the 40-chromosome complex of species now classified as *I. lutescens* (in some older cultivars), and occasionally from *I. aphylla*.

### GARDEN JUDGING

#### Introduced Cultivars and Seedlings of MDB Iris

Miniature dwarf bearded (MDB) iris should have small and dainty flowers, with flowers and stems being in proportion to the overall plant. The great diversity in the background of MDB iris causes a relatively wide range of height in this class. A variety which

occasionally produces a stem above the class height limit may be acceptable if the bloom size and other characteristics are those of the MDB class. A variety purported to be an MDB but not conforming to the class should not receive a vote for an award, whatever its other qualities.

### SCALE OF POINTS

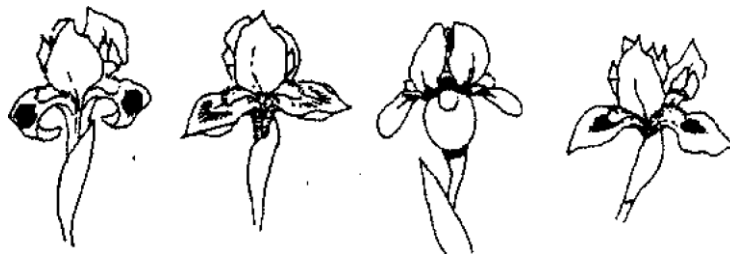
#### Garden Judging of Introduced & Seedling MDB Iris

1. Flower			40
	a. Color	20	
	b. Form	15	
	c. Substance & Texture	5	
2. Plant & Foliage			25
	a. Leaves & Stalk	10	
	b. Floriferousness	10	
	c. Vigor	5	
3. Overall Proportion			20
4. Distinctiveness			15
TOTAL			100

#### 1. Flower - 40 points

**a. Color** (20 points). In judging, remember that color in a given variety can vary from season to season and from garden to garden. The spot pattern derived from *I. pumila* might be exceptionally sharp and clear in a particular year or garden but fuzzy and indistinct in another year or garden. The spot pattern can be a very sharply defined spot, a rayed spot, or a diffuse spot. Halos, divided spots or “wings”, and other variations on the spot must be a pleasing addition to the falls whether it is in a contrasting color or an intensified color on the falls. An overlay of another color should enhance the overall color effect and not appear muddy or smeared. Irregular streaking or blotching of a dark color, particularly noticeable on light colored flowers, tends to appear in cold, wet weather on varieties that are normally clear. Varieties that do not show such streaking or blotching when others do should be credited for this trait. Beard color can be very important to the overall effect. Matching or contrasting colors are preferable to indistinct ones. Style arm color can be another significant factor, especially in flowers with open standards that show off the style arms.

**b. Form** (15 points). Flaring or horizontal falls are more important on low growing plants than on the taller iris since flowers generally are viewed from above. *I. pumila* typically gives to its progeny one of two characteristic forms: falls that curl under or falls that flare out and roll to a point at the end. Falls that roll to a point at the end are sometimes called a star or lifting fall. Either of these fall forms is acceptable. The criterion is whether the color and pattern of the falls are displayed or hidden by the form. If the falls that curl under are relatively wide at the hafts and do not curl under too abruptly, they might display a large amount of color and pattern. Falls that roll to a point, if not extreme, might have a certain daintiness or reveal an interesting color contrast on the reverse of the falls, enhancing the general effect. Standards may be open or closed. Firmly held, open standards that reveal an interesting interior, such as matching or contrasting style arms, are as desirable as the classic domed standards. Beard form can also be a distinct attribute. Compact, bushy beards are preferable to thin, straggly ones.



The dainty flowers of the miniature dwarfs have striking color patterns and variations in form.

**c. Substance and Texture** (5 points). Substance should be crisp and firm. Weak or limp substance, besides being a fault in itself, will detract from the form. Texture can be silky, velvety, or waxy, but it should enhance the color effect and add that sparkle and style that separate the excellent from the ordinary. Although allocated few points, substance and texture can be a crucial influence on color and form.

## 2. Plant and foliage - 30 points

**a. Leaves and stalk** (10 points). Leaves should be neat and short, never taller than the flowers. Foliage is key to the proportion of the plant. Width of leaves should be proportional to that of other plant parts. Leaves should be measured midpoint between the top and the bottom of the leaf. Foliage on individual leaves should be less than 5/8 inches (1.6 cm) across with less than 1/2 inch (1.3 cm) being the preferred size for good proportion. Foliage any wider makes the plant look too coarse and out of proportion.

Slender foliage is much more desirable. Plants with wider than 5/8 inches (1.6 cm) foliage should be penalized 5 points for leaves and stalk. While flowers with relatively narrow or dainty petals usually look best with narrow leaves, wider petaled flowers may look best with 5/8 inch (1.6 cm) leaves. The stalk of an MDB that is purely *I. pumila* typically will have an elongated perianth tube with the ovary directly on the rhizome. Other MDB iris will have stalks with varying proportions of stem to perianth tube. When branching occurs, it should not crowd or confuse the effect of the flowers in the clump. Stalks should be clean and slender with inconspicuous spathe valves.

**b. Floriferousness** (10 points). The number of blooms and duration of blooming are the factors to be considered here. Some varieties produce a huge mass of flowers lasting only a few days. Other varieties produce sparse bloom over several weeks, never making much of a show. Both should be faulted. A cultivar may produce many flowers as a result of having several stalks per rhizome as with *Iris pumila*, extra buds in a socket or branching as with many of the hybrid miniature dwarfs. Any of these scenarios can give a cultivar that produces many flowers. The goal is a cultivar that produces bloom preferably for two or more weeks.

**c. Vigor** (5 points). Miniature dwarfs vary considerably in vigor. While overabundant vigor and increase in a few varieties produces crowded clumps requiring division every year or two, lack of vigor is more often a problem. Varieties derived primarily from *Iris pumila* may not perform well in mild climates, whereas those derived primarily from SDBs may lack hardiness in colder climates. The ideal is a variety that does well in a wide range of climates. Those that do not should be penalized.

### 3. Overall Proportion - 20 points

Proportion is the relationship between the various plant parts, including petal width to flower size, standards to falls, flower size to plant height, plant size to leaf height, leaf width to petal width and rhizome size to overall plant size. Flowers that are proportionally too large for the plant are as out of scale as those that are too small. Flowers blooming down in the leaves have, among other faults, a serious problem of proportion in stem height to leaf height. Individual leaves wider than 5/8 inches (1.6 cm) warrant a 10 points deduction for being out of proportion. Absence of good overall proportion or being larger than the maximum limits should be severely penalized and precludes an out-of-proportion MDB receiving any awards. Daintiness is an essential quality of MDBs, and all plant dimensions must be scaled down proportionately to maintain a dainty appearance. While not actually visible, oversized rhizomes on small plants prohibit neat, compact clumps.

#### 4. Distinctiveness - 15 points

A variety of MDB that is unique in some characteristic is preferred to one that is not. A variety which premieres a new color might have points deducted because of less than perfect form but gain a high score for distinctiveness. It is important here for the judge to be aware of the advances made in MDB breeding as well as in existing cultivars. Too many unique varieties are overlooked due to relatively minor faults, while less faulted commonplace varieties gain votes. A judge can recognize distinctiveness only by knowing what is available in the MDB class.

### EXHIBITION JUDGING Horticultural Entries of MDB Iris

Exhibition judging of iris is distinctly different from judging in the garden. On the show bench a judge is not trying to determine the qualities and attributes of a particular variety. Rather, the exhibition judge must pass judgement in two areas:

1. Cultural perfection - how well the specimen has been grown by comparing it to the maximum typical performance of the variety being judged.
2. Condition and grooming - how well the specimen was prepared for entry into the exhibition.

Exhibition judging evaluates the specimen as it is shown at the moment the judge sees it.

It cannot be emphasized too strongly that exhibition judging of an introduced variety is judging the exhibit against the guidelines of perfection for that variety. There are no points for distinctiveness nor for the improved qualities that some varieties characteristically possess. Specimens atypical of the variety should be faulted however impressive in other respects. Do not be fooled by seasonal variations that typically affect many early blooming varieties. An obviously mislabeled variety, of course, cannot be judged.

Point scales are used to encourage consistent evaluation of specimens on the show bench. Swift and quality performance is demanded of the exhibition judge, making it impractical to point score every entry. The point scale is useful to the student judge in

learning the special requirements of the class. It is especially useful in selecting the best specimen of the show. Consistency must be observed in judging all classes.

The following scale of points is for introduced MDB varieties exhibited as single stalks. Exhibition of miniature dwarfs as potted plants is permitted only if that is the way a sanctioned show schedule is written. Otherwise, potted iris will be in an Educational Exhibit or "For Display Only."

### SCALE OF POINTS Exhibition Judging of Horticultural MDB Iris

1. Cultural Perfection					75
	a. Flower			35	
		i. Color	15		
		ii. Form	10		
		iii. Substance	10		
	b. Stalk			10	
	c. Proportion			10	
	d. Freedom from Damage			20	
2. Condition & Grooming					25
	a. Grooming			15	
	b. Age of Bloom			10	
TOTAL					100

#### 1. Cultural perfection - 75 points

**a. Flower** (35 points). In exhibition judging we are not considering comparative merits of different varieties. Color, form and substance should be as good as or superior to the variety's typical performance.

**b. Stalk** (10 points). The stalk should be clean and of typical height for the variety. If a leaf or spathe valve is included, it should be clean, healthy and attractive.

**c. Proportion** (10 points). Proportion in exhibition judging of introduced varieties again refers to the typical performance for that variety. Overgrown specimens with flowers too large for the variety or stems too long are more frequently encountered in MDB classes than are undergrown ones.

**d. Freedom from Damage** (20 points). Quality cultivation practices will result in specimens free of evident disease, insect infestation, water spots, frost damage or spray residue. Irregular dark streaks or blotches, most apparent on light varieties that have opened in cold and/or damp weather, should be penalized.

## 2. Grooming and condition - 25 points

**a. Grooming** (15 points). The care with which a specimen has been handled and prepared for exhibit will be evident in freedom from torn, bruised or otherwise damaged petals. Staging, including propping the stalk in the container, will show a specimen to its best advantage and is a consideration in judging.

The skills of the exhibitor are evaluated here. The specimen should reflect visible improvement in the flower and stem resulting from the exhibitor's grooming. This includes neat removal of diseased or damaged foliage; cleanliness of the stem and flower; absence of insect infestations; firm upright positioning of the specimen; facing of the specimen; and a neat removal of spent blossoms, including the ovaries, with no damage to the spathes. The result should be a specimen being presented in its best possible appearance.

A judge may encounter trickery such as pinning or taping of flower parts, flower replacement from another stem, splicing of stems, unattached leaves or leaf spathes, cracking of stems to make them appear straighter, or hidden supports and wedges. If any such alterations are found, the entry is to be disqualified from competition.

**b. Age of bloom** (10 points). Flower freshness is particularly important for MDB specimens, since the usual single bloom should last through the entire show. The bloom should be sufficiently developed at the time of judging to show typical form of the mature blossom.

## EXHIBITION JUDGING MDB Iris Seedlings

In judging seedling classes, judges should remember that they are not seeking a superior horticultural specimen as defined in horticultural judging. Rather, they are judging a new cultivar which not only conforms to the guidelines for the class, but exhibits desirable qualities comprising improvement and/or innovation. Condition is not

a factor in judging seedlings. In fact, it is preferable that the stalks are not groomed, so that the judge can more easily evaluate such features as branching and bud count.

The Exhibition Certificate (EC) is awarded to the Best Seedling if one is chosen. The certificate is not a recommendation for introduction since on the show bench it is not possible to evaluate plant qualities. The Best Seedling Award should not be given when no entry is worthy. Exhibition Certificates are also awarded to seedlings that receive votes from at least five judges on special seedling ballots in a calendar year at AIS sanctioned shows. Judges visiting a show are urged to review the seedling entries and use these ballots to reward excellence where they find it.

### SCALE OF POINTS Exhibition Judging of MDB Iris Seedlings

1. Flower			55
	a. Color	25	
	b. Form	20	
	c. Substance & Texture	10	
2. Stalk			5
3. Proportion			15
4. Distinctiveness			25
TOTAL			100

**1. Flower** (55 points). The flower becomes more important in the exhibition judging of seedlings than in other types of judging because it is all there is to evaluate on an MDB seedling specimen. Characteristics of color, form, substance and texture discussed under garden judging are applicable here. Color should be considered with an awareness of the quality of available light. Artificial light may distort the true color of a seedling as it would appear in sunlight, enhancing or diminishing its effectiveness.

**2. Stalk** (5 points). There is little to evaluate on the stalk of an MDB seedling specimen. It should be within the class height limit and strong enough to support the bloom. The stalk should not be so thick or blunt as to detract from the daintiness expected of MDBs. Any branches or spathes should not detract.

**3. Proportion** (15 points). Proportion can only be evaluated on the relation of petal width to flower size, standards to falls and flower size to apparent stalk height. Any flower too large or stalk too tall should be penalized.

**4. Distinctiveness** (25 points). Distinctiveness is very important in exhibition judging of MDB seedlings since more of the uniqueness of a seedling is in its flower rather than its plant. The discussion of distinctiveness under garden judging is applicable to exhibition judging of MDB seedlings.

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## ESSAY: Terminology for Aril and Arilbred Iris

Approved by the AIS Board of Directors, March 9, 2021

### I. DEFINITIONS AND CHARACTERISTICS

These iris are so different and variable that it is very difficult to judge them properly without a thorough knowledge and understanding of the entire group. The name "aril" refers to *Oncocyclus* and *Regelia* species and hybrids involving only these two groups. The term "arilbred" refers to hybrids between the arils and other bearded (*Eupogon*) iris. A breakdown of the various plant types follows, with more complete definitions found in the *Aril Society International Checklist*.

#### ARILS (AR)

- a. ONCOCYCLUS (O and OH): species or hybrids involving only *Oncocyclus*.
- b. REGELIA (R and RH). Species or hybrids involving only *Regelia*.
- c. REGELIOCYCLUS (RC). Hybrids involving *Regelia* and *Oncocyclus*, predominately *Regelia* in phenotype.
- d. ONCOGELIA (OG). Hybrids involving *Oncocyclus* and *Regelia*, predominately *Oncocyclus* in phenotype.

## ARILBREDS (AB)

Arilbred iris are defined as hybrid iris combining genetic characteristics of the aril iris and the Eupogon iris. To be recognized as an arilbred and be eligible for awards by the Aril Society International, an iris must meet two separate criteria:

**1. Arilbreds must contain one-quarter or more aril complement.** This is determined according to the chromosome set system for defining aril content.

### Chromosome Set System

Aril content is currently defined according to the chromosome set system, which replaces the older system based on ancestry. Aril content (or, more specifically, aril chromosome complement) is equal to the number of aril chromosome sets as a fraction of the total. Thus, an iris with one aril chromosome set and two Eupogon chromosome set has an aril content of 1/3. The chromosome sets can be determined by a chromosome count or inferred from parentage, appearance, or fertility.

Arilbreds are divided into three subclasses: oncogeliabred, oncobred, and regeliabred. Iris in each of these subclasses are further divided by aril chromosome complement; i. e., less than 1/2 aril, 1/2 aril, and more than 1/2 aril. This is indicated respectively by a minus (-), no sign, or a plus (+) after the class abbreviations, e. g., RB-, OB, or OGB+.

The majority of modern arilbreds are oncogeliabreds.

**ONCOGELIABRED (OGB, OGB+, OGB-).** A hybrid containing any combination of Oncocyclus and Regelia and other Eupogon iris.

**ONCOBRED (OB, OB+, OB-).** A hybrid containing both, and only, Oncocyclus and Eupogon iris.

**REGELIABRED (RB, RB+, RB-).** A hybrid containing both, and only, Regelia and Eupogon iris.

**2. Arilbreds must exhibit at least two aril flower characteristics.** The recognizable aril flower characteristics include:

Regelia Type

1. Elongated standards or falls as in *Iris korolkowii*.
2. Linear beards and beards on standards as well as the falls.
3. Conspicuous veining.
4. A prominent V-shaped spot in contrasting color.

Oncocyclus Type

5. Broadly domed and reflexed standards as in *Iris gatesii*.
6. Ruffled and reflexed standards as in *I. lortetii*.
7. Accentuated globular form as in *I. susiana*.
8. Extremely broad falls.
9. Well recurved falls.
10. Thick, heavy, or broadly diffuse beards as in *I. susiana* or *I. gatesii*.
11. Exaggerated styles as in *I. bismarckiana* and *I. iberica*.
12. A definable signal spot at the end of the beard.
13. Flaring and lanceolate falls as in *I. acutiloba*.
14. Narrow and flaring falls as in *I. paradoxa*.
15. Linear beards as in *I. meda* and *I. maculata*.
16. Beards on standards as well as falls.

Although some of these examples appear to be in direct conflict, they have been chosen to represent the incredibly wide and varied forms.



*Iris korolkowii*

*I. gatesii*

*I. lortetii*



*Iris susiana*

*I. bismarckiana*

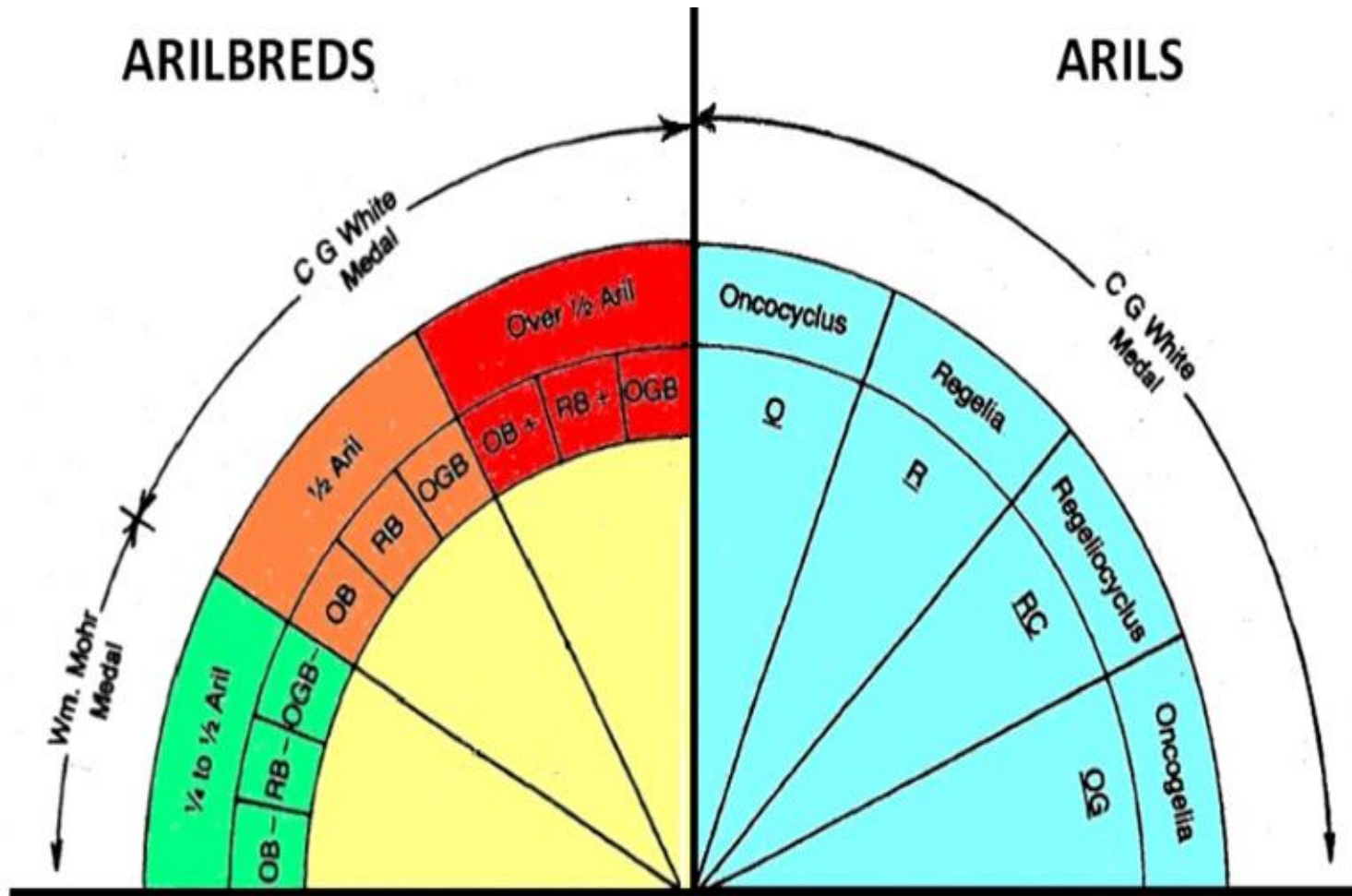
*I. iberica*



*Iris acutiloba*

*I. paradoxa*

*I. meda*



		type of aril content				
		oncocyclus only	oncocyclus and regelia	regelia only		
amount of aril content	pure aril	O OH	OG	RC	R RH	eligible for
	more than half	OB+	OGB+		RB+	C. G. White
	half	OB	OGB		RB	Medal
	less than half	OB-	OGB-		RB-	eligible for William Mohr Medal

## II. ARILBRED HEIGHT DESCRIPTIONS

All types of arilbreds vary greatly in height and overall plant size. Smaller arilbreds, usually derived from dwarf or median bearded iris, present a different range of qualities than their taller counterparts. The following definitions may be helpful in recognizing and appreciating these differences:

- a. arilbred dwarf (ABD): any arilbred with a registered height less than 13 inches (33 cm).
- b. arilbred median (ABM): any arilbred of one-half aril complement or less, with a registered height between 13 and 22 inches (33 and 56 cm), inclusive.
- c. arilbred tall (ABT): any arilbred with a registered height greater than 22 inches (56 cm), or any arilbred of more than one-half aril complement with a registered height of 13 inches (33 cm) or greater.

There is currently no formal usage of the terms above for registration purposes. It is important to note that all iris containing both aril and Eupogon heritage are correctly registered as arilbreds and subcategorized based on their aril complement as described herein. They can informally be further characterized by bloom height using the definitions above, but not by height categories (SDB, IB, etc.) defined for pure Eupogons. Note that aril species are smaller than tall bearded iris. The tallest, *Iris gatesii* and *I. haynei*, usually do not grow above 24 inches (60 cm). Therefore, arilbreds naturally fall into different height groupings than their bearded counterparts.

*These terms may be used in addition to (not in place of) the arilbred classes and subclasses described herein. For example, an OGB- arilbred that also meets the definition of arilbred median (above) may be referred to as "AB (OGB-/ABM)".*

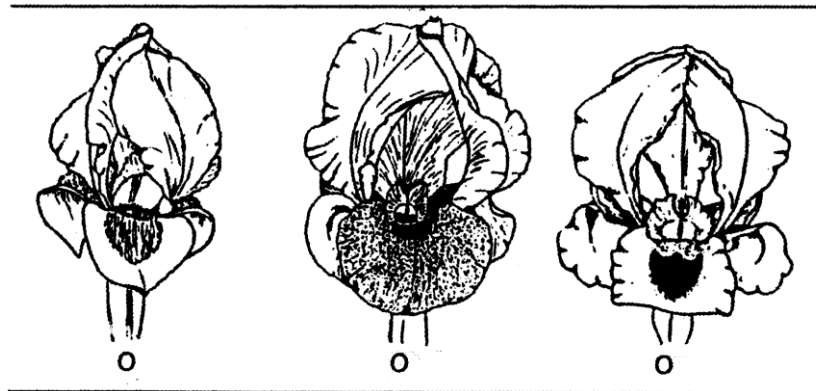
### III. ARILS

#### ONCOCYCLUS SPECIES AND HYBRIDS

Characteristics of this group are the most variable, involving some fifty different species. Stems seldom exceed 24 inches (60 cm) in height, are unbranched, and bear a single blossom ranging in size from that of the dwarfs to tall bearded iris. Large flowers on short stems are sometimes encountered (*Iris haynei*). Stems may be small and wiry (*I. atropurpurea*) or relatively thick and fleshy, almost straight (*I. iberica*), and may or may not have leafy stem spathes (*I. mariae*). Foliage is narrow, ranging from 1/4 to 1-1/8 inches (0.6 to 3 cm) and can vary in height from 3 to 18 inches (5 to 46 cm). It can be quite falcate (ram's horn) with tips at or near the ground in some smaller types (*I. acutiloba*), semifalcate (erect with outward curving on the upper portion) (*I. kirkwoodii*), or almost erect (*I. gatesii*) in some taller types.

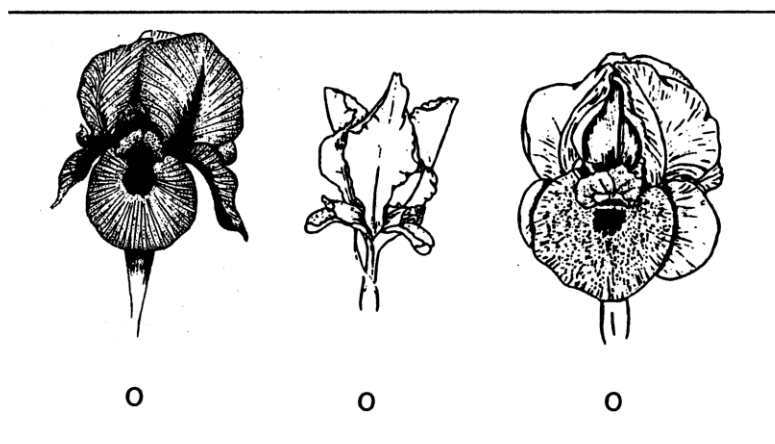
Flower forms of these iris are very diverse and different from those of the tall bearded iris. The standards are usually larger than the falls and vary in proportion to fall size from 1:1 as in *Iris hermona*, to 4:1 as in *I. paradoxa*. Standards are usually rounded or broadly oval and may be domed and touching, overlapping slightly, or erect and open. They may be tailored, gently waving, ruffled, or reflexed outward on the sides (flagging). Falls may be flaring, semi-flaring, mildly recurved (convex), strongly recurved, rolled under, concave (inward curving), or combinations of these. They are mostly oblong or rounded. Some species have narrow segments which sometimes may be pointed. Species and cultivars will sometimes display style arms protruding outward and downward on the falls halfway or more, whereas others may feature very large exerted crests. Beards are mostly broad (diffused or heavy), but linear beards are sometimes found, as in *I. sari* and *I. meda*. Colors range from white to near black, including many combinations of yellow, violet, and red or brown.

Examples of Oncocyclus



Flower colors, patterns, and textures are extremely varied and may occur as a self, blend, bitone, bicolor, or amoena. Color effect is often altered by presence of decorative patterns, veining, stippling, dotting, and color flushing, any of which may be strongly colored or delicate and muted. The most typical feature of this group is the presence of a signal on the fall at the end of the beard, usually occurring in darker contrast to the ground color of the falls. Signals occur in various shapes and sizes and may be sharply outlined or diffusing at the edges. An oncocyclus signal is typically an area of elongated cells which looks and feels like fine velvet. Comparatively, signals on Regelias and arilbreds usually reflect only color pigmentation within the cells of the fall, and the texture is unaltered.

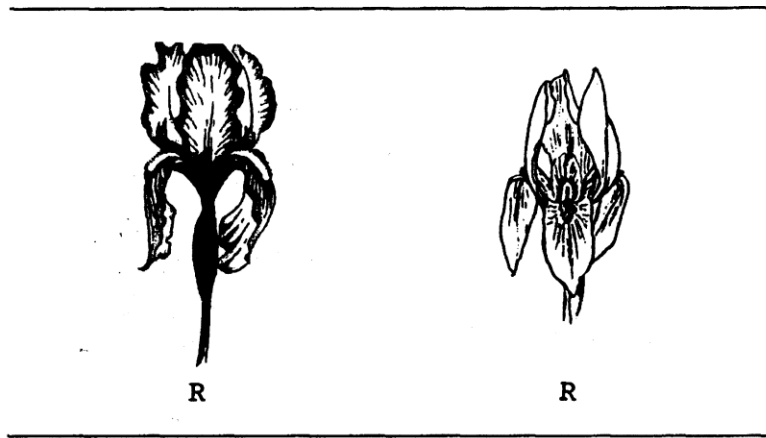
Examples of Oncocyclus



## REGELIA SPECIES AND HYBRIDS

Regelias typically display two buds on slender stems which are usually tall in proportion to flower size (often near 24 inches or 60 cm) for *Iris hoogiana*, *I. stolonifera*, and their hybrids; smaller for *I. korolkowii*. Flower form is narrow with down-hanging falls. Standards are usually pointed and touching, but widely open in some species. Smoothness of color and texture is featured by some, whereas others display prominent ornamental veining. Beards occur both on the falls and inside the standards and are often brightly colored. When present, signals are usually small and appear as a chevron (V-shaped) color spot.

### Examples of Regelias



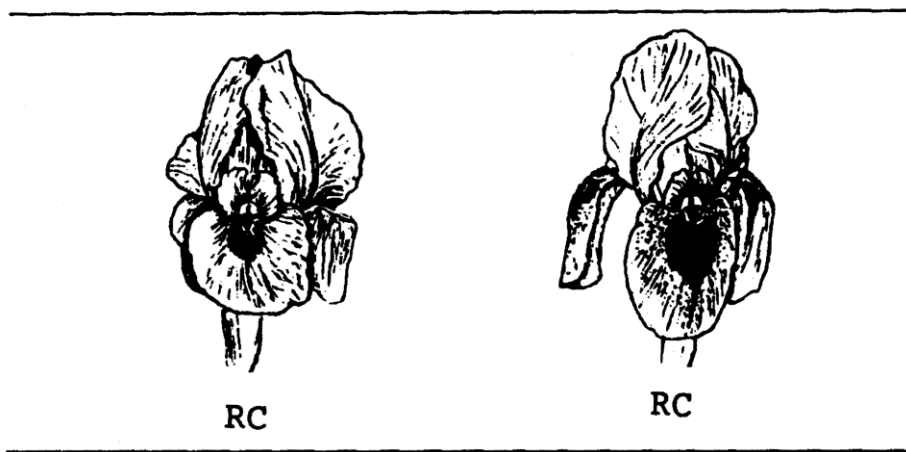
Flower substance is usually less than that found in the oncocyli, and there is less color and pattern variation. Flower size is small to medium, and foliage is mostly narrow, tall, and erect. Regelias are more hardy and tolerant to moisture than the oncocyli, extending the range of cultural conditions under which arils can be grown.

## REGELIOCYCLI

Plant, stem, and blossom size is mostly intermediate between Regelia and oncocyclus. Most stems have two buds and flowers usually reflect more Regelia traits such as ornamental veining and the V-shaped color spot.

Most flowers have light or rose-violet grounds with darker violet or greyed purple veining with small dark color spots and signals. This group is more hardy and easier to grow than the oncocycli.

Examples of Regeliocycli

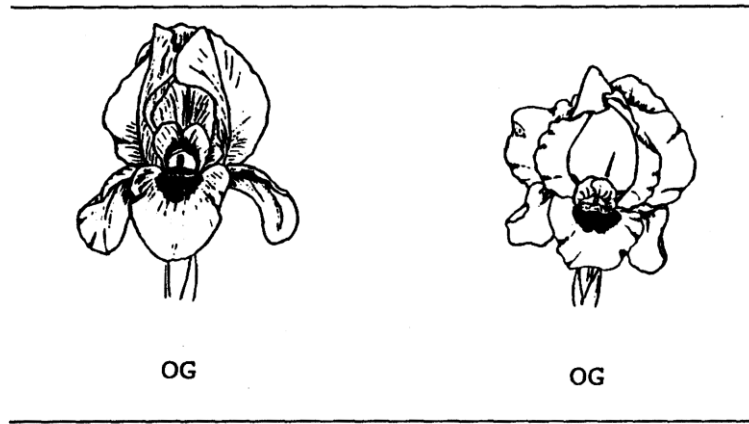


## ONCOGELIAS

Hybrids of this group usually reflect more oncocyclus traits than the regeliocycli, with most advanced generation cultivars being indistinguishable from the pure oncocycli. All aspects of plant, form, and flower vary as in the oncocycli. Stems normally have one bud, but some cultivars have two.

These hybrids are often also easier to grow and perform better than the oncocycli, and increased hardiness is found due to their Regelia content.

Examples of Oncogelias



#### IV. ARILBREDS

##### LESS THAN ONE-HALF ARIL COMPLEMENT

Cultivars of this type resemble their Eupogon parentage more than the aril in both flower and plant.

The early tall bearded X 'Ib-Mac' or 'Capitola' cultivars (referred to colloquially as "Mohrs") fall into this grouping, as do their modern counterparts created by crossing tall bearded iris with arilbreds of 1/2 aril complement. These iris are usually comparable in height to tall bearded iris but may be somewhat shorter. Branching and bud count may be somewhat reduced in comparison with tall bearded.

This grouping also includes the majority of arilbred medians and arilbred dwarfs. The former tends to resemble intermediate bearded iris, with aril characteristics represented in the flower and foliage. Arilbred dwarfs are more reminiscent of standard dwarf bearded iris (or sometimes miniature dwarfs) in height and overall plant habit, again with aril characteristics evident in the color, form, and pattern of the flowers. Bud count and branching may be less than in medians of comparable size.

Arilbreds of this type are as easily grown as bearded iris in most climates, and hence more widely grown than other types of arilbreds.

Examples of arilbreds with less than one half aril complement

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OGB-



OGB-

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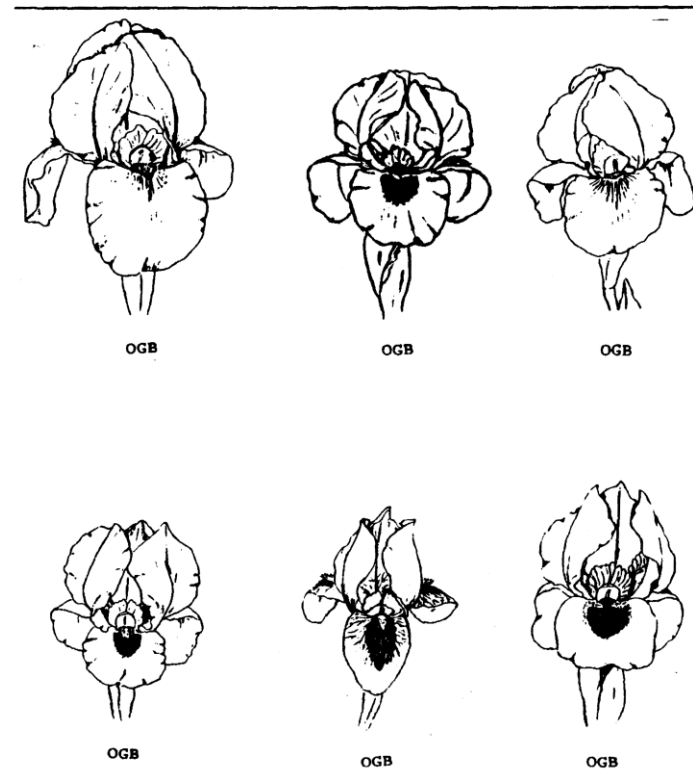
### ONE-HALF ARIL COMPLEMENT

This is the largest of the three types of arilbreds, for here we find the more fertile types including the later C. G. White hybrids, their derivatives, the tetraploid regeliabreds, and other amphidiploids derived from tall bearded iris and arils. They overlap in height with the shorter tall bearded, but many are somewhat shorter. The flowers are expected to display three or more definite aril traits (recurving falls, signals, spot patterns, decorative patterns, veining, etc.) Colors and color patterns vary considerably from pastel and almost white, through bright selfs and bicolors, to near black. Both broad onco-type and linear beards are found. Cultivars of one-half aril complement involving tall bearded iris may have one branch, a spur, and terminal, with three to five buds total.

Although not common, some arilbred medians and arilbred dwarfs fall into this grouping. Some resemble shorter versions of their tall counterparts, but some also show the features of dwarf bearded iris in combination with aril traits. Some may have as many buds as their taller arilbred counterparts, but one or two buds per stalk is more typical.

Most plants in this grouping grow and increase well in many areas, particularly in the drier climates of the western US, and produce multiple bloom stems.

Examples of arilbreds of one-half aril complement

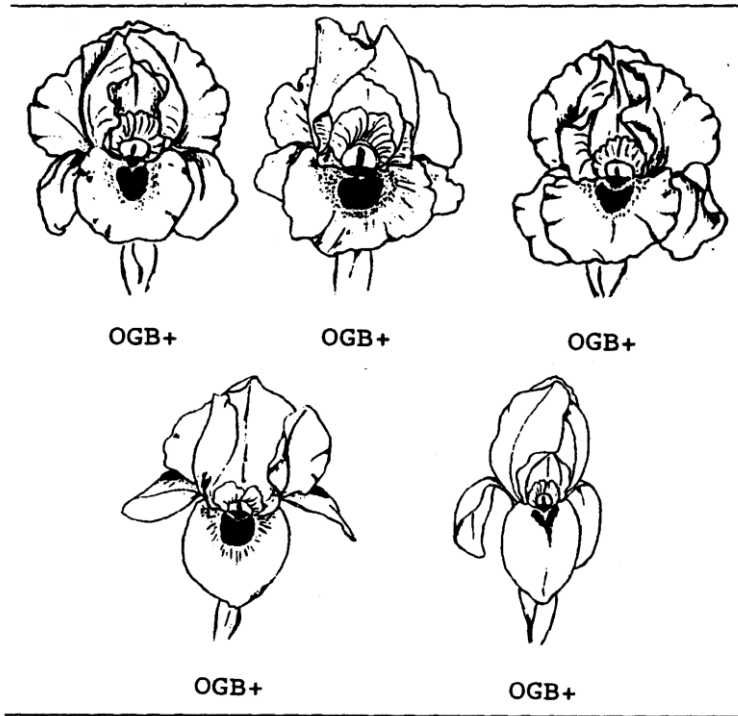


OVER ONE-HALF ARIL COMPLEMENT

Aril traits are most strongly expressed by arilbreds of this class, with three or more aril flower characteristics expected. Many varieties closely resemble pure arils in plant, stem and flower, and may be difficult to distinguish from them when viewed from a distance. Some, but not all, will be taller than their aril ancestors, approaching TB size. Those in the height range of 13 to 22 inches (33 cm to 56 cm), are not considered arilbred medians, as these smaller heights are usually a consequence of their predominantly aril ancestry. A few arilbred dwarfs (less than 33 cm in height) have been produced in this category from crosses involving arils and small dwarf bearded species.

Typically, no branching is found and stems will display only two buds. Occasionally a spur may be found on some varieties. Cultivars in this group of arilbreds are much more manageable in culture than pure arils; some even grow as well as plants of one-half aril complement and reliably produce multiple bloom stems and good increase.

Examples of arilbreds with over one-half aril complement



## V. OVERVIEW

- The name "aril" refers to Oncocyclus and Regelia species and hybrids involving only these two groups.

### THE ARILS (AR)

- There can be hybrids of Regelia (RH) species and hybrids of Oncocyclus (OH) species.
- A hybrid of a Regelia and an Oncocyclus that is predominantly Regelia is called a Regeliocyclus (RC)
- A hybrid of a Regelia and an Oncocyclus that is predominantly Oncocyclus is called an Oncogelia (OG)

### THE ARILBREDS (AB)

- The term "arilbred" refers to hybrids between the arils and other bearded (Eupogon) iris. An arilbred must contain at least one-quarter or more aril chromosome complement.
- Arilbreds are divided into three subclasses: oncogeliabred (OGB), oncobred (OB), and regeliabred (RB).
- Iris in each of the 3 subclasses are further divided by aril chromosome complement; i.e., less than 1/2 aril, 1/2 aril, and more than 1/2 aril. This is indicated respectively by a minus (-), no sign, or a plus (+) after the class abbreviations, e. g., RB-, OB, and OGB+.

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## Chapter 15

### JUDGING ARIL and ARILBRED IRIS

Approved by the AIS Board of Directors, March 9, 2021

These iris are so different and variable that it is difficult to judge them properly without a thorough knowledge and understanding of the entire group. Therefore, it is vital that judges review “Terminology: Understanding Aril and Arilbred Iris” before entering the garden or any exhibition.

**Arilbreds must exhibit at least two aril flower characteristics.** To review these characteristics, see the illustrations in the essay, “Terminology: Understanding Aril and Arilbred Iris.” The recognizable aril flower characteristics include:

#### Regelia Type

1. Elongated standards or falls as in *Iris korolkowii*.
2. Linear beards and beards on standards as well as the falls.
3. Conspicuous veining.
4. A prominent V-shaped spot in contrasting color.

#### Oncocyclus Type

5. Broadly domed and reflexed standards as in *Iris gatesii*.
6. Ruffled and reflexed standards as in *I. lortetii*.
7. Accentuated globular form as in *I. susiana*.
8. Extremely broad falls.
9. Well recurved falls.
10. Thick, heavy, or broadly diffuse beards as in *I. susiana* or *I. gatesii*.
11. Exaggerated styles as in *I. bismarckiana* and *I. iberica*.
12. A definable signal spot at the end of the beard.
13. Flaring and lanceolate falls as in *I. acutiloba*.
14. Narrow and flaring falls as in *I. paradoxa*.
15. Linear beards as in *I. meda* and *I. maculata*.
16. Beards on standards as well as falls.

Although some of these examples appear to be in direct conflict, they have been chosen to represent the incredibly wide and varied forms.

## GARDEN JUDGING

### Introduced Varieties & Seedlings of Aril & Arilbred Iris

Standard comparison procedures should be used for all evaluations because point scales would be difficult to apply to the wide variation of flowers and plant types encountered. In both arils and arilbreds the flower in all of its aspects should receive approximately two-thirds (2/3) of the total evaluation credit, and the plant and stem one-third (1/3).

Overall, the judge should evaluate cultivars for desirable improvements, diversities, goals, and typical expectations for the type and class. Plants should be evaluated for increased cultural and weather tolerances, regularity of bloom, number of stems, rate of increase, general vigor, better substance and disease resistance. This applies to both arils and arilbreds, but is particularly pertinent for arils, because this is a prime objective of their hybridizing. The judge must remember that there is no single "proper" form for either arils or arilbreds. Diversity of form and flower aspects are both inherent and desirable. Clean coloration is desired in all types and should not appear "muddy" or "dirty." Stems should carry the flowers above the foliage and be strong enough to support the blossoms through normal weather conditions. Flower size should be in relatively good proportion to the stem and should be distinctive as well as possess charm, grace, and poise.

**EVALUATION OF ARIL FLOWERS:** Hybridizing goals include new and improved forms; new colors and combinations of color; transfer of signal color, size, and shape to different plants; and different patterns and combinations of patterns.

Flower form is of prime importance. While no variety should be considered unfavorably because it has a different and unfamiliar form, the goal is to accentuate and enhance the most aesthetically appealing features of aril species in their progeny and hybrids. With over 50 different species to work with there is a large array of possibilities and challenges for hybridizers.

Historically, the round, globular form of many *Oncocyclus* species have made them the most sought-after arils by gardeners and plant collectors. The recurved falls, domed closed standards and wide flower segments which create this form are highly prized in new aril hybrids of the OH and OG groups.

Hybrids with a preponderance of *Regelia* features (RH and RC groups) with their less broad petals and more open, vertical segments are likely to display a somewhat oval

form in overall aspect. Standards that flop or splay outward at their tips cause undesirable disruption of the symmetry of the flower. Severely narrowed hafts are undesirable because they detract from the fullness of the flower.

Excessive recurving, rolling, or "snapping" (a tucking under causing a horizontal petal break) of the falls is highly undesirable as this destroys flower form. Likewise, pinching or swirling of blossom segments is unacceptable. These are also undesirable traits in arilbreds.

Color aspects are more highly rated in arils than in most other iris types, for not only flower color, but signals, decorative patterns, veining, stippling, and dotting are evaluated. Signals should be completely visible when viewed from a horizontal plane and not partially hidden from view by excessive recurving of the falls. Size, color, shape, and definition of signals are considered in their effect on total flower evaluation. If present, decorative patterns, veining and stippling should be well defined and have good color intensity. Irregular color flecking, streaking, or splotching is not desirable, for they reflect imperfections or disease rather than true aril traits.

**EVALUATION OF ARILBRED FLOWERS:** Evaluation of arilbred flowers is basically the same as for arils. Hybridizing goals include transferring the exotic forms, signals, colorations, and patterns of the arils to plants having more hardiness, increased branching and bud count, better disease resistance, and greater adaptability to growing conditions. The extent to which these efforts have been successful is the primary basis for judging arilbreds within each subclass.

One of the most valuable attributes of the oncocycli is the prominent dark or brightly colored signal, which is completely lacking in other bearded iris. Great progress has been made during recent years to transfer these signals to cultivars of one-half or more aril complement, some of which now display signals larger than found on most oncocycli and oncogelias. Hybridizing advancements in the 1/2-aril OGBs have resulted in some plants displaying signals as large as or larger than those displayed by most arilbreds of more than 1/2 aril complement. Flower forms and beards are also more aril-like than found on some of more than 1/2 aril complement. A judge must be aware of these progressions in hybridizing and not arbitrarily dismiss such plants as being wrongly classified. He or she should also remember that arilbreds of more than 1/2 aril complement can have widely differing height and flower forms depending on whether the aril content is predominately *Oncocyclus* or predominately *Regelia*.

Flower characteristics of the oncocycli are particularly sought after, for they are the most beautiful and spectacular. Regelia content sometimes results in unusual bright color patterns.

Color aspects are also more highly rated in arilbreds than in most other iris types. Irregular color flecking, streaking, or splotching in arilbreds that is caused by broken color genetics is acceptable.

The same aril flower characteristics desired in tall arilbreds are expected in arilbred dwarfs and medians. Some may inherit the spot and ray patterns of *Iris pumila*, with or without signal and veining derived from their aril ancestry. Experience in growing both dwarfs and arils will help a judge to distinguish between these various patterns.

**EVALUATION OF ARILBRED BRANCHING:** Branches should be well placed and evenly spaced to display each flower separately without interference from another and should hold blossoms away from the stem. A judge must remember that amount of aril content is inversely related to the degree of branching displayed by arilbred cultivars. Arilbred dwarfs and medians will usually have less branching than the taller arilbreds.

Plants of less than one-half aril complement should display branching almost equal to that of the Eupogon parentage. Branching of plants having one-half aril complement is expected to be intermediate between the aril and Eupogon parents. Half-bred cultivars involving tall bearded should usually display one branch, a spur, plus terminal, with a total of four buds. Some cultivars have more or less branching and number of buds, but the cultivar should be judged as a whole, giving proper considerations to flower and plant. Varieties of over one-half aril complement typically have no branching whatsoever.

Arilbred medians should not be merely “stubby” versions of tall arilbreds, but show the appealing proportion and balance expected in median iris. Foliage, stalk, and flowers should be in balance and appealing. Some, particularly those with  $\frac{1}{2}$  aril complement, may show enlarged, globular blooms from Oncocycli ancestry that would be out of scale in the SDB and IB classes. This ‘onco look” is a desirable trait in arilbred medians.

Similarly, arilbred dwarfs should convey the daintiness and charm expected of MDBs and small SDBs. Floriferousness should compensate for the usual absence of branching.

Weather and cultural practices strongly influence arilbreds depending upon aril content, and can result in erratic plant performance, degree of branching, and atypical expressions in the flowers. It is sometimes necessary to observe the cultivar for several years prior to final evaluation.

Arilbreds because of their quite varied types of bearded and aril ancestry that may be combined in different ways, will not always satisfy the bud count and branching expectations for the bearded classes they may otherwise resemble.

Most importantly, the judge should evaluate the amount and degree of desirable aril flower characteristics present in the cultivar for its particular class, as this is a prime objective of arilbred hybridizing. Two or more aril flower characteristics are required of all arilbreds, and three or more aril flower characteristics are required for arilbreds of 1/2 or more aril complement to be considered eligible for awards.

However, careful evaluations of progress toward plant objectives are also necessary.

A judge should grow as many types as possible so the performance of aril/arilbred plants may be continually observed and evaluated. Visits to gardens of other growers in the area will offer added insight for evaluations. Final consideration should be reserved until a two year clump is observed.

## EXHIBITION JUDGING

### Horticultural Entries of Aril & Arilbred Iris

Exhibition judging of iris is distinctly different from judging in the garden. On the show bench a judge is not trying to determine the qualities and attributes of a particular variety. Rather, the exhibition judge must pass judgement in two areas:

1. Cultural perfection - how well the specimen has been grown by comparing it to the maximum typical performance of the variety being judged.
2. Condition and grooming - how well the specimen was prepared for entry into the exhibition.

Exhibition judging evaluates the specimen as it is shown at the moment the judge sees it.

All show chairs should be in possession of the latest *AIS and ASI Checklists*, which will indicate which varieties are classified as arils or arilbreds and in which class (OB, OGB, RB) and subclass (<1/2, 1/2, >1/2 aril complement) they should be considered. This information is also available digitally on the ASI website and the Iris Encyclopedia (wiki). In the event of discrepancies, the AIS Register (electronic version preferred) supersedes the other resources for exhibition classification purposes.

Exhibition awards are given to the grower in recognition of skill and accomplishment in culture and grooming. The aril-arilbred section is peculiar in that some cultivars and species are relatively easy growers, while others demand a very high degree of horticultural skill. In close selections for higher awards, the judge should consider the degree of accomplishment and skill required of the respective exhibitors.

Familiarity with the variety or species is a necessary prerequisite to properly judge each cultivar against its potential performance. A judge may find it difficult to give a higher award to a single-flowered aril or arilbred with no branching over a branched variety with several buds, but the judge must remember that emphasis should be on what is typical of the variety within its particular class.

When selecting specimens for higher awards from first-place ribbon winners, a judge should remember that it is a potential Best Specimen of Show. This does not suggest that only a latest introduction should be chosen, but an outdated cultivar of obvious inferiority to current expected criteria should not be selected. Iris selected for such higher awards must clearly display the expected number of aril flower characteristics (two for arilbreds of <1/2 aril complement, three for all other arilbreds).

The following point scales are guidelines to indicate relative importance when considering the various aspects. Each variety should be considered for its individual merits, with no comparisons to cultivars of other classes.

There are separate points for arils and arilbreds because arils have no branching. When judging arilbreds of over one-half aril complement, the point scale for arils should be used.

**SCALE OF POINTS**  
**Exhibition Judging of Horticultural Aril & Arilbred Iris**

			ARIL	ARILBRED	
1. Cultural Perfection					75
	a. Flower				
		i. Form	25	20	
		ii. Color	25	20	
		iii. Size	10	10	
		iv. Substance	10	10	
	b. Stem				
		i. Height & Straightness	5	5	
		ii. Branching & Bud Placement	N/A	10	
2. Conditioning & Grooming					25
TOTAL					100

1. Cultural Perfection - 75 points

a. Flower

**i. Form** - Consistent petal size and symmetry of form are most important. If necessary, request show officials to rotate the specimen for better viewing. A freshly opened aril or arilbred blossom will not rate the highest scoring for form because typical form is usually not reached until 8 to 24 hours after opening. Swirling or excessive overlapping of standards and a tighter than normal fall recurve may indicate a not fully opened blossom.

Irregular or abnormal recurving, rolling, or snapping of the falls is a serious fault, and should be heavily penalized. Pinching, twisting, or rolling at the edges of flower segments should receive like penalty. Severe or multiple tears and deformities are

major faults, and the specimen should be devalued accordingly. However, a very small tear or deformity is a minor fault and does not warrant heavy penalty unless it adversely affects the flower form.

**ii. Color** - Not only flower color, but signals, color spots, decorative patterns, veining, stippling, and dotting are evaluated. Color should be typical for the variety, and not pale or abnormally intense, and should be of even saturation for the variety. Irregular flecking, marbling, and splashing of colors are faults, unless such is typical of the variety and is always displayed. Signals and spot patterns should be of normal size and color intensity, as should decorative patterns, veining, stippling, and dotting. Flowers should be faulted if there is fading and diffusing of color in any aspect.

**iii. Size** -The specimen should display a full-sized flower or flowers in normal proportion to the stem. It is common for aril and arilbred flowers to be larger in proportion to the stem than is acceptable in the other bearded iris classes. If undersized for the variety potential, it should be penalized. Specimens with larger flowers than normal for the variety do not automatically warrant devaluation as being overgrown. If the stem is also larger and in good proportion, the exhibit should be scored very high in recognition of superior accomplishment by the exhibitor.

**iv. Substance** - Evaluation of flower substance is also reflected in form. It should be adequate to retain the specimen's definition of form in every case. It may be starchy and readily visible, or in some cultivars, of a more resilient nature. The specimen should show no signs of desiccation from wind, refrigeration, sun, or frost.

#### b. Stem

**i. Height and Straightness** - Aril stems should be almost straight, of typical height for the variety, and of adequate strength and rigidity to support the flower.

Arilbred stems should also be nearly straight, but some cultivars may normally have slight curving or gentle "s" curving. They should be of typical height and strong enough to well support the blossoms.

The specimen should be evaluated in total to evaluate symmetry and balance. If the judge has concerns or suspects trickery, the judge may request that show officials remove the specimen from the container in order to evaluate.

**ii. Branching and Bud Placement** - Branches should not be crowded near the top portion of the stem but be present in the upper 2/3 of the stalk. Branches, if present,

should be evenly spaced with buds pointing upward and outward, and should not occur at random around the stem, but should be staggered opposite from one another on a single plane throughout the length of the stem. A branch and alternate spur on the same side is badly out of balance. A spur may sometimes be found on stems of varieties which typically have no branching. Evaluation of such should include credit for the extra bud, placement, balance, plus overall size and condition of the specimen.

When multiple blossoms are present, they should be separately displayed and not crowded against the stalk or one another. A stem with two open blossoms is in much better balance if it has an opposing spur. Number of open flowers doesn't necessarily rate one specimen over another having fewer, if the extra bloom is crowded or throws the stem out of balance. A stem having one open blossom with a well-developed bud plus a spur is better balanced and may rate higher. Arils require a terminal blossom. Arilbred specimens lacking a terminal blossom should be recognized as severely out of balance and penalized accordingly, unless branching and other blooms are present to create balance. An empty socket is unacceptable at any bloom point.

Arilbreds will not always satisfy the bud count and branching expectations for the bearded classes they may otherwise resemble and should be judged accordingly.

#### B. Condition and Grooming – 25 points

The skills of the exhibitor are evaluated here. The exhibit should reflect visible improvement in the flower and stem resulting from the exhibitor's grooming. This includes neat removal of diseased or damaged foliage; cleanliness of the stem and flower; absence of insect infestations; firm upright positioning of the specimen; facing of the specimen; and a neat removal of spent blossoms, including the ovaries, with no damage to the spathes. The result should be a specimen being presented in its best possible appearance.

A judge may encounter trickery such as pinning or taping of flower parts, flower replacement from another stem, splicing of stems, unattached leaves or leaf spathes, cracking of stems to make them appear straighter, or hidden supports and wedges. If any such alterations are found, the entry is to be disqualified from competition.

Entry tags should indicate the Aril Society International (ASI) classification of the cultivar if not included in the Division/Section/Class section of the tag. Examples: "Hakuna Matata" – AB(OGB-), "Tadzhiki Bandit" – AR(RC). Black or blue ink is recommended for filling out all entry tags.

## EXHIBITION JUDGING

### Aril & Arilbred Iris Seedlings

When evaluating seedlings, the judge should consider the stem and flowers in comparison to named aril or arilbred varieties of the same class for possible Exhibition Certificate award. Condition and grooming are not considered as with named varieties. The seedling should display enough aspects of stem and flower for a judge to reasonably determine if the seedling is an improvement over-existing cultivars and warrants testing of garden aspects for possible future introduction. If, in the opinion of the judge, the equality of any seedling does not warrant further consideration as a garden flower, no award should be given.

Exhibitors of seedlings should indicate only the appropriate Aril Society International (ASI) classification on the portion of the entry tag visible to the judges. The seedling number should only be stated in the part revealed when the tear off portion of the tag is removed. Such tags could read “Arilbred – OGB sdlg” or “Arilbred – RB+ sdlg” or “Aril – Onco hybrid sdlg.” The inclusion of the height descriptor ABD, ABM, or AB(T) for arilbreds would also be of assistance to the judges in their evaluation. This would be adequate for the judge’s consideration and prevents recognition of any hybridizer’s seedling number.

**FLOWER AND STEM** – The flower and all its aspects is the major focus. The aril heritage and complement must be taken into consideration to evaluate all components. **DISTINCTIVENESS** – This is a very important quality for aril and arilbred seedlings. For arilbreds, that distinctiveness should flow out of the aril characteristics.

**(VISIBLE) ARIL CHARACTERISTICS** – The expression of the aril heritage in arilbreds is of utmost importance. Arilbreds of less than ½ aril complement must exhibit at least 2 aril characteristics. All other arilbreds must exhibit at least 3 aril characteristics. It is not desirable to make arilbreds that look like tall bearded, median or dwarf cultivars.

In judging seedling classes, judges should remember that they are not seeking a superior horticultural specimen as defined in horticultural judging. Rather, they are judging a new cultivar which not only conforms to the guidelines for the class, but exhibits desirable qualities comprising improvement and/or innovation. Condition is not a factor in judging seedlings. In fact, it is preferable that the stalks are not groomed, so that the judge can more easily evaluate such features as branching and bud count. Spent flowers can be removed if done so that the ovary remains visible.

The Exhibition Certificate (EC) is awarded to the Best Seedling if one is chosen. The certificate is not a recommendation for introduction since on the show bench it is not possible to evaluate plant qualities. The Best Seedling Award should not be given when no entry is worthy. Exhibition Certificates are also awarded to seedlings that receive votes from at least five judges on special seedling ballots. Judges visiting a show are urged to review the seedling entries and use these ballots to reward excellence where they find it.

### SCALE OF POINTS

#### Exhibition Judging of Aril & Arilbred Iris Seedlings

		ARIL	ARILBRED
1. Flower			
	a. Form	25	15
	b. Color	25	15
	c. Size	10	10
	d. Substance	15	10
2 Stem			
	a. Proportion & Straightness	10	5
	b. Branching & Bud Placement	N/A	10
3. Distinctiveness		15	15
4. (Visible) Aril Characteristics		N/A	20
TOTAL		100	100

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## Chapter 16

### JAPANESE IRIS

*Iris ensata*/Hanashobu

Approved by the AIS Board of Directors, March 9, 2021

#### Garden Judging

Garden judging of iris is based totally on performance in the garden. A well-trained judge can immediately recognize a quality cultivar and should never reward varieties with glaring deficiencies. Japanese iris flowers are distinctly different from those of other iris classes. Japanese iris (JI) bloom at a later period than any of the other iris and they present a unique challenge to the judge.

One of the judge's responsibilities is to evaluate and encourage the work of hybridizers toward new goals. Cultivars and seedlings must exhibit healthy and vigorous plants for garden use, regardless of how beautiful the flower. No rigid rules should be allowed to limit future development. The added variations and improvements of the future can be brought about only by careful and impartial consideration in making judgments for awards.

**SCALE OF POINTS**  
Garden Judging of Introduced Japanese Iris

1. Plant					50
	a. Vigor			35	
		i. Foliage	30		
		ii. Versatility	5		
	b. Stalk			15	
		i. Proportion	5		
		ii. Branching & Bud Count	5		
		iii. Strength & Flower Support	5		
2. Flower					30
	a. Form, Substance & Proportion			20	
	b. Color, Pattern & Texture			5	
	c. Durability			5	
3. Distinctiveness					20
TOTAL					100

1. Plant - 50 points

**a. Vigor** (35 points). This is the single most important set of points in the scale. Regardless of size, a plant with commendable vigor will be a good grower, a reliable bloomer and produce many flowers. No iris should receive an award unless it has vigor.

i. Foliage (30 points). Japanese foliage can be blue-green or yellowish green. It can be upright or fountain-like, but each must be vigorous and in good proportion to the stalks, disease resistant, virus free and attractive through the growing seasons. In general, blue-green upright foliage will be the most trouble free.

ii. Versatility (5 points). Versatile iris will grow in many soil and climatic conditions.

**b. Stalk** (15 points).

i. Proportion (5 points). As judge in the garden, height should be in good proportion to the size of the plant and flowers, with the flower carried above the foliage. The stalk should be neither too tall or too low to display the flower to best advantage, consistent with its size and particular form.

ii. Branching & Bud Count (5 points). The bud count for a clump depends both on branching and on the number of bloom stalks produced. It should not be judged on branching alone. Any branches present should be spaced so that the individual flowers are properly displayed. Preferably only one flower should open at a time.

iii. Strength & Flower Support (5 points). The stalk should be reasonably straight and sufficiently strong to keep the flower erect, regardless of size, during ordinary weather conditions. The flower should be held firmly attached in an upright position.

2. Flower - 30 points

**a. Form, Substance & Proportion** (20 points). These qualities are grouped because they cannot be easily separated. The many different forms of flower parts must be harmonious, pleasing and in good proportion. Any unusual arrangement of flower parts must be attractive as well as distinctive. Single types and the various double forms are all equally desirable. At present there are (a) three-fall types or singles; (b) six-fall types; and (c) multiple petal types (nine-petal, twelve-petal, etc.). The style arms may be vertical or in graceful arches, or they may be fully converted to petals. The anthers may be conventional, may have petal-like extensions, or they may be converted to petals. There may also be extra petaloids. Standards may be large or small or converted into falls. They may be vertical or angled, plain or fancy. Whichever they are, the standards must be consistent. Falls may be tailored, ruffled or fluted. They may be wide and horizontal or arching downward. Falls must be graceful and in good proportion with the rest of the flower. Because the fall is the largest area of color, anything (such as narrow falls, recurved falls or prominent holes in the top of the flower) which limits the show of color should be penalized. Signals can be large or small, sharp or diffuse. Currently the size of a Japanese flower may vary from 3 to 10 inches (8 to 24 cm). All of these sizes are good if they are in good proportion with the plant. The substance, whether heavy or light, must hold the form.

**b. Color, Pattern & Texture** (5 points). All colors must be clear and pleasing. New colors should be encouraged whether they come from chromosome mutation or genetic engineering. As the flower grows, the color may lighten, but it must remain clear, pleasing and harmonious. Japanese iris have a wide variety of patterns, including selfs, veining, rays, bicolors, marbled, splashed, blends, shading, sanding, etc. All of these are encouraged but must be harmonious. Texture, a surface feature, is variable in Japanese iris, including velvety, satiny, creped and smooth. Texture may greatly enhance the color and richness of the flower. Signals are another source of color pattern and texture.

**c. Durability** (5 points). Flowers must have the ability to resist heat, rain and other stresses and to remain fresh at least two days. A flower that does not have durability when judged against other varieties in a garden should be penalized. The durability is a genetically determined factor. However, temperature, water and nutrient availability, as well as sunlight intensity, all affect the life expectancy of the flower. High temperatures may cut the flower life in half.

### 3. Distinctiveness - 20 points

Distinctiveness is a combination of flower qualities that gives a flower charm and sets it apart from others. Distinctiveness may be a new color, a new pleasing pattern, a new harmonious combination of colors, a new graceful form, a new pleasing texture, a new size, more floriferousness, more durability, a different bloom season, a longer season, more flexible growing conditions, or more disease resistance. In any case, the distinctiveness must be an improvement.

## EXHIBITION JUDGING: Horticultural Entries of Japanese Iris

Exhibition judging of iris is distinctly different from judging in the garden. On the show bench a judge is not trying to determine the qualities and attributes of a particular variety. Rather, the exhibition judge must pass judgement in two areas:

1. Cultural perfection - how well the specimen has been grown by comparing it to the maximum typical performance of the variety being judged.
2. Condition and grooming - how well the specimen was prepared for entry into the exhibition.

Exhibition judging evaluates the specimen as it is shown at the moment the judge sees it.

Because of the height of Japanese iris, the show chair is encouraged to stage them on lower tables so they can be viewed more comfortably.

Point scales are used to encourage consistent evaluation of specimens on the show bench. Swift and quality performance is demanded of the exhibition judge, making it impractical to point score every entry. The point scale is useful to the student judge in learning the special requirements of the class. It is especially useful in selecting the best specimen of the show. Consistency must be observed in judging all classes.

### SCALE OF POINTS

#### Exhibition Judging of Horticultural Japanese Iris

1. Cultural Perfection					75
	a. Flower			50	
		i. Form & Substance	35		
		ii. Color	15		
	b. Stalk			25	
		i. Proportion, Balance & Form	15		
		ii. Attachment of Flowers	10		
2. Condition & Grooming					25
TOTAL					100

#### 1. Cultural Perfection - 75 points

In Japanese iris the height, branching, flower size, etc., are greatly influenced by culture. Cultural perfection is growing the iris to its greatest potential.

##### **a. Flower** (50 points).

i. Form & Substance (35 points). Form is determined by a combination of the shapes of the flower parts, relative sizes of those parts to each other (proportion), and

the position in which they are held in relation to each other. In a cultivar show the form should be characteristic for the particular cultivar.

Substance is the inner tissue structure which determines and sustains the form and color of the flower. Lack of substance causes degeneration of characteristic flower form as well as fading or streaking of color.

ii. Color (15 points). Color should be characteristic for the well-grown cultivar. It must be recognized that Japanese iris are unique in that as they mature they change in form and color. The color of a mature specimen, if characteristic, is to be considered as valid as the color of the first day bloom.

**b. Stalk (25 points).**

i. Proportion, Balance & Form (15 points). Proportion of the stalk to bloom is a characteristic of the cultivar. As the culture is improved, the stalk becomes taller and the flowers become larger and branching may increase. More than one open bloom should not be penalized so long as the blooms are displayed effectively and do not destroy the overall grace and balance of the stalk. The form of the stalk should be straight for most cultivars.

ii. Attachment of Flowers (10 points). Flowers must be firmly attached in an upright position.

**2. Condition and Grooming (25 points)**

The skills of the exhibitor are evaluated here. The exhibit should reflect visible improvement in the flower and stem resulting from the exhibitor's grooming. This includes neat removal of diseased or damaged foliage; cleanliness of the stem and flower; absence of insect infestations; firm upright positioning of the specimen; facing of the specimen; and a neat removal of spent blossoms, including the ovaries, with no damage to the spathes. The result should be a specimen being presented in its best possible appearance.

A judge may encounter trickery such as pinning or taping of flower parts, flower replacement from another stem, splicing of stems, unattached leaves or leaf spathes, cracking of stems to make them appear straighter, or hidden supports and wedges. If any such alterations are found, the entry is to be disqualified from competition.

## EXHIBITION JUDGING

### Japanese Iris Seedlings

In judging seedling classes, judges should remember that they are not seeking a superior horticultural specimen as defined in horticultural judging. Rather, they are judging a new cultivar which not only conforms to the guidelines for the class, but exhibits desirable qualities comprising improvement and/or innovation. Condition is not a factor in judging seedlings. In fact, it is preferable that the stalks are not groomed, so that the judge can more easily evaluate such features as branching and bud count. Spent flowers can be removed if done so that the ovary remains visible.

The Exhibition Certificate (EC) is awarded to the Best Seedling if one is chosen. The certificate is not a recommendation for introduction since on the show bench it is not possible to evaluate plant qualities. The Best Seedling Award should not be given if no entry is worthy. Exhibition Certificates are also awarded to seedlings that receive votes from at least five judges on special seedling ballots. Judges visiting a show are urged to review the seedling entries and use these ballots to reward excellence where they find it.

### SCALE OF POINTS

#### Exhibition Judging of Japanese Iris Seedlings

1. Distinctiveness					25
2. Flower					50
	a. Form			30	
		i. Substance	10		
		ii. Proportion	20		
	b. Color, Pattern & Texture			20	
3. Stalk					25
	a. Proportion			5	
	b. Attachment of Flowers			5	
	c. Overall Grace & Balance			5	
	d. Branching & Bud Count			5	
	e. Strength			5	
TOTAL					100

### 1. Distinctiveness - 25 points

It is important to reward the hybridizer who is doing something to advance Japanese iris. Distinctiveness is a combination of flower qualities that gives a particular flower charm and sets it apart from others. This could be a graceful new form, a new clear color, a new pattern, a pleasing texture or any combination that makes it distinct.

### 2. Flower - 50 points

Since the exhibition judge cannot see the plant, judging emphasis is placed more on the flower than in garden judging.

**a. Form** (30 points). Even though we have divided this into substance (10 points) and proportion (20 points) in the scale of points, it is impossible to separate them completely. Form is determined by a combination of the shapes of the flower parts, relative size of those parts to each other (proportion), and the position in which they are held in relation to each other. Substance is the inner tissue structure which supports the form. All forms must be pleasing, and any unusual arrangement of flower parts must be attractive as well as distinctive. Single types and the various double forms are all equally desirable.

**b. Color, Pattern & Texture** (20 points). All colors must be clear and pleasing. New colors should be encouraged. Japanese iris have the most diversity of pattern of any iris. All should be encouraged, but they must be harmonious. Textures are determined by the surface layer of cells of the flower. They include velvety, waxy, smooth, creped, etc. New textures should be encouraged, but they must be pleasing.

### 3. Stalk - 25 points

**a. Proportion** (5 points). The size of the flower needs to look as if it belongs to the stalk.

**b. Attachment of Flowers** (5 points). A seedling should be penalized if the flowers are not held upright.

**c. Overall Grace & Balance** (5 points).

**d. Branching & Bud Count** (5 points). Iris seedlings may extend the bloom season by more buds per stalk or more stalks per plant. But the seedlings can only be evaluated

on the show bench for buds on the stalk. If the seedling is branched, the branches should be well spaced and pleasing in appearance.

**e. Strength** (5 points). The stalk must have enough strength to easily hold up the flowers.

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## Chapter 17

### LOUISIANA IRIS

Approved by the AIS Board of Directors, May 11, 2021

**Definition:** The iris comprising the subsection Apogon (without beard or beardless), series Hexagonae, are commonly referred to as Louisiana iris. Currently, the five recognized species within the series Hexagonae are: *Iris hexagona*, *I. fulva*, *I. brevicaulis*, *I. giganticaerulea*, and *I. nelsonii*. Louisiana iris are unique among the genus *Iris* for their cultural adaptability, range of colors and flower forms.

### GARDEN JUDGING

The worth of any iris cultivar should be based solely on garden performance and should not be influenced by personal likes and dislikes. Numerous observations are necessary to ensure consistency in performance. Proper judging requires that both the desirable and undesirable traits of a cultivar be considered. Observations should not be limited to just the blooming season.

Experience is the best teacher and is obtained through years of growing and evaluating iris. Initially, a judge should evaluate each characteristic individually. The following scale is suggested as a guideline for garden evaluations.

### SCALE OF POINTS

#### Garden Judging of Introduced Louisiana Iris

1. Plant			40
	a. Vigor & Stamina	20	
	b. Foliage	10	
	c. Stalk	10	
2. Flower			60
	a. Color	20	
	b. Substance & Durability	15	
	c. Beauty & Distinctiveness	25	
TOTAL			100

1. Plant – 40 points

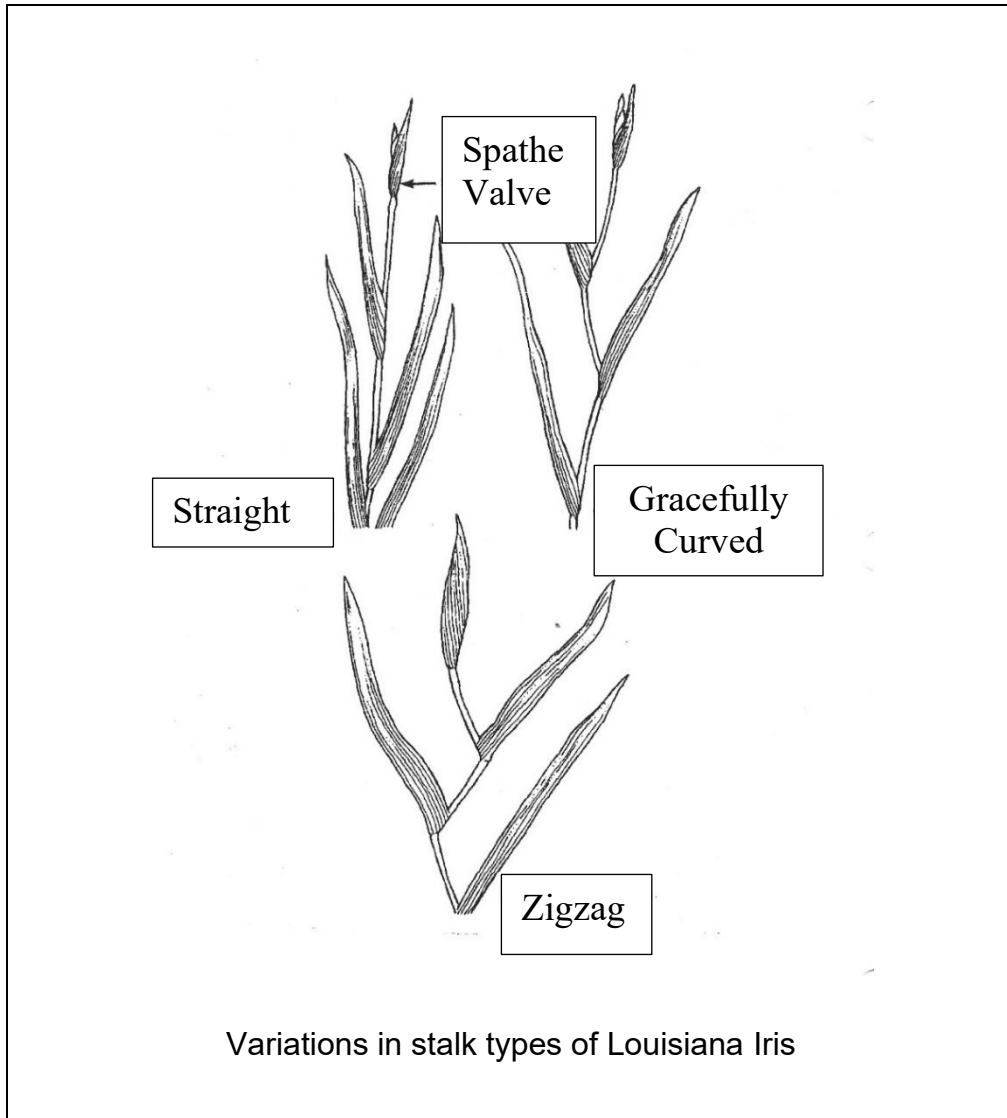
**a. Vigor and Stamina** (20 points). A good garden iris must grow and multiply under normal garden culture and conditions, tolerate normal variations in weather conditions and be free of disease. Particular attention should be given to the presence of rust and leaf spot. Leaf miners will cause gray streaking in the foliage and general loss of vigor, but this is associated with poor culture and should not be considered a fault. Each rhizome must produce a minimum of two offsets per season. It should be considered a fault if a cultivar produces few or no increases. Rhizome sizes vary a great deal in Louisiana iris. Clumps tend to be larger and less compact than in other types of iris. In areas where summers are long, hot and have a low relative humidity, outer leaves tend to turn brown and dry out. This should not be considered a fault but can be exacerbated by poor culture conditions, especially insufficient or inconsistent moisture.

**b. Foliage** (10 points). The foliage of Louisiana iris species and cultivars varies in length, thickness, width, and coloring. When evaluating the foliage, no criticism should be made of variations, provided the foliage is proportionate and free of disease. Both yellow-green and blue-green foliage are acceptable, although specimens with blue-green foliage may be less susceptible to rust and leaf spot than those having yellow-green foliage. Careful observation must be used to determine that the foliage is truly yellow-green and not yellow-green as a result of chlorosis, which can be caused by poor culture, damaged roots, compacted roots, and nutrient deficiencies. It should also be noted that foliage in colder climates tends to be more yellow, especially in early spring when the weather is cool and damp but should green up quickly when the weather warms.

Two unique traits of Louisiana iris foliage are particularly misunderstood: crinkling or pleating of foliage and the irregular spathe valve at the terminal position. Crinkling or pleating of the foliage, especially on the bloom stalk, is normal and should not be considered a fault. The terminal bud spathe valve is normally longer on one side than the other and might extend above the flower or curl under the petals. (See illustration.) This is not a fault.

**c. Stalk** (10 points). Louisiana iris stalks may be straight, gracefully curved, or zigzag. All are acceptable provided they have sufficient strength to remain upright without staking except when seed pods are maturing. The zigzag stalk is attributable to *Iris brevicaulis* and should not be confused with stalks that develop a bend or curve before straightening out. *Iris brevicaulis* stalks tend to lean from vertical, often with arching foliage, with flowers facing upward and with the terminal bloom rarely extending above

the foliage and should not be faulted for doing so. This courtesy does not extend to hybrid cultivars with *I. brevicaulis* in their lineage.



For general garden purposes, the height of the stalk should be 10 to 50 inches (25 to 125 cm). Stalk height should be relatively consistent within a clump. The height and thickness of the stalk should be in proportion to the size of the flowers. However, small flowers can look proportional on a tall thick stalk in some circumstances.

New cultivars under consideration for introduction or awards should carry a minimum of six buds per stalk. An exception to this rule may be made for cultivars that are very vigorous and produce a large number of stalks per clump and still have enough offsets to ensure good bloom the next season. However, a large number of blooms on each stalk is preferable.

Louisiana iris grown in cooler climates will tend to be shorter and have a lower bud count with fewer bud positions than the same varieties grown in warmer areas. Iris in cooler climates should not be penalized. Judges should become familiar with what is normal for a particular region or climate. Total bud count and the number of positions (i.e., location of the buds on the stalk) should be weighed against stalk height. Cultivars taller than 30 inches (90 cm) should carry four or more positions. Most modern cultivars should carry two buds at most positions. Shorter cultivars, under 30 inches (90 cm), may have fewer buds and bud positions but should not have points deducted as long as the number of buds and bud positions are proportional to the height of the stalk. Buds should be distributed proportionally over the upper two-thirds of the stalk to achieve a well-balanced appearance. Side branches which typically emerge from the lower two positions and extend upward 6 to 16 inches should not interfere with the flowers at other positions. Branches that cause a clustered or bunched look are not desirable. Culture and weather conditions can affect side branch formation and this feature may be variable.

Flowers at the terminal position must extend above the foliage in hybrid cultivars with the exception that, as previously noted, one side of the spathe valve may extend above the terminal bloom (see illustration). Cultivars of pure *Iris brevicaulis* will not extend their stalks above the foliage and should not be faulted. It should be considered a fault when the angle between stalk and foliage is acute or when foliage grows closely to the bloom stalk preventing buds and branches from emerging properly. Because the last bud position in Louisiana iris often is located down in the foliage, it may bloom tight against the stalk, facing forward, and should not be considered a fault. Occasionally, a cultivar may have flowers that open facing forward rather than upward, much like a gladiolus. While this is rather unusual, it should not be considered a fault if it is a consistent trait of the cultivar.

Louisiana iris do not always open the terminal bloom first and must not be faulted for not doing so. In most cases, the blooms will open sequentially and often two or more buds may open at once. Opening multiple blooms at once can be a problem unless there are a sufficient number of buds to allow the stalk to remain in flower for a maximum number of days. A Louisiana cultivar is expected to have blooms open over a period of two weeks.

## 2. Flower – 60 points

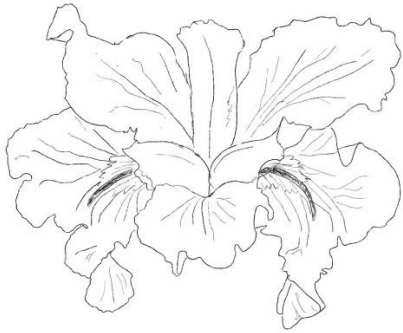
**a. Color** (20 points). Color is one of the most noted features of the Louisiana iris. All the primary colors and their combinations are found in the parent species and their natural hybrids. Colors should be clean, clear, and colorfast. An exception to the rule of color fastness occurs when fading results in a pleasing effect, such as a flower that opens a light yellow then fades to creamy white. Blended colors should produce a bright, pleasing color or color combination, not dull or drab. Bicolors should have a good color contrast and be in harmony. A new and different color or color combination must not overshadow the other characteristics of the cultivar. New color patterns, such as pronounced veining, spray pattern, halos, wide edges, multiple-colored rims, broken color, or luminata patterns should be evaluated along with other good characteristics. Streaking and blotches of color on floral segments is acceptable but should be consistent. If the streaking or blotches of color are present on one standard, the pattern should be repeated on the other standards and on every bloom or should be considered a fault.

**b. Substance and Durability** (15 points). Substance is the physical tissue makeup of the flower segments that directly affects the ability to maintain form and color. Flowers, under normal weather conditions, should last two to three days and still maintain their color and form without becoming floppy. Excessive substance can be a problem with both diploid and tetraploid cultivars. Flowers that never completely open or have edges that curl inward should be penalized.

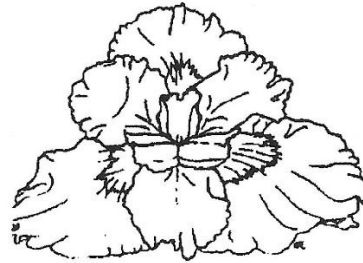
Texture is the surface appearance of the floral parts and is described by such terms as leathery, satiny, silky, velvety, rough or smooth. Any texture is acceptable if the underlying substance is good and adds to the beauty and distinctiveness of the flower. Certain colors are enhanced by texture, such as crepe-like pastels, satiny reds and velvety purples.

### Flower Forms for Louisiana Iris

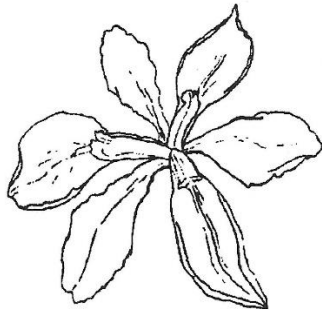
Recurved



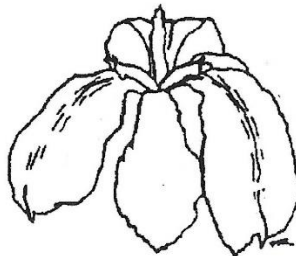
Overlapping



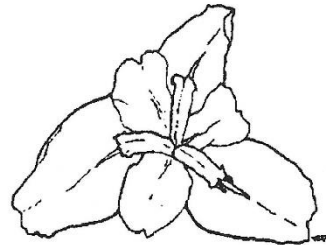
Open



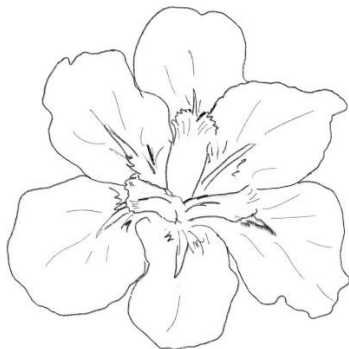
Pendent



Semi-Flaring to Flat



Cartwheel



Semi-Double



**c. Beauty and Distinctiveness** (25 points). Many factors may contribute to beauty and distinctiveness, such as texture, form, style arms and signals. For an iris to be worthy of introduction or awards, it should possess distinctiveness as well as beauty. However, this one factor should not overshadow the other requirements.

The flower forms available in Louisiana iris are numerous and considered one of their major attributes. All forms are acceptable, and great care should be exercised to preserve this diversity. The basic and most frequently described forms are flat, flaring, pendent, recurved, open, overlapping, cartwheel and double or semi-double.

Contributing to the individuality and distinctiveness as well as the form is the ruffling of the standards and falls. However, the smooth, tailored form is equally good. Care should be taken when determining that the form is double or semi-double. It is important to differentiate between additional petaloids on the double flower form compared to an extra standard or fall, which does not constitute doubling. The latter is considered a freak bloom caused by weather or growing conditions.

Style arms are also important to the overall beauty and distinctiveness of Louisiana iris. Frequently the style arms are a different color than the standards and falls, and such variations should be considered desirable if they produce pleasing and harmonious contrasts. Style arms may be ruffled or edged with a different color and vary in length and width.

Signals are a marking, typically in yellow, orange, green, white or a combination of colors, located on the falls in the location of what would be the beard on bearded iris. Signals vary from very large to almost absent. Some cultivars have signals on both standards and falls. In addition, when the signals are identical on all six petals, it may be referred to as a 'star signal'. A line signal is a raised pubescent area and sometimes is referred to as a crest. The signals may radiate out some distance on the petal and be displayed on a different color background or outlined and extended by a contrasting color. All of these variations should be considered desirable if they add to the overall beauty and distinctiveness of the flower.

## EXHIBITION JUDGING

### Horticultural Entries of Louisiana Iris

Exhibition judging of iris is distinctly different from judging in the garden. On the show bench a judge is not trying to determine the qualities and attributes of a particular variety. Rather, the exhibition judge must pass judgement in two areas:

1. Cultural perfection - how well the specimen has been grown by comparing it to the maximum typical performance of the variety being judged.
2. Condition and grooming - how well the specimen was prepared for entry into the exhibition.

Exhibition judging evaluates the specimen as it is shown at the moment the judge sees it.

Point scales are used to encourage consistent evaluation of specimens on the show bench. Swift and quality performance is demanded of the exhibition judge, making it impractical to point score every entry. The point scale is useful to the student judge in learning the special requirements of the class. It is especially useful in selecting the best specimen of the show. Consistency must be observed in judging all classes.

### SCALE OF POINTS

#### Exhibition Judging of Horticultural Louisiana Iris

1. Cultural Perfection					75
	a. Stalk			35	
		i. Foliage	10		
		ii. Height & Form	5		
		iii. Bloom Positions & Placement	20		
	b. Flower			40	
		i. Size	10		
		ii. Color	10		
		iii. Form & Substance	20		
2. Condition & Grooming					25
TOTAL					100

## 1. Cultural Perfection - 75 points

Louisiana iris species are a diverse group, with each displaying unique traits in foliage, stalks, flower form, and range of colors. This great diversity within the five recognized species makes for an even more diverse group of hybrid cultivars. Each cultivar should be weighed on its own merits, with no preferential treatment based on personal likes and dislikes. Cultivars that typically display a given fault should not be penalized for doing so within their own class. This is not to say that cultivars displaying typical faults should not have points deducted when under consideration for section awards.

### a. Stalk (35 points).

i. Foliage (10 points). The foliage should be free of brown tips, tears, and blemishes. Trimming should be held to a minimum.

**Note:** Also refer to the discussion under Foliage in Garden Judging.

ii. Height & Form (5 points). Louisiana iris are not subdivided by any form of height classification. However, the shorter cultivars, 30 inches (90 cm) and lower, should be considered just as worthy for special awards as the more familiar taller cultivars. Tall-growing cultivars should be left as tall as possible yet trimmed to a reasonable viewing level for judges. Any height restrictions for entries should be printed in the show schedule.

**Note:** Also refer to the discussion under Stalk in Garden Judging.

iii. Bloom Positions & Placement (20) points. Buds should be able to open without interference from foliage or other buds. The number of bud positions on the stalk will vary based on the height of the stalk. Total bud count cannot be adequately predicted in a show setting in real time since buds in double or triple sockets will appear in succession and will not all be visible at one time. Although not all buds may be apparent, the judge can count bud positions. Judges should not guess at the total number of buds based on a single moment in time. It is difficult to assess the ability of blooms to open freely and unencumbered looking at buds and stalks should not be discounted because of unopened flowers. Side branches, which typically emerge from the last two positions and range in length from 6 to 16 inches, should not interfere with the buds at other positions and should be strong enough to display blossoms properly. Ideally, buds will be distributed proportionally over the upper two-thirds of the stalk to achieve a well-balanced appearance.

**Note:** Also refer to the discussion of Bud Placement under Stalk in Garden Judging.

**b. Flower** (40 points).

i. Size (10 points). Just as stalk heights vary in Louisiana iris, so do the bloom sizes. Ideally, the bloom size and stalk structure should be in proportion to the height of the stalk. The bloom size should be typical of the cultivar as grown in the show area.

ii. Color (10 points). The flower color should be true to the cultivar. Caution should be exercised in questioning a cultivar's identity based solely on coloring. Artificial lighting sources can make certain colors appear different. Early-season or cool-weather bloom may cause colors to be more intense and patterns more vivid. Color can also be an indicator as to the age of the flower. Colors tend to fade and lose their brilliance as blooms go past peak. However, color should not be the only factor used in determining the age of a bloom. There are cultivars that typically open rather dark and then rapidly fade to a much lighter shade.

iii. Form and Substance (20 points). The flower forms available in Louisiana iris are numerous and considered one of their major attributes. No one form should be considered preferable over another. The basic and most frequently described forms are shown in a previous diagram. The flower form must be typical of the cultivar. Care should be taken when determining that the form is double or semi-double. It is important to differentiate between additional petaloids or simply an extra standard or fall, which does not constitute doubling. The latter is considered a freak bloom caused by weather or growing conditions and should be penalized.

Substance is the physical tissue structure of the flower segments and directly affects the ability to maintain form and color. A judge must learn to observe, not feel, substance.

2. Condition and Grooming - 25 points

The skills of the exhibitor are evaluated here. The specimen should reflect visible improvement in the flower and stem resulting from the exhibitor's grooming. This includes neat removal of diseased or damaged foliage; cleanliness of the stem and flower; absence of insect infestations; firm upright positioning of the specimen; facing of the specimen; and a neat removal of spent blossoms, including the ovaries, with no damage to the spathes. The result should be a specimen being presented in its best possible appearance.

A judge may encounter trickery such as pinning or taping of flower parts, flower replacement from another stem, splicing of stems, unattached leaves, or leaf spathes, cracking of stems to make them appear straighter, or hidden supports and wedges. If any such alterations are found, the entry is to be disqualified from competition.

Selection and proper presentation are all-important in the exhibition of iris. The process should begin days in advance of actually cutting a stalk. Grooming should not be obvious and should not alter the normal appearance of the cultivar. Louisiana iris foliage should not be trimmed to look like any other type of iris. The typical Louisiana iris has a good deal of foliage on the stalk, and trimming should be held to a minimum. The foliage should be trimmed in such a way that normal contours are retained.

Blemished and fading blooms should be carefully removed without damaging the spathe. Any evidence of removal or trimming on the spathe should cause a deduction in grooming points. Stalks, foliage and flowers should be clean free of insects and any smudges or fingerprints.

The placement of the stalk in a container for exhibition is also important. The intersections of side branches to the stalk must be clearly visible and not hidden because the stalk is jammed down in the container. Judges should be able to see that the branch is attached to the stalk. Care must be taken to wedge the stalk securely into position. Judges may determine that a leaning stalk was not the fault of the exhibitor and request a clerk to adjust its position. Entry tags should be placed on the specimen in a position to face the judge.

## EXHIBITION JUDGING

### Louisiana Iris Seedlings

In judging seedling classes, judges should remember that they are not seeking a superior horticultural specimen as defined in horticultural judging. Rather, they are judging a new cultivar which not only conforms to the guidelines for the class, but exhibits desirable qualities comprising improvement and/or innovation. Condition is not a factor in judging seedlings. In fact, it is preferable that the stalks are not groomed, so that the judge can more easily evaluate such features as branching and bud count. Spent flowers can be removed if done so that the ovary remains visible.

The Exhibition Certificate (EC) is awarded to the Best Seedling if one is chosen. The certificate is not a recommendation for introduction since on the show bench it is not possible to evaluate plant qualities. The Best Seedling Award should not be given if no entry is worthy. Exhibition Certificates are also awarded to seedlings that receive votes

from at least five judges on special seedling ballots in a calendar year at AIS sanctioned shows. Judges visiting a show are urged to review the seedling entries and use these ballots to reward excellence where they find it.

**SCALE OF POINTS**  
**Exhibition Judging of Louisiana Iris Seedlings**

1. Stalk			35
	a. Proportion	15	
	b. Bloom Positions & Placement	20	
2. Flower			65
	a. Color	20	
	b. Substance	20	
	c. Beauty & Distinctiveness	25	
TOTAL			100

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## Chapter 18

### PACIFIC COAST IRIS

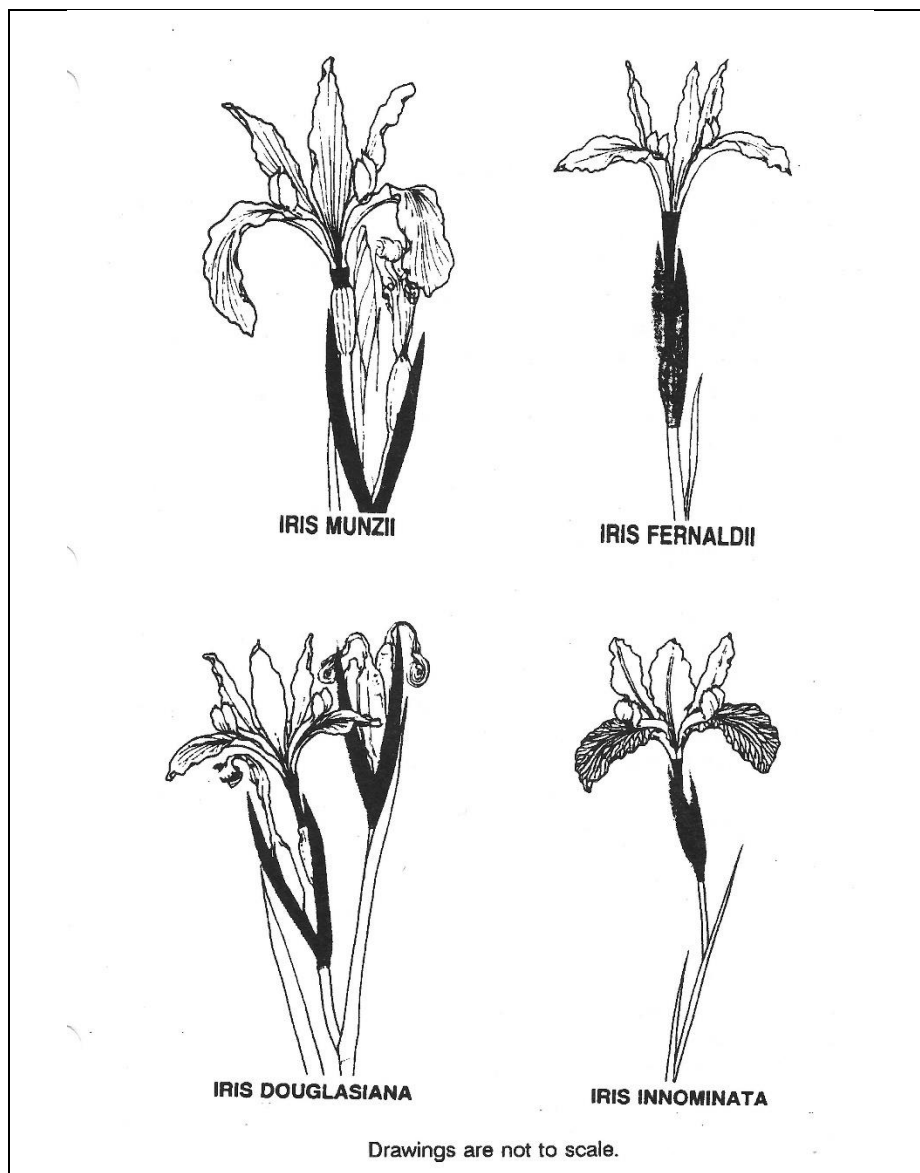
Approved by the AIS Board of Directors, April 13, 2021

Any assessment of the Pacific Coast Iris (PCI) must be made with an awareness of the characteristics of the primary species used in the development of the modern hybrids and of the improvements that have occurred in the group during recent years. Foliage which is attractive at all stages of growth is now common. Hybridizers working in this field have produced numerous hybrids which are improved garden plants.

The most common hybrids are derived primarily from *Iris douglasiana* and *Iris innominata*, however, other species such as *I. tenax*, *I. munzii*, and *I. fernaldii* can be found in the heritage of some PCIs. Continued breeding with these hybrids is creating other noteworthy colors and patterns as well as a more even distribution of color types within the range of clump size and height.

For example, the plicata pattern is now firmly established in the PCI. Hybridizers are producing colors that approach pink and orange. Tall yellows are now a reality. (Remember that early hybrids of the golden yellow *Iris innominata* were, almost always, of small stature.) There are diminutive purples and reds. Hybridizers are working towards producing petite blues. Colors are becoming clearer and cleaner and the range has expanded with darker tones reaching new intensities. Signals and eye spots have become more clearly and attractively defined or minimized or eliminated. Overall striping and veining, such as red-violet over a golden yellow base and purple veining over a white base, have been extended to additional colors of the spectrum.

The PCI appear in a never-ending variety of sizes and forms. Line drawings of the flower of six of the species have been included to illustrate the range of form and bud placement in the species. The goal is to retain the diverse characteristics and charm of the species while producing attractive and easy to grow garden plants.



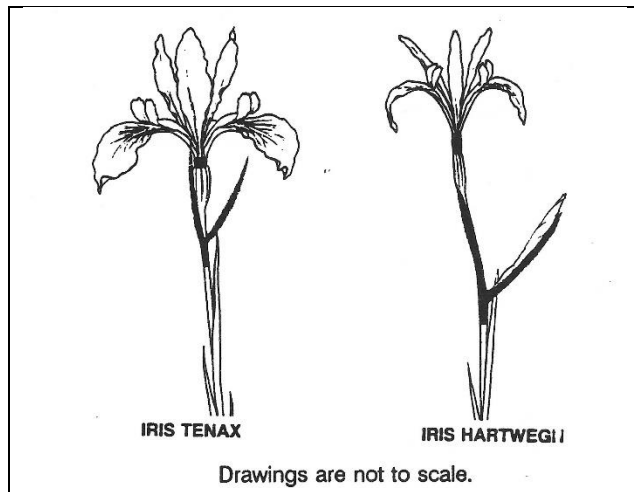
Two tactics are being used to extend the range over which the PCI can be grown.

1) Incorporating the genotype of some of the little used species into the gene pool of the modern hybrids such as the deciduous species *Iris tenax* for the purpose of increasing cold hardiness and *Iris macrosiphon* and *Iris munzii* for increasing the tolerance for hot summers.

2) Growing PCIs from hybrid seed in unfavorable climatic zones and using the survivors to produce hybrids adapted to the climate and soil conditions of that area.

It is the duty of the judge to reward advancements in this diverse group that produce especially attractive and garden-worthy plants. The judge is cautioned that no garden

award should be voted for a PCI on the basis of the performance of a clump in a single bloom season or year. In particular, the judge should remember that first year plants do not always perform in a manner typical for the variety. Some plants will be slow to establish or might have sparse or undersized first year bloom. The judge should evaluate only well-established clumps and over several seasons.



## GARDEN JUDGING

### Introduced Cultivars of PCI

The Society for Pacific Coast Native Iris adopted criteria for judging this group of iris but did not establish a point scale for garden judging.

**1. Plant.** The plant should be vigorous and hardy in the areas where the Pacific Coast Iris thrive. Plants which thrive beyond this normal growing area are especially desirable, provided they can produce an attractive garden effect. Plants should be resistant to diseases and to transplanting difficulties. It is a disservice to reward a plant that is a difficult garden subject. Once established, the plant should bloom reliably every year and should be able to withstand adverse weather conditions, including excessive heat, cold, wind and moisture.

**2. Foliage.** Except for the deciduous species and their hybrids, the foliage should remain attractive throughout the year, varying in size from extremely low and narrow (under six inches) to broad and tall (up to 3.5 feet tall). The foliage might be stiff and upright or gracefully arching. Foliage that is not uniform in appearance, is sparse, or

produces a twisted looking clump should be penalized. Dead foliage and spent bloom stalks should be easy to remove without damaging the still growing portions of the plant. Judges are encouraged to evaluate foliage both when the plant is in bloom and at other times of the year, particularly in late summer when the foliage has reached maximum growth for the season.

**3. Habit.** The plant should form a neat clump. Those with wandering tendencies or overly compact form should be faulted. The plant should be sturdy and floriferous, producing a few well-branched stems or many unbranched stems. Ideally, each bloom should be displayed such that the flower can be viewed without interference from its neighbors, yet the clump should present a pleasing mass of color when viewed from a distance in the garden. A long bloom period is preferred. A short, sparse bloom season should always be faulted. A good modern hybrid should give a minimum of two weeks of bloom each spring on established clumps. A shorter bloom period should disqualify the variety for consideration for AIS garden awards. In mild coastal climates, the variety should bloom readily under sunny conditions or in partial shade. In hot summer climates, the variety should bloom reliably when planted in partial or deciduous shade.

**4. Stem.** The size and length of the stem should be in pleasing proportion to the size of the flower it supports. Branching that creates a top-heavy, loose or relaxed appearance is heavily faulted as are snaking stems. Stems should always hold the flower away from the ground and at the top or above the foliage. Crowding of bloom stems or crowding of flowers on a branched stem is a serious fault. Ideally, each stem should bear a minimum of two buds. The exceptions are *Iris innominata* and *I. tenax*, which may often have one bud per stem, but display many stems per clump. Additional credit should be given if there are more buds or additional bloom stalks which open in sequence to extend the season.

**5. Flower.** The size of the flower should be in proportion to the foliage and stem. A small flower on a plant with large, broad foliage is to be faulted as is a large flower above narrow, grass-like foliage. The larger the flower, the more color it will project. However, width and size of flower parts is of little value unless other desirable traits are present. Large flowers, with wide floral parts can be just as appealing as smaller flowers with a dainty and graceful shape. Shape and color contribute to the aesthetic value more than size alone.

Standards may be erect or spreading toward the horizontal, but they should never flop. Substance in all flower parts is of utmost importance. Ruffling and the more tailored forms are both acceptable, but neither should alter the flower's basic form. The flower should endure harsh weather conditions without losing its form. The flower should open

fully under all normal weather conditions. Twisted or distorted flowers are to be faulted. Varieties whose flowers are distorted by not being able to clear the spathes or which need help coming out of the spathes should also be faulted.

Color may vary from almost pure selfs with no visible signal area to patterns with elaborate and intricate veining, contrasting style arms and eye spots or blazes. All are acceptable, if pleasing to the eye. Variety in color patterns is encouraged. Subtle coloring is as desirable as the vivid and vibrant. Streaking occurs occasionally and should not be penalized unless it detracts. Colors should not fade. Dirty or muddy coloring is a fault.

## GARDEN JUDGING PCI Seedlings

The judge should identify those seedlings which represent significant advances in color, color combinations, form, size, good growth and bloom habits. Therefore, the judge must be familiar with introduced varieties already available. The judge should be aware of what color patterns are common and what colors or color combinations and patterns represent an innovation or advancement. Special attention should be given to the overall effect of the clump and foliage as well as the form, substance, color, color pattern and size of the bloom. Distinctiveness is a plus. Large flowers are appealing if in proportion to the plant and stem. Equal consideration should also be given to the development of the dwarf types from *Iris innominata*. Only genuine and solid advances should be encouraged.

## EXHIBITION JUDGING Horticultural Entries of PCI

Exhibition judging of iris is distinctly different from judging in the garden. On the show bench a judge is not trying to determine the qualities and attributes of a particular variety. Rather, the exhibition judge must pass judgement in two areas:

1. Cultural perfection - how well the specimen has been grown by comparing it to the maximum typical performance of the variety being judged.
2. Condition and grooming - how well the specimen was prepared for entry into the exhibition.

Exhibition judging evaluates the specimen as it is shown at the moment the judge sees it.

Point scales are used to encourage consistent evaluation of specimens on the show bench. Swift and quality performance is demanded of the exhibition judge, making it impractical to point score every entry. The point scale is useful to the student judge in learning the special requirements of the class. It is especially useful in selecting the best specimen of the show. Consistency must be observed in judging all classes.

### SCALE OF POINTS Exhibition Judging of Horticultural PCI

1. Cultural Perfection			75
	Flower & Stem		
2. Condition & Grooming			25
TOTAL			100

1. **Cultural Perfection** (75 points). To receive full points, the color, form, size and substance of the bloom or blooms should be typical for the variety. Special merit is not given to stems with multiple open flowers unless this is typical of the variety being judged. Conversely, varieties which typically branch should not receive a first-place award unless the full stalk, including the branches, is displayed. Stems of many varieties, particularly those from the edge of an established clump, may curve such that the terminal flower is displayed in a tilted position. If this is typical of the variety, it

should not be faulted on the show bench. Foliage should be present (not stripped from the stalk), typical for the variety and healthy in appearance. The vast majority of Pacific Coast Iris have deep green or blue green foliage, not yellow-green.

**2. Condition and Grooming (25 points).** The skills of the exhibitor are evaluated here. The specimen should reflect visible improvement in the flower and stem resulting from the exhibitor's grooming. This includes neat removal of diseased or damaged foliage; cleanliness of the stem and flower; absence of insect infestations; firm upright positioning of the specimen; facing of the specimen; and a neat removal of spent blossoms, including the ovaries, with no damage to the spathes. The result should be a specimen being presented in its best possible appearance.

Foliage that has been neatly trimmed to eliminate the brown tips that commonly occur in areas of alkaline soil or water or to minimize the visual effect of rust, slug, snail or insect damage is acceptable so long as the natural leaf shape is maintained.

A judge may encounter trickery such as pinning or taping of flower parts, flower replacement from another stem, splicing of stems, unattached leaves or leaf spathes, cracking of stems to make them appear straighter, or hidden supports and wedges. If any such alterations are found, the entry is to be disqualified from competition.

## EXHIBITION JUDGING

### PCI Species & Natural Hybrids

The judge should be familiar with various species, subspecies and the more common natural hybrids. Judges should review their general characteristics before judging commences. It should be noted that each cultivar may exhibit considerable variation, especially if unregistered.

## SCALE OF POINTS

### Exhibition Judging of PCI Species & Natural Hybrids

1. Cultural Perfection					75
	a. Flower			65	
		i. Color	20		
		ii. Form	20		
		iii. Substance	15		
		iv. Size	10		
	b. Stem			10	
2. Condition & Grooming					25
TOTAL					100

#### 1. Cultural Perfection – 75 points

**a. Flower** (65 points). The flower should display a pleasing color or combination of colors. Usually, a clear or strong color for a particular species should be rewarded. Form should be appealing and consistent with the species, although pleasing variations are acceptable. Substance and size should be typical of the variety and any improved hybrid is to be awarded.

**b. Stem** (10 points). The stem should be typical for the species and credit should be given for the best examples within species limits. Species which are normally stemless or nearly so, should not be penalized. Flowers held at an odd angle indicate a stem that leans or tends to snake and should be seriously faulted unless that characteristic is typical of the species or natural hybrid.

#### 2. Condition and Grooming – 25 points

The specimen should be fresh, clean and without blemish or damage. It should be well groomed and have no sign of insect infestation.

## EXHIBITION JUDGING PCI Seedlings

In judging seedling classes, judges should remember that they are not seeking a superior horticultural specimen as defined in horticultural judging. Rather, they are judging a new cultivar which not only conforms to the guidelines for the class, but exhibits desirable qualities comprising improvement and innovation. Condition is not a factor in judging seedlings. In fact, it is preferable that the stalks are not groomed, so that the judge can more easily evaluate such features as branching and bud count. Spent flowers can be removed if done so that the ovary remains visible.

The Exhibition Certificate (EC) is awarded to the Best Seedling if one is chosen. The certificate is not a recommendation for introduction since on the show bench it is not possible to evaluate plant qualities. The Best Seedling Award should not be given if no entry is worthy. Exhibition Certificates are also awarded to seedlings that receive votes from at least five judges on special seedling ballots in a calendar year at AIS sanctioned shows. Judges visiting a show are urged to review the seedling entries and use these ballots to reward excellence where they find it.

### SCALE OF POINTS Exhibition Judging of PCI Seedlings

1. Flower			80
	a. Color	20	
	b. Form	20	
	c. Substance	20	
	d. Proportion	10	
	e. Distinctiveness	10	
2. Stem			20
TOTAL			100

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## Chapter 19

### SIBERIAN IRIS

Approved by the AIS Board of Directors, May 11, 2021

Revision approved by the AIS Board of Directors, January 24, 2024

**Definition:** Siberian irises comprise that group of beardless irises consisting of two subseries: Sibiricae with 28 chromosomes and Chrysographes with 40 chromosomes. There are three species in the Sibiricae subseries: *Iris sibirica*, *I. sanguinea*, and *I. typhifolia*. Subseries Chrysographes presently includes eight species: *Iris bulleyana*, *I. clarkei*, *I. chrysographes*, *I. delavayi*, *I. dykesii*, *I. forrestii*, *I. ramsayi*, and *I. wilsonii*. All are native to central Europe and Asia. They vary in height from 7 to 48 inches (18 to 120 cm) and in many other characteristics, such as flower form and foliage.

Hybrid cultivars exist among the species of each subseries, as well as one authenticated inter-subseries hybrid, 'Foretell.' There are tetraploid forms of both subseries. The tetraploid hybrids tend to differ somewhat from the diploids in such aspects as the size and substance of flowers, length of flower stalk, and width of foliage, but the judging standards remain the same.

### GARDEN JUDGING

#### Introduced Cultivars of Siberian Iris

Only when an iris has been seen growing and flowering well in a variety of locations should the judge consider it for an Award of Merit (AM) or Special Medal award. Consistency of performance is critical. An award of Honorable Mention (HM) might be appropriate if a cultivar possesses an outstanding new feature, even with significant faults, but no higher award should be given unless the overall quality is superior.

Point scales for garden judging are used to encourage consistent evaluation of specimens. Swift and quality performance is demanded of the judge, making it impractical to point score every iris. The point scale is useful to the student judge in learning the special requirements of the class. Consistency must be observed in judging all classes.

## SCALE OF POINTS

### Garden Judging of Siberian Iris

1. Distinctiveness & Garden Impact			25
2. Plant			45
	a. Vigor & Disease Resistance	15	
	b. Stalk, Buds, Branching & Length of Bloom	15	
	c. Foliage	15	
3. Flower			30
	a. Form, Proportion & Substance	10	
	b. Colors, Patterns, Contrasts & Textures	10	
	c. Durability	10	
TOTAL			100

#### 1. Distinctiveness & Garden Impact - 25 points

Distinctiveness and personality mean the overall combination of positive features of the iris that distinguish it from its peers and make it readily recognizable. A superior Siberian iris should be attractive both in and out of bloom, vigorous, disease free, and, when in bloom, should provide a glorious bouquet of attractive flowers with a distinct personality. Such a plant is invaluable, both as an accent point in the garden and as a harmonious member of a mixed plant grouping. It is critical to look for this essential whole, both from a distance, and again closer up, before considering the individual features described below.

#### 2. Plant - 45 points

**a. Vigor & Disease Resistance** (15 points). The judge should not focus so intently on the flower alone that the critical features of vigor and growth habit are overlooked. Vigor is critical for a good garden impact with an abundance of flowers and reliable performance. Awarding irises that have attractive flowers, but serious problems with vigor or disease susceptibility will lead, over time, to an overall decline in the garden-worthiness of Siberians. Susceptibility to disease is a very serious fault. An iris which often shows evidence of disease should not be introduced and should not receive any award, whatever its other virtues may be.

**b. Stalk, Buds, Branching, & Length of Bloom** (15 points). Stalks should be upright and resistant to wind and weather. No Siberian stalk should ever need staking.

When properly placed, a higher number of branches and buds is desirable, since it increases the floral display and extends the bloom season. However, judgment is needed here, since some unbranched cultivars, or ones with low bud count, present a succession of bloom stalks which can be equally effective in extending the bloom season. The judge should look for this succession. Generally, bloom on an established plant should last over two weeks, and three or four weeks is possible. Length of bloom period depends on the daily temperature and will be shorter under hot conditions. Although long bloom is desirable, the extended bloom should have significant garden impact. An additional week of flowering that is weak and sporadic has limited value.

Some Siberians send up a second crop of bloom stalks a few weeks after the first. This is termed 'repeat bloom.' If reliable, and the repeat display is sufficient to provide a notable garden effect, then this is a very desirable trait. However, judges will not see this trait unless they revisit gardens some weeks after the spring bloom season or grow these varieties for themselves.

Typically, two branches plus a terminal are the maximum found. A third branch occurs quite rarely. Many named varieties have no branch. The ideal branching presents the flowers close to the stem but without crowding. Wide, candelabra-style branching can cause interference with other flowers in the clump. Stalks should be long enough that the flowers are presented at or above the foliage. It is a fault for the foliage to interfere with the ability to view the flowers clearly.

Multiple buds in the flower socket are generally desirable. Two or three is the most common number, but some Siberian irises may have as many as five or six buds in the terminal. The final flowers in this case may be rather small. An undesirable effect which obscures the clarity of flower form is a tendency in some varieties to open a second flower before the first in the terminal has withered. If this happens frequently, it is a fault.

The relative sizes of the flower and the stalk should be in balance. Large flowers on very short stalks can look ungainly. By contrast, tall stalks may carry smaller flowers in a pleasing way when the stalks are slender and present the flowers gracefully above the foliage.

A feature of some Siberians is the presence of red or purple spathe valves (flower sheaths). These give a colorful and attractive effect before the flowers open and should be noted.

**c. Foliage** (15 points). Siberian foliage varies from very narrow, less than half an inch (a few millimeters), to quite broad, about  $\frac{3}{4}$  of an inch (2 cm). Foliage colors may vary from light green to dark green to blue-green. Foliage should be upright and spear-like or gracefully curved in a fountain effect. Some species have an interesting spiral twist in the leaf. There is room for variations in foliage appearance, but any marked tendencies to untidiness or disease should be seriously faulted. A Siberian iris with good foliage will provide a valuable landscape effect from spring to frost. A tendency for the foliage to collapse in the late summer exists in some Siberians and is a significant fault, but this cannot be judged if the cultivar is viewed only during the bloom season.

As the clumps of some cultivars expand, they tend to grow with an outer ring of foliage and a hollow center. If this occurs within the first two or three years after planting or to an extreme degree, it is a significant fault because it detracts from the clump effect.

### 3. Flower - 30 points

**a. Form, Proportion and Substance** (10 points). There is no preferred size or form for a Siberian flower. Many different and interesting forms exist and new ones should be encouraged. The only absolute criteria are that Siberian flowers should always be graceful, reasonably balanced in relationship of their parts, symmetrical, and with good clarity of outline. New forms that may meet these criteria include Siberians in which the standards are converted to falls (6-fall types) multi-petal forms in which the reproductive parts are converted to petaloids, and a hose-in-hose structure may be present. The hose-in-hose structure might resemble a flower within a flower.

Both standards and falls may be held horizontally or assume a more vertical orientation and may vary considerably in size. Style arms may lie horizontally or be held more vertically also. When all parts are horizontal, the flatter flower will have less impact when viewed from the side, but a greater impact when viewed from overhead. If too extreme, this form may reduce the clump impact from a distance. Vertical standards and falls produce a three-dimensional appearance. Style arms can play a significant role in the impact of the flower through color contrasts with the falls, feathered midribs, terminal crests or multi-shaded effects.

Multiple Siberian flower forms are acceptable unless there are gross differences in size or visual impact between the flower parts or the flower parts are distorted. One form

that lacks grace is the flower with narrow, strappy falls that either hang down or, worse, are held out horizontally with wooden stiffness. Another unacceptable form is the flower with falls that are twisted or pinched at the haft in such a way as to destroy the flower's outline. Yet another serious problem of form occurs when some parts of the flower lack substance. The result of poor substance is that the standards or falls fail to hold a distinct form and may even flop down irregularly. It is important to note that substance and thickness are not identical. Many Siberians have thin, flexible petals that move attractively with the breeze yet return to their original form when the wind dies. If such flowers hold their form well, they do not lack substance. Very heavy substance is not particularly attractive if it produces wooden stiffness in a flower. As always, there is a balance here between extremes.

Ruffling brings variation in form. It lends individuality to a flower that might otherwise be uninteresting. However, ruffling can be too extreme if it seriously obscures the clarity of outline of the flower. Although such adornments as ruffling, lacing and feathering of the flower parts can be positive attributes, a simple tailored form has a classic grace that should not be downgraded by the judge.

**b. Colors, patterns, Contrasts & Textures** (10 points). Color in Siberian irises currently includes all shades of blue-violet, blue, purple, near black, lavender, pink, yellow, brown, gold, shades of red and pure or creamy whites. Colors vary from soft to brilliant and should always be pleasing. Improvements in existing colors and color blends, particularly, the development of new ones, deserve favorable notice. Though color is important, high awards should not be given to irises based solely on color advances if they exhibit serious faults in other areas.

Color patterns may include dappling, veining, dotting, lighter colored rims on the falls, and combinations of colors and shades. Bitones and bicolors are appearing more frequently, and this often adds interest and individuality to the flower. Increasingly, Siberians are being introduced that have a pleasing blend of colors on the falls and/or standards. If attractive, these contrasts and patterns are to be encouraged. Color patterns, blends and contrasts are only a fault if they combine to provide a muddy effect or the colors clash inharmoniously.

Many Siberians have distinct white or yellow signal areas at the base of the falls, sometimes extending over a considerable area. These can add greatly to the personality of the flower.

Texture is a surface characteristic which influences color impact as it reflects or absorbs light. Texture variations include silky, satiny, velvety, suede-like, or diamond-dusted effects. These characteristics often increase the impact and interest of the flower.

As with ruffling, the various textures, signal areas, patterns and contrasts within the flower coloring can lend strong individuality and interest to a flower. However, a perfect self, entirely lacking marking, signals and contrasts, deserves strong consideration from the judge if it has good garden impact and individuality due to an unusual purity or novelty of color.

**c. Durability (10 points).** Durability is the ability of the flower to remain attractive over several days. This includes natural longevity of the flower before it dies, which is quite dependent on temperature. Under average temperature conditions, it is expected that a Siberian flower will remain attractive for three days. A second aspect of durability is the capacity to withstand adverse weather conditions such as rain and wind or bright sun. One can only judge this quality by growing and observing the variety in the garden under varying conditions. Some fading of colors typically occurs under hot, sunny conditions. This is a fault only if the fading provides an unattractive clump effect.

The durability of flowers can be too great in the sense that a good Siberian iris rapidly casts the old and withered flowers. If these tend to persist obtrusively in the stalk, the effect is likely to be untidy and the iris should be faulted.

## EXHIBITION JUDGING

### Horticultural Entries of Siberian Iris

Exhibition judging of irises is distinctly different from judging in the garden. On the show bench a judge is not trying to determine the qualities and attributes of a particular variety. Rather, the exhibition judge must pass judgement in two areas:

1. Cultural perfection - how well the specimen has been grown by comparing it to the maximum typical performance of the variety being judged.
2. Condition and grooming - how well the specimen was prepared for entry into the exhibition.

Exhibition judging evaluates the specimen as it is shown at the moment the judge sees it.

**SCALE OF POINTS**  
Exhibition Judging of Horticultural Siberian Iris

1. Cultural Perfection					75
	a. Stalk			35	
		i. Proportion of Flower to Stalk	10		
		ii. Branching	10		
		iii. Spathes, Bracts & Stem	10		
		iv. Size & Color of Stem & Foliage	5		
	b. Flower			40	
		i. Floral Display	10		
		ii. Form, Proportion & Substance	10		
		iii. Patterns & Texture	10		
		iv. Color	10		
2. Condition & Grooming					25
TOTAL					100

1. Cultural Perfection - 75 points

**a. Stalk (35 points).** The stalk should be typical of the cultivar. The entire stalk should be on display in order to show the proportion of flower, branching, and bud positions to the stalk. Again, these should be typical of the cultivar. Branching should be typical of a well-grown specimen and can vary from none to two depending on the cultivar.

Buds should be able to open without interference from other buds or foliage. If foliage is present, it should be free of brown tips, tears, and blemishes. Trimming should be held to a minimum.

**b. Flower (40 points).** Because there are many different forms and color patterns, the Siberian flower must be judged against what is typical for the variety. Thus, there is no preferred size or form for a Siberian flower. At least one flower must be open and it should be fresh without the slightest indication of aging or crowding from other buds or flowers. The color should be clear and supported by adequate substance. The

blossoms should be of size that is normal or larger than normal for the variety. No evidence of fading or unevenness should be present. Flowers past peak performance should have been carefully removed, leaving no or little evidence to the spathe. The question the judge should ask is, "Is this the best example of the flower of this cultivar?"

## 2. Condition & Grooming - 25 points

The skills of the exhibitor are evaluated here. The exhibit should reflect visible improvement in the flower and stem resulting from the exhibitor's grooming. This includes neat removal of diseased or damaged foliage; cleanliness of the stem and flower; absence of insect infestations; firm upright positioning of the specimen; facing of the specimen; and a neat removal of spent blossoms, including the ovaries, with no damage to the spathes. The result should be a specimen being presented in its best possible appearance.

A judge may encounter trickery such as pinning or taping of flower parts, flower replacement from another stem, splicing of stems, unattached leaves or leaf spathes, cracking of stems to make them appear straighter, or hidden supports and wedges. If any such alterations are found, the entry is to be disqualified from competition.

## EXHIBITION JUDGING Siberian Seedlings

In judging seedling classes, judges should remember that they are not seeking a superior horticultural specimen as defined in horticultural judging. Rather, they are judging a new cultivar which not only conforms to the guidelines for the class, but exhibits desirable qualities comprising improvement and/or innovation. Condition is not a factor in judging seedlings. In fact, it is preferable that the stalks are not groomed, so that the judge can more easily evaluate such features as branching and bud count. Spent flowers can be removed if done so that the ovary remains visible.

The Exhibition Certificate (EC) is awarded to the Best Seedling if one is chosen. The certificate is not a recommendation for introduction since on the show bench it is not possible to evaluate plant qualities. The Best Seedling Award should not be given if no entry is worthy. Exhibition Certificates are also awarded to seedlings that receive votes from at least five judges on special seedling ballots in a calendar year at AIS sanctioned shows. Judges visiting a show are urged to review the seedling entries and use these ballots to reward excellence where they find it.

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## Chapter 20

### IRIS SPECIES and SPEC-X

Approved by the AIS Board of Directors, May 11, 2021

Revision approved by the AIS Board of Directors, January 28, 2026

**Definition:** A species (SPEC) iris is the named selection of a single species originally collected in the wild as a division, seedling, or seed; has come from seeds of the former plants grown in cultivation (whether hand pollinated or open pollinated); or has come from mutations of the above.

**Definition:** According to SIGNA (Species Iris Group of North America), SPEC-X is the term applied to any hybrid that does not fall into a conventional category such as Louisianas, Siberians, or Junos. It literally means “species cross”.

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The hybridizer may elect to register an iris as a species if it seems the iris is more species-like and not representative of the definition of a specific class. For example, when it is time to register an *Iris sibirica* seedling, the hybridizer has the option of registering it in the Siberian class or the species class. The Founders of SIGNA Medal is the highest award for irises in the species class.

SPEC-X irises are hybrids with a mix of species traits. A cross involving an iris species as one of the parents and another plant not of that species is a SPEC-X. Also included in SPEC-X are hybrids from species crosses. An example of a species cross (SPEC-X) would be the seedling from the cross of *Iris ensata* with *I. pseudacorus*. Iris hybrids that do not fit in any other category are also considered SPEC-X iris. Another example would be the offspring of *I. junonia* and an SDB. The hybridizer may elect to register a seedling as SPEC-X if it is more species-like and does not fit into any other category. The Randolph-Perry Medal is the highest award for irises in the SPEC-X class.

Species (SPEC) and SPEC-X irises are versatile and can be used in the perennial border or rock garden as specimen plants, mass plantings, ground covers, pool plants or container plants. Burgeoning interest in species and SPEC-X irises is bringing more of them into gardens, where their evaluation can pose a complicated assignment. Judges are encouraged to grow the species and SPEC-X irises most commonly grown in their area, because there is no better way to learn about these irises than by growing them.

## GARDEN JUDGING

### Iris Species and SPEC-X

Species (SPEC) and SPEC-X are the broadest and most diverse classes of irises, representing many sizes, forms, bud counts, branching habits, types of stalks, etc. Guidelines from other classes of irises should be set aside. In SPEC, each cultivar is to be evaluated on its own merit as a garden plant. It is important to remember that a species is not represented by any single plant. Many species have a great deal of variation, even in the wild. SPEC-X is a wide-open class. In some cases, the judge will be evaluating irises of a type which never existed before. There is a lot of leeway in this class to reward innovation. However, the cultivar must also be evaluated on its garden merit.

Point scales for garden judging are used to encourage consistent evaluation of specimens. Swift and quality performance is demanded of the judge, making it impractical to point-score every iris. The point scale is useful to the student judge in learning the special requirements of the class. Consistency must be observed in judging all classes. This scale of points can be used to judge any species or SPEC-X iris.

## SCALE OF POINTS

### Garden Judging of Iris Species & SPEC-X

1. Aesthetic Qualities			55
	a. Flower	20	
	b. Foliage	15	
	c. Overall Presentation	20	
2. Cultural Qualities			20
	a. Vigor	10	
	b. Disease & Pest Resistance	5	
	c. Growth Habit	5	
3. Distinctiveness			25
TOTAL			100

#### 1. Aesthetic Qualities - 55 points

Is it visually pleasing? This is the guideline for the aesthetic qualities of the species and SPEC-X irises. Try to leave preconceptions regarding color, proportion, form, ruffling, branching, etc., behind when judging the aesthetic value of species irises.

**a. Flower** (20 points). Many elements are involved in evaluating an individual flower. Color and/or pattern are among the easier elements to judge. Features such as beards, signals, crests, etc., also are important, and there are no hard and fast rules as to what is visually pleasing. In one iris a cleaner, more distinct signal may be a very attractive feature, while in another, the total lack of a signal may also be attractive. Even more difficult to evaluate are the shape, texture, finish, substance, and durability of a flower. The shape of each flower must be considered individually. All shapes may be acceptable. However, it must be pleasing for that particular iris. Tucked falls are attractive on some species and SPEC-X irises and not on others. Generally, the natural (wild) shape of a species or SPEC-X iris can be a helpful guide. New shapes can be considered improvements if they are visually pleasing. Double or multi-petaled flowers are acceptable if they enhance overall aesthetic quality. Extra parts should be displayed in multiples of three. Flowers which do not open because of multiplicity of parts are to be discouraged. Substance and durability can be a confusing area, especially for species. While stiffer petals may be an improvement in durability, they may be too stiff to be attractive for that particular specimen if one of its special qualities is

daintiness. Individual judgments must be made in each case. Colorful seed pods can be just as attractive as flowers and should be rewarded if present.

**b. Foliage** (15 points). Consider the aesthetic qualities of the foliage. Start with the typical wild form of that species and look for its best qualities and improvements. The shape of each leaf fan is important, as well as the shape of the whole plant. For example, if the species has typically narrow foliage and a cultivar has even more narrow foliage which enhances its appearance, this is to be rewarded. Color is also important. Bright green foliage may be as visually pleasing as grey-green or dark green, depending on the species. Variegations in the foliage (i.e., different colored zones on the leaves such as stripes or a series of dots) may be a distinct garden asset. Variegations should be consistent, appearing on all of the leaves and not just some of the leaves. If the variegation occurs only for a short period of time, the judge must determine if it is sufficient to be considered a rewardable feature. Leaves stained with purple should not be overlooked; but again, the effect must be pleasing. Also important is the finish of the foliage. Is it shiny or dull, or textured in some special way? Finally, consider the durability of the foliage. Does it hold up well over a long period of time or does it collapse in a heap after bloom? A species or SPEC-X iris which naturally goes dormant after bloom should not be penalized, but one which naturally remains green should be judged on its foliage, both in and out of bloom. An iris grown primarily for its foliage should not have to produce outstanding flowers to receive recognition. In that case, the points will have to be adjusted to accommodate its unusual features.

**c. Overall Presentation** (20 points). How does it all go together? There are a number of important elements of overall presentation to consider: color harmony, stalk carriage, balance and proportion, carrying power, and floriferousness. Each species and SPEC-X iris must be judged with the typical wild form in mind as the underlying criterion. A specimen which typically blooms down in the foliage should not be penalized for that. But if a cultivar of that species has flowers which are more visible, it should be rewarded. Do not expect the presentation of *Iris cristata* to compare to *I. pseudacorus*.

Balance and proportion are difficult areas to judge in species. If you are unfamiliar with arils and more used to *Iris pumila*, the arils may appear out of proportion. It is important to know the species and SPEC-X irises you are judging. A single small and delicate flower on a tall stalk might be out of balance if there is only one flower open at a time, but if there are many open at once, it might be quite attractive. If stalks are leaning or tilting, they are out of balance.

Garden impact or effectiveness should be judged both at a distance and close at hand, since irises are viewed in both of these ways in the garden. Size is only one aspect of

garden impact. A small bright flower may have as much impact as a larger less colorful one. A tiny iris grown in a mass may have as much impact as a single specimen of a much larger iris.

Floriferousness is an important element of both garden impact and overall presentation. Floriferousness can be achieved through the duration of each bloom, the number of buds per stalk, and/or the number of stalks per plant. Also important in judging floriferousness is repeat bloom or remontancy, which cannot be evaluated on a single visit to a garden. In addition, credit should be given to varieties which are extra early or extra late as they extend the season of bloom in the garden.

## 2. Cultural Qualities - 20 points

How well does it grow? This is the standard for judging the cultural qualities of species and SPEC-X irises. The genus *Iris* is widely distributed over many diverse habitats, and some species require exact conditions for growth. If the gardener is unable to provide these conditions, the plant will appear less vigorous, and the plant should not be judged. Those plants which adapt more readily to a wide variety of growing conditions will naturally be considered by more judges, as they will grow well in more gardens. Do not try to judge the cultural qualities of a species or SPEC-X iris on only one visit to a garden or on one season's evaluation. These are aspects which must be judged overtime.

**a. Vigor** (10 points). Strong growth and good increase. Vigor is often thought to include good health, but in this context, these two qualities have been differentiated. A cultivar may grow and increase very well and yet be very susceptible to a disfiguring disease such as leaf spot or virus.

**b. Disease and Pest Resistance** (5 points). If a cultivar is not favored by a pest such as iris borer or thrips, while others are, it should receive more points. The same is true for virus infection, leaf spot, rust, etc. Clearly, any cultivar susceptible to diseases which also affect the vigor of the plant should be seriously penalized.

**c. Growth Habit** (5 points). If an iris ordinarily grows in a rambling habit, it should not be penalized for conforming to its species type. However, if a named cultivar of such a species or SPEC-X iris has a more clump forming habit, it should be rewarded, because it will be more useful in the garden scene. Similarly, a named cultivar of a clump forming species should be rewarded if it remains solid in the center over time, and penalized if it dies out in the center. Finally, in the SPEC-X class, many varieties

may be sterile. While this is viewed as a fault by iris hybridizers, it should not be penalized as a garden plant.

### 3. Distinctiveness - 25 points

We should strive to allow and encourage the greatest possible diversity of iris expression. Distinctiveness can only be evaluated by a judge who is familiar with most of the named cultivars of a particular species and SPEC-X irises. A named cultivar should be distinct enough to be recognized without a label. Points in this section should be awarded for any of the elements listed above under aesthetic qualities and cultural qualities if they are especially positive. This section also allows the judge to give special recognition for an innovative feature such as a color break, even though the flower may be somewhat lacking in shape and substance. There is a limit however, to rewarding a single innovative feature if the overall presentation of the plant is poor.

## EXHIBITION JUDGING

### Horticultural Entries of Iris Species & SPEC-X

Both species and SPEC-X irises may be registered with cultivar names and these names can be found in The American Iris Society Check Lists, the R&Is, and the AIS Iris Encyclopedia. For species, a valid published binomial (for example, *Iris setosa*, *Iris tectorum*, *Iris aphylla*, etc.) is considered the equivalent of a registered name. Lists of species binomials can be found in SIGNA's (Species Iris Group of North American) Species Check List and Brian Mathew's *The Iris*. Many species were registered and introduced before the species and SPEC-X classes existed, and these older irises are just as acceptable as exhibition entries as those registered as species and SPEC-X irises.

### Show Entries

All horticultural specimens should be identified as fully as possible on the entry tag by giving either the registered cultivar name or the species binomial. In addition, the collector or geographical origin, if known, and any additional information, such as a commonly accepted varietal name or a clonal designation assigned by the collector should be included on the entry tag. For example, *Iris aphylla* H17 (Hanselmayer) identifies the species, the assigned clonal designation, and the collector. "H17" identifies a particular clone, just as a suffix such as "alba" or "nana" does.

Seedling entries should include seedling number, class (SPEC or SPEC-X) and the species binomial name or cross description in order to enable the judge to evaluate the entries in the context of their species origin.

No exhibit should be disallowed because it has been flowered in a cold frame or cold house as opposed to the open garden. Species and SPEC-X irises are often grown under controlled conditions outside their area of normal hardiness.

Many species are too small in scale to fit the containers used for tall bearded irises. The show committee should either provide several types of smaller containers (floral picks in Styrofoam or Oasis work well) or specify that exhibitors provide their own containers of a suitable size.

## Show Schedule

Nowhere is a good show schedule more important than in providing for species and SPEC-X irises. The show committee will need some knowledge of the various types and should be familiar with what types have been exhibited in the past at each time of year and in what numbers. There can be one or more sections for species and SPEC-X in the show schedule. However, if very few are exhibited, then a single section titled "Species & SPEC-X" is sufficient. Lumping these irises in an "Other Irises" section does not provide them with an appropriate judging venue.

If the show bench normally has numerous species and SPEC-X entries, then two or more sections should be provided in the show schedule. There are several possible approaches to creating sections and subsections in an iris show. One option is to create a separate section for pure species and another for SPEC-X. Another option is to create separate sections for bearded and beardless species. A semi-botanical approach works well, too. For example, creating sections for beardless water irises, dryland irises, woodland irises, etc. Or sections could be based on region of origin, such as American beardless, European bearded, Asian beardless, etc. If an unusually large number of entries appears at the show, it is the responsibility of the show chair to create additional sections on the spot. For example, a show might have 15 entries that qualify for the "Beardless Species" section, but eight of the entries might be clones of *Iris cristata*. In this case, it would be desirable to judge the *I. cristata* clones as a separate section.

Grouping of entries within the classes in the exhibition hall should be alphabetically by species or SPEC-X (within any sections or subsections), and alphabetically by varietal designation or registered name within each species or SPEC-X class. In a cultivar show, each different clone may be awarded a first-place ribbon (if deserving). If there

are several entries of one registered variety, then they should be judged together and only one first-place ribbon awarded among them. If there are several entries identified with the same species binomial name and clonal designation, e.g., *Iris aphylla* H17 (Hanselmayer), then they should be judged together and only one first-place ribbon awarded among them.

## Exhibition Judging

Exhibition judging of irises is distinctly different from judging in the garden. On the show bench a judge is not trying to determine the qualities and attributes of a particular variety. Rather, the exhibition judge must pass judgement in two areas:

1. Cultural perfection - how well the specimen has been grown by comparing it to the maximum typical performance of the variety being judged.
2. Condition and grooming - how well the specimen was prepared for entry into the exhibition.

Exhibition judging evaluates the specimen as it is shown at the moment the judge sees it.

A rigidly defined point scale will not work for species and SPEC-X entries because of their great variation. The following guidelines may be useful in assigning relative value when evaluating the iris stalk and/or flower and the condition and grooming of the specimen.

### SCALE OF POINTS Iris Species and SPEC-X

1. Cultural Perfection of Flower & Stalk (if any)	75
2. Condition & Grooming	25
TOTAL	100

1. Cultural Perfection of Flower & Stalk (if any) - 75 points

a. **Flower.** Characteristics evaluated for flower are color, form, and substance. Form can vary greatly and depends on the species origins of the specimen. In some species the standards are nearly indistinguishable from the falls (e.g., *Iris fulva*), and in others, nearly absent (e.g., *Iris danfordiae*, *I. setosa*). In Junos, the style crests commonly have become so large and ornate that even without the standards, the flower has balance. In others (e.g., *Iris paradoxa*), the falls may be so much reduced as to appear as mere landing platforms for pollinators. Thus, floral parts may be in quite different proportion from one iris to another. Some will show petals aligned in a single plane, some will be erect, and some will have pendant petals. No matter which, the arrangement and orientation of petals must conform, both in color and shape, to the published species, clonal or cultivar description. Substance should also be typical of the species or cultivar. In some species, substance is typically thin and in others, it typically is quite tough.

b. **Stalk.** The stalks of species and SPEC-X irises can be different from those of modern hybrids. Some species lack a stalk. Instead, the flower is held up with a perianth, a floral tube. The stalk or branch habit of a species or SPEC-X iris should not be penalized if it does not conform to what is expected in an advanced generation cultivar. Instead, the stalk and branches should be compared to the norm for its own type. Some of these irises have extensive branching, while a single terminal flower is typical of others. They may have asymmetrical branching, symmetrical branching, or no branching. As for the stalk, it is natural for some to be straight, for some to be twisted, and some almost non-existent. This further points up the necessity for judges to know the characteristics of species and SPEC-X irises grown in their area.

2. Condition and Grooming - 25 points

The skills of the exhibitor are evaluated here. The specimen should reflect visible improvement in the flower and stem resulting from the exhibitor's grooming. This includes neat removal of diseased or damaged foliage; cleanliness of the stem and flower; absence of insect infestations; firm upright positioning of the specimen; facing of the specimen; and a neat removal of spent blossoms, including the ovaries, with no damage to the spathes. The result should be a specimen being presented in its best possible appearance.

A judge may encounter trickery such as pinning or taping of flower parts, flower replacement from another stem, splicing of stems, unattached leaves, or leaf spathes, cracking of stems to make them appear straighter, or hidden supports and wedges. If any such alterations are found, the entry is to be disqualified from competition.

## EXHIBITION JUDGING

### Seedling Entries of Iris Species and SPEC-X

In judging seedling classes, judges should remember that they are not seeking a superior horticultural specimen as defined in horticultural judging. Rather, they are judging a new cultivar which not only conforms to the guidelines for the class, but exhibits desirable qualities comprising improvement and/or innovation. Condition is not a factor in judging seedlings. In fact, it is preferable that the stalks are not groomed, so that the judge can more easily evaluate such features as branching and bud count. Spent flowers can be removed if done so that the ovary remains visible.

The Exhibition Certificate (EC) is awarded to the Best Seedling if one is chosen. The certificate is not a recommendation for introduction since on the show bench it is not possible to evaluate plant qualities. The Best Seedling Award should not be given if no entry is worthy. Exhibition Certificates are also awarded to seedlings that receive votes from at least five judges on special seedling ballots in a calendar year at AIS sanctioned shows. Judges visiting a show are urged to review the seedling entries and use these ballots to reward excellence where they find it.

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## Chapter 21

### SPURIA IRIS

Approved by the AIS Board of Directors, March 30, 2021

**Definition:** Spuria iris are that group of beardless iris listed as Series Spuriae of the Apogon (beardless) subsection.

There are two main groups of spuria species. One group includes dwarf species such as *Iris sintenisii* and *I. graminea*, and these include species with 16 to 34 Chromosomes except for *I. pontica* with 72 chromosomes.

Although the judge may see these dwarf species occasionally on the show bench in the species section of a show, none of these small species has contributed to the modern garden spuria iris. These dwarf species have summer green foliage and grow well in more northerly climates. All of the modern spuria hybrids are descended from rather tall species that, in some climates, are summer dormant. Dormancy is a very climate-specific phenomenon so that in the desert Southwest virtually all cultivars go dormant, except some 38 chromosome species hybrids such as *I. notha* and *I. demetrii* as well as some hybrids from the 44-chromosome group such as *I. carthalinae* and *I. klattii*. In the north, almost none do. Hybridizers have been selecting for shorter growing spuria iris from these tall species, so that now a range of heights from 25" to over 60" can be found in the garden hybrids.

The *World of Irises* and the Check List from the Spuria Iris Society itemize approximately twenty species. It is presently thought that some of the synonyms are repeated and that actually there are approximately sixteen species. Until further work is completed on this section of iris, the number of species cannot be stated definitely. The spuria species grow in the temperate zone from Spain to China, with the greatest concentration in Central Asia. Because of this wide dispersion and varied climatic environs (subtropical to subarctic), no fixed rules can be established to limit stalk height and many other plant characteristics.

Spuria iris normally bloom later than tall bearded iris, with their season of bloom spanning up to a month in cooler climates. As most iris shows and garden judging events are scheduled to coincide with the peak bloom of the tall bearded iris, the judge must make special efforts to evaluate spuria iris growing and blooming in the garden.

The judge must be familiar with newer cultivars growing in the garden. Breeding and selection of spuria cultivars should result in varieties with improved appearance and performance.

## GARDEN JUDGING Introduced Cultivars of Spuria Iris

It is very difficult to establish a numerical score for garden judging. The intangibles of charm, beauty and personality are not easily defined. A single viewing of a spuria iris in the garden is never sufficient to judge adequately the plant and its flowers. The following scale of points is a suggested guideline.

### SCALE OF POINTS Garden Judging of Introduced Spuria Iris

1. Clump Effect			15
2. Flower			40
	a. Color	15	
	b. Substance & Durability	15	
	c. Form	10	
3. Plant			35
	a. Stalk & Foliage	15	
	b. Floriferousness	10	
	c. Stamina & Vigor	10	
4. Distinctiveness			10
TOTAL			100

#### 1. Clump Effect – 15 points

The spuria clump is one of the greatest aspects of the spuria plant. Spuria iris do not require the frequent digging and dividing that bearded iris do and the clump should increase in size and continue to be floriferous for many years. The foliage mass should be a dark green and the stalks should be tall enough to rise out of the foliage with all the flowering positions on the stalk occurring above the foliage. Cultivars that make sparse foliage, have fewer blooms in the clump and/ or have flowers that do not clear the foliage are faulted.

## 2. Flower – 40 points

**a. Color** (15 points). The color range of spuria iris is more limited than other types of iris. Basically whites, yellows, blues, lavenders, browns and approaches to red or pink are found. Yellow amoenas and browns, which are rather rare in other iris groups, are fairly common in the spuria iris. Improvements in the clarity of color and approaches to the colors of orange, pink, red or true blue should be considered favorably.

Many of the spuria flowers have strong signals of white or yellow on the falls. These can add distinction to the flower if the effect is clean and pleasing. Approaches to complete selfs, especially in whites or blues are also welcome, as these colors frequently have large yellow signals. In many cultivars the standards will be either brown, purple or blue and the falls dominated by a strong signal. This “dark top” effect can be especially pleasing and distinctive if the colors are well separated and contrasts are great. Many flowers have color applied smoothly but some of the more interesting flowers have patterns of striping that extend over both standards and/ or falls.

The fine texture of the flower may also affect the color. The velvety texture of a flower, especially for red and purple flowers, can effectively darken the color. Conversely a smooth texture accentuates the brilliance of bright yellows and golds.

Faults in color include muddy colors, bloom colors that fade to unattractive shades or where the signal and basic petal contrast in non-harmonious ways.

**b. Substance and Durability** (15 points). Spuria flowers have some of the most durable flowers of any iris, even rivaling the florist Dutch iris. A spuria flower should last a minimum of 3 days, even under the worst conditions. Flowers that last longer than that are to be encouraged.

**c. Form** (10 points). Spuria form has advanced greatly over the years. The spuria iris of our grandparents had erect, fairly narrow, standards. The falls had a long, extended claw area upon which the style laid flat. At the terminus of the fall proper, the fall widens to a rounded structure. The wide spacing of the petals gave rise to the term “butterfly iris” because this type of petal resembles butterfly wings. Although this form is pleasing, more recent spuria hybrids have much shorter claw areas. This has caused several changes. The decrease in claw length has forced the styles to be slightly raised from the falls (much as you would see in bearded iris) and the lamina area, the flat, leaf-like portion of the falls, has increased in size and breadth. Changes have also occurred in

the standards, mostly with increasing width and decreasing length. The net effect of these changes is a more compact flower. These changes, accompanied with increased ruffles and approaches to lace, have made for more modern-looking flowers that rival the other beardless iris classes.

It should be noted, however, that the traditional forms are also effective. For example, flowers with large and long dark standards contrasted against lighter falls will have an amazing visual effect.

Because of the large spathe leaves on the spuria stalk, some spuria cultivars have difficulty opening properly and can open with severely twisted petals. Similarly, cultivars that have elongated standards often twist the standards into unattractive shapes. These form defects, along with any tucking or pinching of the petal should be considered major faults.

The claws, not unlike the haft area in bearded iris, can be too elongated, thus holding the fall too far from the center of the flower for good proportion. The shorter claw usually gives the best overall flower form.



A typical Spuria stalk.

New developments in form. Flower on the left exhibits "flat" form. That on right displays ruffling.

### 3. Plant - 35 points

**a. Stalk and Foliage** (15 points). Most spuria hybrids have rather tall and very erect stalks. Stalks that lean or fall over should be heavily penalized. Several hybridizers are working on shorter spuria iris and these should be encouraged to increase the usefulness of spuria iris in smaller garden situations.

Spuria stalks have extensive spathe leaves from which the branches and flowers must traverse in order to display the flower. The flowers at all positions on the stalk should open easily with no odd corkscrewing of the flower. This is a severe fault that is often noted in cultivars related to *Iris orientalis*.

The bud count on spuria cultivars varies tremendously by climate. Although a cultivar might have 6 buds in the desert Southwest of the US, that same cultivar might have 4 buds in Oregon. Because of this variability, judges should be familiar with spuria bud count and branching typically found in the area. Many cultivars coming to the market now have 6 to 7 buds and there have been cultivars with as many as 14. When higher numbers of flowers are found on a stalk, the flowers should open at reasonable intervals so that a crowded mass of flowers is not produced.

**b. Floriferousness** (10 points). A floriferous variety will produce many blooms over an extended period of time. Multiple open blooms per stalk, while visually impressive, will almost always significantly shorten the length of bloom period compared to those varieties that open fewer blooms at once. It is desirable for each stalk to possess at least two buds in its terminal and have two buds in some of its branches. A good spuria iris should have 2 to 3 branches with at least 4 buds per stalk. It would be more desirable to have 5 to 7 buds and exceptional to have even more. The goal is to produce adequate and effective color display for at least two weeks.

**c. Stamina and Vigor** (10 points). A good spuria cultivar should produce at least two increases per rhizome per year to increase the size of the clump and produce a good display of bloom each season. Because spuria iris are left in one place for years, they should continue to produce adequate bloom. Because of variations in climate response, the judge should have some knowledge of typical growth of spuria iris in their area in order to properly assess a cultivar.

Spuria iris are prone to virus. Virus symptoms include light to clear streaks on the flowers or very dark streaks on some of the paler cultivars. Foliage will often have lighter streaks of pale green to white when they have virus.

#### 4. Distinctiveness – 10 points

A spuria iris may have all the good qualities but be too similar to existing cultivars to qualify for any awards or represent no great advancement over already-introduced cultivars. Because of this a judge must have a good knowledge of what is considered state of the art in spuria iris. Distinction is not limited to flower attributes. Exceptional vigor and/or bud count can also add distinction.

### SUMMARY

A good spuria iris cultivar should make an imposing mass of foliage that is erect and green and not marred by any virus symptoms. The stalks should be straight and rise far enough above the foliage mound so that all flowers on the stalk are above the leaves and the branches to allow all flowers open properly. The flowers of modern spuria cultivars are mostly of the compact flower form and exhibit ruffling or lace. Other forms are also acceptable as long as the flowers are well formed and keep their shape. Four buds are acceptable in cooler climates. However, in a warmer climate, there should be more buds on each stalk.

A new cultivar should represent a distinct improvement in flower color or form or some aspect of plant performance.

A judge may never see a cultivar worthy of the full 100 points. However, one must continue to search for beauty and the ultimate of perfection. The cultivar earning the highest score should reap the greatest harvest of awards.

## EXHIBITION JUDGING

### Horticultural Entries of Spuria Iris

Exhibition judging of iris is distinctly different from judging in the garden. On the show bench a judge is not trying to determine the qualities and attributes of a particular variety. Rather, the exhibition judge must pass judgement in two areas:

1. Cultural perfection - how well the specimen has been grown by comparing it to the maximum typical performance of the variety being judged.
2. Condition and grooming - how well the specimen was prepared for entry into the exhibition.

Exhibition judging evaluates the specimen as it is shown at the moment the judge sees it.

Spuria flowers are ideal cut flowers and, as a consequence, should appear fresh and unmarred when exhibited. Ben Hager, when teaching judges training on spuria iris, would carry a load of spuria stalks into the room, pretend to trip, and throw all the stalks on the floor. The crowd would react and then Ben would show that the spuria flowers were just fine! They are very tough.

Because many judges are not familiar with a wide range of cultivars, it is important that the cultivar being judged is in fact the cultivar listed on the card. The most recent edition of the illustrated checklist produced by the Spuria Iris Society, shows pictures and written descriptions of virtually all the cultivars that have been marketed in North America and allows the judge to determine if the cultivar is labeled correctly.

Because many of the iris shows are at the tall bearded rather than spuria peak, most spuria entries to these shows will only have one flower open. Such a stalk should not be penalized for having only one open flower. Spuria stalks are, in general, very tall. If the show entries are on a table, it is very appropriate for the judges to ask the clerk to move the vase to the floor so that the fine points of the flower might be observed.

Point scales are used to encourage consistent evaluation of specimens on the show bench. Swift and quality performance is demanded of the exhibition judge, making it impractical to point score every entry. The point scale is useful to the student judge in learning the special requirements of the class. It is especially useful in selecting the best specimen of the show. Consistency must be observed in judging all classes.

## SCALE OF POINTS

### Exhibition Judging of Horticultural Spuria Iris

1. Cultural Perfection			75
	a. Flower	40	
	b. Stalk	35	
2. Condition & Grooming			25
TOTAL			100

#### 1. Cultural Perfection - 75 points

**a. Flower** (40 points). The flower must be fresh without the slightest indication of aging. There should be good, clear color supported by adequate substance. Form must be typical of the variety, and the blossoms should be of size that is normal or larger than normal for the variety. The spuria flower must have color typical of that cultivar with at least one flower fully opened. Size of the flower should be either typical or greater than the cultivar. No evidence of fading or unevenness should be present. The question the judge should ask is “Is this the best example of the flower of this cultivar that I have seen?”

**b. Stalk** (35 points). The spuria stalk should be typical of that cultivar. Although a spuria stalk might look better in the vase if a length of the stem is cut, the entire length of stem should be on display. Any stem that has been shortened for presentation should be penalized severely. For judges more familiar with bearded iris, the spuria stem with its large spathe leaves may seem abnormal. In many cultivars the spathe leaves will extend slightly into the terminal flower; this is not a fault. The spathe leaves should be clean and not marred by any symptoms of virus (general lighter streaks of color) or from mechanical damage.

Judging the bud count on the spuria stem with only a single terminal bloom is difficult. Sometimes, placing the vase on the floor and looking directly down upon the stalk can assist in making an accurate bud count. Expansion of the spathe leaves away from the stem is a clue that buds are underneath these leaves. It is entirely unacceptable to touch the stem to check bud count. Because bud count is variable in different climates, the judge should be aware of typical bud counts in the area and what a particular cultivar might have.

Buds below the terminal often have problems in opening properly or open at an odd angle. This would be considered a fault, especially if the flowers are displayed at odd or unattractive angles.

## 2. Condition & Grooming - 25 points

The skills of the exhibitor are evaluated here. The specimen should reflect visible improvement in the flower and stem resulting from the exhibitor's grooming. This includes neat removal of diseased or damaged foliage; cleanliness of the stem and flower; absence of insect infestations; firm upright positioning of the specimen; facing of the specimen; and a neat removal of spent blossoms, including the ovaries, with no damage to the spathes. The result should be a specimen being presented in its best possible appearance.

A judge may encounter trickery such as pinning or taping of flower parts, flower replacement from another stem, splicing of stems, unattached leaves or leaf spathes, cracking of stems to make them appear straighter, or hidden supports and wedges. If any such alterations are found, the entry is to be disqualified from competition.

Spuria iris have large nectaries at the base of the flowers that attract a variety of insects. Frequently aphids, bees or wasps, ants and ladybugs may be seen at these sites in the garden. Spuria stalks that have not been groomed sufficiently will often have these insects in these areas. A couple of insects might be tolerated because they often hide in the spathe leaves. However, the presence of insects should be at an absolute minimum for any specimen meriting a first-place ribbon.

When more than one flower occurs on a stem, the exhibitor may aid the display of the flowers by gently positioning the flowers or by gently positioning spathe leaves so that each flower is in a good position and to prevent crowding. Stalks with a corsage sort of bloom display can be made especially attractive by this sort of gentle rearrangement.

## EXHIBITION JUDGING Spuria Iris Seedlings

In judging seedling classes, judges should remember that they are not seeking a superior horticultural specimen as defined in horticultural judging. Rather, they are judging a new cultivar which not only conforms to the guidelines for the class, but exhibits desirable qualities comprising improvement and/or innovation. Condition is not a factor in judging seedlings. In fact, it is preferable that the stalks are not groomed, so

that the judge can more easily evaluate such features as branching and bud count. Spent flowers can be removed if done so that the ovary remains visible.

The Exhibition Certificate (EC) is awarded to the Best Seedling if one is chosen. The certificate is not a recommendation for introduction since on the show bench it is not possible to evaluate plant qualities. The Best Seedling Award should not be given if no entry is worthy. Exhibition Certificates are also awarded to seedlings that receive votes from at least five judges on special seedling ballots in a calendar year at AIS sanctioned shows. Judges visiting a show are urged to review the seedling entries and use these ballots to reward excellence where they find it.

To properly evaluate spuria seedlings the judge must have a good knowledge of the present state of the art of the spuria flower. A flower may be beautiful but too similar to existing cultivars to merit any award. Forms have advanced recently so that a more compact form is more the norm for new introductions than the widely separated butterfly form typical of the earlier spuria introductions.

Flowers with novel colors, improvements in color or pattern, more extensive ruffling or lace, or with an exceptional branching pattern should be considered favorably and considered for an exhibition certificate.

### SCALE OF POINTS Exhibition Judging of Spuria Iris Seedlings

1. Flower			75
	a. Color & Pattern	25	
	b. Form	25	
	c. Beauty & Distinction	25	
2. Stalk & Branching			25
TOTAL			100

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## Chapter 22

### NOVELTY & SPACE AGE IRIS

Approved by the AIS Board of Directors, March 30, 2021

Revision approved by AIS Board of Directors, January 28, 2026

Novelty iris are becoming more popular as the quality of the plant and flower improves. Iris with multiple petals, broken color, variable color patterning or flat shaped flowers are examples of novelty iris. Variegated foliage is also included in the novelty iris category. Warmer temperatures often enhance novelty features such as in the flat-shaped flowers.

Space age iris came into existence through the work of a single individual, the late Lloyd Austin of Placerville, California. He noted that some plicata seedlings in the garden of the late Sydney B. Mitchell had little growths at the end of their beards. Mr. Austin interbred these seedlings until he obtained plants with horns at the ends of the beards. Further breeding produced spoons, flounces, pompoms, feathers, and other double appendages in this location.

Some iris possess both space age and novelty characteristics.

#### TYPES OF NOVELTY IRIS

**Horn** – The term “horn” is used to describe a short, stubby protrusion or extension of the beard.

**Spoon** – The term “spoon” refers to an elongated beard that widens near the end creating a spoon-shaped petaloid that flares upward. “Reverse spoons” are inverted compared to a typical spoon.

**Flounce** – A “flounce” refers to a still larger expansion of the beard into a wide, folded, often canoe or fan-shaped projection. Some flounces are so large they give the iris an appearance of being double. A “full moon” flounce lies flat against the fall and covers most of the fall.

**Pompom** – A “pompom” refers to a consistent multilayered carnation-like collection of petaloids that protrudes from the beard.

**Feather** – A “feather” refers to a long horn or horn-flounce (double appendage) that ends in small narrow fringed petaloids.

Horns, spoons, flounces, pompoms, or feathers are beautiful additions but can be detrimental to a flower. Judges should be certain these appendages do not distort the flower’s shape and weigh it down. The overall effect should be a harmonious extension of the flower form.

These unique projections are not 100% consistent on the flower. For example, there might be two flounces and one spoon on a flower. Extra points should be awarded ~~considered~~ for consistency. Iris judges should grow or visit gardens with a variety of novelty iris to be familiar with cultivars that produce consistent appendages.

**Multiple Petal (multi-petal) Flowers** - These varieties of iris possess more than three standards and three falls. The judge should closely ascertain that the flowers, though unique, still exhibit the basic accepted outline of the iris flower. Flowers with multiple petals (standards and falls) must be consistent at least 85% of the time.

**Broken Color** – The expression of an unstable color gene or other genetic material is thought to produce flowers that exhibit a random application of two or more colors. While the broken color pattern (streaking, splashing, etc.) should be fairly consistent from flower to flower, the color markings themselves are randomly expressed on the flower. The broken color pattern should not be confused with the plicata pattern. However, some iris can possess plicata and broken color applications together on the same flower.

**Variable Color Patterning** – There are rare cultivars that produce flowers with different colors. For example, the diploid MTB ‘Joseph’s Coat Katkamier’ (A.B. Katkamier by Eric Tankseley-Clarke, R. 1989) can produce flowers with a color pattern that varies from a white and violet amoena to a yellow and red variegata. This is different from broken color where the cultivar produces flowers of a consistent color or colors, but those colors are randomly expressed in the form of streaks, dots and splashes.

In exhibition judging, a stalk of ‘Joseph’s Coat Katkamier’ should exhibit two colors of one color pattern or the two colors of the other color pattern. The two distinctive

color patterns appear unique to this cultivar, however, other iris with this pattern are likely to be hybridized.

**Flat-Shaped Flowers** – Flat-shaped iris, also known as flatties, are novelty iris with six falls arranged in a horizontal to downward arching pattern with six visible beards. Although there usually are no standards, flat-shaped iris flowers will occasionally have one standard. The novelty of this iris is especially attractive when the petals are very wide. Flat-shaped novelties may have one or two partially normal flowers on the same stalk with the flat flowers.

**Magnolia-shaped flower** – An iris flower that only partially opened such that it has the shape of a magnolia or tulip blossom. Also known as a tulip-shaped flower. The magnolia-shaped flower is a very rare novelty iris. For example, ‘Blue Tulip’ (Frederick Knocke 1964, TB)

Total consistency of flower form is a plus. A good novelty iris should consistently display its novelty characteristics. If the flat-shaped flower is comprised of both standards and falls, the standards must consistently grow flat at least 85% of the time. Weak, floppy standards that collapse do not make a flat flower. The style arms of the flat-shaped flowers will most often appear in the normal quantity, but can appear in multiple or irregular counts.

**Variegated Foliage** – foliage with colors other than the standard green such as purple, black, white, cream, etc. These unusual colors could be streaked, striped, edged or seasonal.

## GARDEN JUDGING

### Introduced Cultivars & Seedlings of Novelty & Space Age Iris

The Rule of Thumb is: The better the flower, the better the novelty. While a novelty iris flower may not look exactly like a traditional form, it still should be a beautiful flower.

The appropriate chapter in the *Handbook for Judges* should be used for judging novelty iris in the garden. For example, follow the guidelines in “Chapter 9: Tall Bearded Iris” when the novelty iris being judged is a tall bearded iris. The judge will have to exercise an independent judgment on specific points, particularly form and distinctiveness. Improved and innovative flowers, bud count, stalks, and plants are to be stressed as with all garden judging.

## EXHIBITION JUDGING

### Horticultural Entries & Seedlings of Novelty & Space Age Iris

The appropriate chapter in the *Handbook for Judges* should be used for judging novelty iris in exhibitions.

Novelty and space-age iris may be a class in the show schedule. Depending on the number of entries and exhibitors, novelty and space-age iris may even be in separate classes. Specimens that exhibit both novelty and space-age features, may be exhibited in either novelty or space-age sections of the AIS show or in any other appropriate section (e.g., historic, intermediate). The exhibitor will choose the section for their specimen.

As with all other iris in an exhibition, varieties should be evaluated carefully. Each entry should be compared to what is typically the best performance for the variety being judged. The unique nature of the novelty and/or space-age iris must not override the guidelines on form and proportion for the class being evaluated. The appropriate chapter in the *Handbook for Judges* should be consulted. However, the expression of the novelty or space-age characteristic on the specimen is very important. If most other attributes are equal, the best example of a consistent novelty should be favored while specimens lacking the novelty and/or space-age should not receive awards.

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## Chapter 23

### REBLOOMING IRIS

Approved by the AIS Board of Directors, June 8, 2021

The first reblooming bearded iris was offered for sale in the 1880s by a plant nursery in England. Twenty years would pass before an English iris breeder would release two fall-reblooming *Iris cengialtii* hybrids.

Rebloom hybridizing commenced in the 1920s in the eastern and midwestern US. To this day, only a handful of dedicated hybridizers have worked on this unique genetic trait. The contributions of diploid iris species to rebloom still are NOT well understood. To advance breeding results, hybridizers make educated guesses, in most cases, based on garden results. A tiny genetic pool of reblooming iris has resulted in slow progress for the development of colors, color breaks, flower form, and reliability for both warm and cool season reblooming varieties.

**Definition:** A reblooming iris (RE) is one that blooms more than once in a growing season. There are basically five distinguishable behavior patterns in modern reblooming iris. Some iris might have multiple patterns of reblooming.

1. **Rebloomers (cyclic rebloomers)** - cultivars which complete two distinct cycles of bloom. After the spring flowering, there is a second nearly predictable period of bloom.
2. **Multiple blooming iris** - cultivars that send up bloom-stalks repeatedly at any time throughout the growing season, spring to summer and fall.
3. **Repeaters** - cultivars which produce additional bloom stalks with some regularity immediately following or shortly thereafter the initial spring bloom season. It is not uncommon for these varieties to extend the spring bloom season from four to eight weeks.
4. **Sporadic rebloomers** - varieties which unpredictably produce bloom stalks at varying times during the growing season. Many occasional rebloomers perform well on the West Coast and the southern areas of the United States. While they are highly

regarded in areas where they rebloom, they might not show reblooming tendencies in colder climates.

**5. Secondary stalk rebloomers** - cultivars that send up a second stalk from the same rhizome during the same growing season. Secondary stalk rebloomers are rare.

A reblooming iris in any of these five categories should produce enough additional bloom stalks to double the total number of days of bloom produced annually. Genetic background, cultural practices and climate can affect reblooming tendencies.

Horticulturally speaking, reblooming varieties should not be compared to spring-only blooming varieties. Heavy fall-flowering means there will be LESS increase for spring blooming buds. Reblooming iris have a shorter recovery period (i.e., dormancy) which can substantially reduce the spring bloom stalk to fan ratios and overall flower quantity and size when compared to neighboring spring-only blooming clumps.

Summer weather conditions can play a large role in rebloom frequency, particularly in the fall. Heat, humidity, drought, and excessive moisture can also affect bloom stalk height, branching, bud count, flower quality and delayed bloom during this period. Judges need to look for consistent performance over a consecutive three-year period to eliminate any doubts about a reblooming variety's worthiness for American Iris Society (AIS) garden awards. More awards for rebloomers are incentive for more future breeding activity.

To promote rebloom, it is important to fertilize after the spring bloom and keep the plants well watered. In some areas, it might be necessary to provide some protection from intense heat.

The Reblooming Iris Society has an excellent *Checklist* of reblooming cultivars sorted by their USDA zones.

## GARDEN JUDGING

### Reblooming Iris

Bearded iris are not the only iris that can rebloom. Examples of rebloom are found in the classes of Siberian, Japanese, Louisiana, arilbred, and Pacific Coast iris. The appropriate chapter in the *AIS Handbook for Judges and Show Officials* should serve as a general judging guide for eligible garden candidates. Instead of expending energy on fan increase and size and number of blossoms, reblooming iris devote energy to multiple cycles of bloom. This characteristic makes reblooming iris distinctive.

## EXHIBITION JUDGING

### Reblooming Iris

As with all other iris, a cultivar should be evaluated carefully, comparing each entry to its typical performance for the variety being judged. Judge it against its ideal self. Refer to appropriate chapters in the current Handbook for more specific, detailed guidelines. For example, follow the guidelines in “Chapter 10: Border Bearded Iris” when judging a reblooming border bearded iris.

To be fair, judge the quality of a reblooming iris as you would a non-reblooming iris. Reblooming iris should be of the same quality as once-blooming iris.

Exhibition judging of iris is distinctly different from judging in the garden. On the show bench a judge is not trying to determine the qualities and attributes of a particular variety. Rather, the exhibition judge must pass judgement in two areas:

1. Cultural perfection - how well the specimen has been grown by comparing it to the maximum typical performance of the variety being judged at this time of year.
2. Condition and grooming - how well the specimen was prepared for entry into the exhibition.

Exhibition judging evaluates the specimen as it is shown at the moment the judge sees it.

The skills of the exhibitor are evaluated here. The specimen should reflect visible improvement in the flower and stem resulting from the exhibitor's grooming. This includes neat removal of diseased or damaged foliage; cleanliness of the stem and flower; absence of insect infestations; firm upright positioning of the specimen; facing of the specimen; and a neat removal of spent blossoms, including the ovaries, with no damage to the spathes. The result should be a specimen being presented in its best possible appearance.

A judge may encounter trickery such as pinning or taping of flower parts, flower replacement from another stem, splicing of stems, unattached leaves or leaf spathes, cracking of stems to make them appear straighter, or hidden supports and wedges. If any such alterations are found, the entry is to be disqualified from competition.

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## Chapter 24

### HISTORIC IRIS

Approved by the AIS Board of Directors, March 30, 2021

**Definition:** HIPS (Historic Iris Preservation Society) defines “historic” iris as those introduced 30 or more years ago. If no introduction date is available, the date of registration should be used.

Historic iris are eligible for show awards but not for AIS garden awards. That time is in the past, therefore they are only judged in exhibitions, not in the garden. Exception: Board of Directors Award.

### EXHIBITION JUDGING

#### Historic Iris

The show schedule should clearly state the years of eligibility for the Historic Section. For example, a show schedule written in 2021 would state that iris introduced in or before 1991 are eligible for the Historic Section. Exhibitors should have the choice of entering the historic iris in the historic or other appropriate section (e.g., TB, MTB, Louisiana, novelty, etc.)

Entry tags for iris exhibited in the historic section must clearly state the cultivar’s year of introduction. If no introduction date can be found, the year of registration may be used. Any type of iris can be historic (e.g., intermediate bearded, Louisiana, spuria, arilbred, etc.) If appropriate, the classification committee or show chair can sub-divide the entries of historic iris into smaller groups.

The point scales used in judging modern cultivars can be applied to historic iris. However, it must be kept in mind that bearded classes have been redefined in recent years. For example, in 1976, the maximum miniature dwarf bearded (MDB) height was changed from 10 inches to 8 inches and many diploid tall bearded iris might not grow to the present minimum TB height specification of 27.5 inches. Also, keep in mind that the intermediate bearded (IB) designation appearing in the 1939 and 1949 *Check Lists* was based solely on height without regard to flowering time, ancestry, or overall proportion.

Iris in those check lists that are designated IB encompass true intermediates as well as diploid and tetraploid short tall bearded, some of which now would be classed as border bearded. In all cases, the specimen must conform not to present-day class guidelines, but to those applicable at the time of its original registration or any subsequent reclassification. Especially important, emphasis should be on the excellence of the horticultural specimen rather than any proximity of the cultivar itself to currently preferred style in flower form, stalk or overall size. As with all iris in exhibition, the specimen must be judged against cultural perfection for that particular variety.

If the historic iris is judged to be better than the best iris in the other sections of the show, the historic iris can and should be deemed best specimen of show. However, should two specimens be judged equal, the newer variety by year of introduction should be placed higher because it represents to the public the closest current standard of perfection.

Correct identification sometimes can be a problem with older iris. It is recommended that judges have access to the older *Check Lists*, the on-line Iris Register or the AIS Iris Encyclopedia and, if possible, the HIPS online photo gallery of verified cultivars. To become better educated about historic iris, judges should study the changes in iris form and attributes over the history of hybridizing, as well as the changes in classification. Familiarity with the historic cultivars grown in the geographic area of the show is also helpful.

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## Chapter 25

### BULBOUS IRIS

Approved by the AIS Board of Directors, April 27, 2021

Revision approved by the AIS Board of Directors, January 24, 2024

Bulbous irises grow from autumn-planted bulbs, similar to tulips, daffodils, and hyacinths, not from rhizomes. Bulbous irises are divided into four groups: Reticulata, Scorpiris (the Juno iris), *Iris tuberosa* (formerly *Hermodactylus tuberosa*), and Xiphium.

**Reticulata group:** Among the earliest of spring blooming plants, these will rarely be encountered at show time.

**Scorpiris (Juno iris):** Because their bloom season overlaps with median, arilbred, and early tall bearded irises, the Scorpiris irises might be seen on the show bench. Unfortunately, they are not widely grown.

***Iris tuberosa*:** This is a single species which was formerly called *Hermodactylus tuberosa*. It was classified as a *Hermodactylus* because its ovary (where seeds form) has just one chamber rather than three, like all other irises. Recently it was reclassified as a true iris and its name changed to *Iris tuberosa*. In bulb catalogs it may still be found as *Hermodactylus*. The most distinguishing characteristic is that its flower has green standards and velvety black falls. Because of this, it has been called the Widow Iris or Snakeshead Iris.

**Xiphium group:** The Dutch and Spanish bulbous irises have considerable overlap with the bloom season of the early tall bearded iris. Thus, they are the bulbous types most likely to be encountered on the show bench. Also, in the Xiphium group are the English bulbous irises, which bloom extremely late, even overlapping the Japanese iris bloom season. Due to their late bloom season and limited use, the English bulbous irises would be encountered only at late season shows geared for beardless bloom.

The registration of bulbous iris is handled by the Royal General Bulb Growers' Association in the Netherlands and is abbreviated KAVB in Dutch. The AIS Board of Directors has ruled that, because bulbous irises are not AIS registered varieties, there is

no garden judging of bulbous irises and they are not eligible for top show awards such as Best Specimen of Show. However, bulbous irises are eligible for lesser show awards. They brighten the show bench and expand the variety of cultivars on display. Their entry in shows should be encouraged.

## SHOW SCHEDULE

In past decades, the Dutch and Spanish hybrids were segregated by size and blooming period. The Dutch iris are somewhat larger in size and typically bloom earlier while the Spanish iris are smaller and bloom about two weeks later. Today, with many hybrids of all sizes, it would be another challenge for the show committee to try to create sections for these irises based on size and blooming period.

Depending on what is grown locally, a single section in the show schedule for bulbous irises might suffice. However, if there are many entries, it might be preferable to have the Spanish or Dutch iris further divided by color groups with the addition to the show schedule of a group for Other Bulbous Types. If no other section is available, these irises could be included in the species, species-crosses or miscellaneous section.

Single stems of the Spanish or Dutch iris make attractive show entries. If competition warrants, additional classes for a collection of three of a kind should be considered. Because of the diminutive size of the Reticulatas and many of the Scorpiris iris, three of a kind would be preferable. However, to display variety on the show bench, one of a kind is better than nothing.

## EXHIBITION JUDGING

### Bulbous Irises

Prior to the creation of the AIS Iris Encyclopedia (the wiki), judges may have found it difficult to verify the names of iris registered by the KAVB. (Koninklijke Algemeene Vereniging Voor Bloembollencultuur or KAVB is the international registry for the genera of *Tulipa*, *Hippeastrum*, *Hyacinthus*, bulbous irises, *Crocus* and *Muscari*.). Now ALL extant bulbous iris are included in the wiki and can be found by searching their cultivar name through species or if a hybrid, through SPEC-X. Historic bulbous iris were registered with AIS up until 1950 and should be treated like any AIS registered iris.

**Bulbous irises are NOT eligible for Best Specimen of Show.**

Exhibition judging of irises is distinctly different from judging in the garden. On the show bench a judge is not trying to determine the qualities and attributes of a particular variety. Rather, the exhibition judge must pass judgment in two areas:

1. Cultural perfection - how well the specimen has been grown by comparing it to the maximum typical performance of the variety being judged.
2. Condition and grooming - how well the specimen was prepared for entry into the exhibition.

Exhibition judging evaluates the specimen as it is shown at the moment the judge sees it.

Since Dutch or Spanish irises will represent the majority of bulbous entries, the following points apply specifically to them in exhibition judging.

### SCALE OF POINTS Dutch & Spanish Bulbous Iris

1. Cultural Perfection					75
	a. Stalk			15	
	b. Foliage			10	
	c. Flower			50	
		i. Color	15		
		ii. Proportion	15		
		iii. Size	10		
		iv. Substance & Texture	10		
2. Condition & Grooming					25
TOTAL					100

#### 1. Cultural Perfection - 75 points

**a. Stalk** (15 points). Stalks should be straight. In almost all cultivars, there will be a total of two buds at the top of the stem. If branching and further bud placement are evident, as in some of the Spanish irises, there should be no confusion of flowers due to

crowding. Stems should be cut to a sufficient length for giving a pleasing display on the bench.

**b. Foliage** (10 points). The foliage should be typical for the variety including length, substance and color. The leaves should be clean and free from insect or snail damage or disfigurement due to virus infection. It is typical for the foliage to end in a dry, brown tip. However, if the browning is noticeable and distracting, it is best to groom the foliage by clipping it neatly and at a natural angle. Excessively browned tips or obtrusively clipped foliage should be penalized.

**c. Flower** (50 points). Except in rare instances of appropriate branching, there should be but one flower open on a stalk. The flower should be held in a vertical position, not veering off at an angle. Colors may be clear and bright or may be muted and blended, but there should be no flecking. Specimens with extreme flecking, a manifestation of virus infection, should be disqualified.

Flower form and size should be typical of the variety, but particular emphasis should be placed on the regularity of the blossom. The falls should be equidistant from each other and they should be of the same size and shape. The same rule holds true for the style arms and particularly for the standards. It is quite common for one or more of the standards to catch on other floral parts while the bud is opening, keeping the standard from assuming its position mid-point between the falls. An experienced exhibitor will correct this fault by pulling free the standards in opening flowers prior to the day of picking.

The presence of a well developed second bud should be assessed. This second bud expands as the first flower ages, indicating that the open bloom is not a fresh one. Also, crowding by the second bud will tend to destroy the regular placement of the falls on the open flower.

If the second flower is the one in bloom, the first flower should have been removed in such a way as to be unnoticeable. Also, unless the first flower was removed early enough, the second flower would tend to develop at an angle due to crowding.

**Multiple Stalks.** If the show schedule calls for more than one stalk per entry, particular attention should be paid to uniformity of stem height, flower form and size, etc. The individual stalks should be as identical to each other as possible.

**Other Points.** Should the other bulbous types be encountered, keep in mind that *Reticulatas* have no stems. What appears to be a stem is a long perianth tube. English

irises are much more likely to show flecking and they have much thinner substance than the Spanish or Dutch irises. Scorpiris (Juno) iris vary from the diminutive stemless flower of *Iris persica* to the 24-inch (61 cm) stems of *Iris magnifica* which has flowers borne singly in the upper leaf axils. The standards of the Scorpiris (Juno) iris are very small and insignificant while the style arms may be quite large and showy.

Credit should be given to the exhibitor who can grow and exhibit these unique outer fragments of the iris rainbow, the lesser-known bulbous irises.

## 2. Condition & Grooming - 25 points

The skills of the exhibitor are evaluated here. The specimen should reflect visible improvement in the flower and stem resulting from the exhibitor's grooming. This includes neat removal of diseased or damaged foliage; cleanliness of the stem and flower; absence of insect infestations; firm upright positioning of the specimen; facing of the specimen; and a neat removal of spent blossoms, including the ovaries, with no damage to the spathes. The result should be a specimen being presented in its best possible appearance.

A judge may encounter trickery such as pinning or taping of flower parts, flower replacement from another stem, splicing of stems, unattached leaves or leaf spathes, cracking of stems to make them appear straighter, or hidden supports and wedges. If any such alterations are found, the entry is to be disqualified from competition.

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## Chapter 26

### COLLECTION CLASSES

Approved by the AIS Board of Directors, April 13, 2021

Revision approved by the AIS Board of Directors, July 27, 2022

The purpose of a collection is to demonstrate the consistency of the grower's horticultural expertise. Collections are entered in the Horticultural Division of a show.

#### **Collections are not eligible for Best Specimen of Show.**

Each exhibitor is permitted to enter only one stalk of any particular cultivar, including registered but unIntroduced seedlings, in any of the single stalk sections (e.g., Tall Bearded, Arilbred, Spuria) of the Open Horticultural Division. The same cultivar may also be entered in any of the Collection, English Boxes, Container-Grown Iris, or Single Blossom Sections. (Keep in mind that entries in the sections of Collections, English Boxes, Container-Grown Iris, and Single Blossom are not eligible for Best Specimen of Show.) For example, an exhibitor may enter 'Dusky Challenger' in the Tall Bearded Section as a single stalk and in the Collections Section with 5 stalks (or whatever quantity is required by the show schedule).

**This also applies to seedlings: they may be entered in the Seedling Division and in any of the Collection, English Boxes, Container-Grown Iris or Single Blossom sections following the guidelines in the following chart:**

Eligibility of a seedling entered by one exhibitor:

	Eligible for Seedling Division only	Eligible for Seedling <b>OR</b> Open Horticultural Division	Eligible for Seedling <b>AND</b> Open Horticultural Divisions	Eligible for sections that are <b>NOT</b> competing for Best Specimen in Show
A seedling not registered and not introduced (i.e., seedling with number only)	yes	no	no	yes
A seedling registered but <b>NOT</b> introduced	no	yes	no	yes

The ideal collection will consist of three to five stalks of the same type but not necessarily the same cultivar (depending on the show schedule) of iris, all of which should be of first-place quality. Stalks should be identical in all physical respects, e.g., size, form, freshness, etc. All stalks should be cut to the same length. There should be an artistic quality in the presentation of the collection. Only one first-place ribbon may be awarded per collection.

Exhibition judging of irises is distinctly different from judging in the garden. On the show bench a judge is not trying to determine the qualities and attributes of a particular variety. Rather, the exhibition judge must pass judgement in two areas:

1. Cultural perfection - how well the specimen has been grown by comparing it to the maximum typical performance of the variety being judged.
2. Condition and grooming - how well the specimen was prepared for entry into the exhibition.

Exhibition judging evaluates the specimen as it is shown at the moment the judge sees it.

**SCALE OF POINTS**  
**Exhibition Judging of Collection Classes**

1. Overall Effect			20
	a. Combination of Specimens	10	
	b. Harmonious Display	10	
2. Horticultural Perfection			50
	a. Individual Flowers	25	
	b. Stalks, Buds & Bloom Quality	25	
3. Condition			30
	a. Grooming	10	
	b. Culture	20	
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>100</b>

In judging collection classes, one must consider uniformity of stalks, size, petal texture, color patterns and harmonious combination of colors, as well as horticultural perfection of each specimen in the collection.

A collection should be composed of stalks of the same type of iris, for example, all tall bearded or all Louisiana irises. Collections of mixed types should be reserved for educational or display purposes only. A good show schedule will provide for classes with either three or five stalks per collection. It will specify the color composition of the collection, for example, all selfs, all plicatas, all whites, all different, etc. Since multiple stalks may result in crowding or damage to individual blooms, the schedule should specify whether specimens are to be displayed in one container or in individual containers. The schedule should also state who will furnish the container(s).

Each different variety must be properly labeled to be eligible for an AIS award. If all stalks are same variety, one label will suffice. Labels should be unobtrusive and preferably external to the exhibit.

### 1. Overall Effect - 20 points

Stalks should be cut to equal lengths. Although this is not a design entry, the combination of colors and color patterns should be harmonious and should create a balanced and symmetrical outline of the display when exhibited in one container. Containers should be appropriate to the size of the iris being shown and should be uniform in size, shape, and color and clean. Containers should be unobtrusive so as not to detract from the appearance of the flower stalks in the exhibit.

Note: Multiple containers may be placed on a common base or otherwise linked together so long as the staging does not intrude on the purpose of the display, which is to show the flower stalks.

### 2. Horticultural Perfection - 50 points

As in specimen classes, each stalk should be judged against the perfection for that particular variety. When the collection entry is composed of assorted varieties, attention should be accorded to the overall effect and condition. All the flowers on each stalk must be fresh and of top quality. In all cases, correct proportion is a primary consideration. The judge must notice that tall bearded stalks, when exhibited in individual containers, are not cut too short.

### 3. Condition - 30 points

The skills of the exhibitor are evaluated here. The specimen should reflect visible improvement in the flower and stem resulting from the exhibitor's grooming. This includes neat removal of diseased or damaged foliage; cleanliness of the stem and flower; absence of insect infestations; firm upright positioning of the specimen; facing of the specimen; and a neat removal of spent blossoms, including the ovaries, with no damage to the spathes. The result should be a specimen being presented in its best possible appearance.

A judge may encounter trickery such as pinning or taping of flower parts, flower replacement from another stem, splicing of stems, unattached leaves or leaf spathes, cracking of stems to make them appear straighter, or hidden supports and wedges. If any such alterations are found, the entry is to be disqualified from competition.

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## Chapter 27

### ENGLISH BOXES

Approved by the AIS Board of Directors, April 13, 2021

Revisions approved by AIS Board of Directors, July 27, 2022

English Boxes are designed as a means of displaying collections of single flowers without stem, foliage, or the presence of buds. The entire emphasis is on the beauty of each individual blossom. The English Box is entered in the Horticultural Division of an iris show and is judged by AIS judges according to horticultural exhibition judging guidelines. Because of the complexity and time involved in creating and presenting this form of collection, it is suggested that, in addition to the first-place ribbon, a rosette or other special award be given to the best English Box.

English Box entries are not eligible for Best Specimen of Show Award.

Each exhibitor is permitted to enter only one stalk of any particular cultivar, including registered but unintroducted seedlings, in any of the single stalk sections (e.g., Tall Bearded, Arilbred, Spuria) of the Open Horticultural Division. The same cultivar may also be entered in any of the Collection, English Boxes, Container-Grown Iris, or Single Blossom Sections. (Keep in mind that entries in the sections of Collections, English Boxes, Container-Grown Iris, and Single Blossom are not eligible for Best Specimen of Show.) For example, an exhibitor may enter 'Dusky Challenger' in the Tall Bearded Section as a single stalk and in the English Boxes Section, according to instructions in the show schedule.

**This also applies to seedlings: they may be entered in the Seedling Division and in any of the Collection, English Boxes, Container-Grown Iris or Single Blossom sections following the guidelines in the following chart:**

Eligibility of a seedling entered by one exhibitor:

	Eligible for Seedling Division only	Eligible for Seedling <b>OR</b> Open Horticultural Division	Eligible for Seedling <b>AND</b> Open Horticultural Divisions	Eligible for sections that are NOT competing for Best Specimen in Show
A seedling not registered and not introduced (i.e., seedling with number only)	yes	no	no	yes
A seedling registered but NOT introduced	no	yes	no	yes

An English Box should consist of a minimum of five or not more than six, individual flowers of the same classification of irises, such as all spuria iris, all tall bearded iris, or all arilbred iris. Flowers may be different cultivars or all the same, the latter being more difficult to achieve. The show schedule shall be specific in determining the number and types of irises to be used. An entry not meeting the show schedule requirements should not be judged.

Each blossom should be correctly labeled. It is suggested that labelling be posted outside the box so as not to detract from the overall effect of the display. A 3 by 5 inches index card with the iris names in the correct position maybe be used.

The number of entries in this class may be limited at the discretion of the show committee.

The show schedule will determine the exact method of display, such as construction and size of the box. See the suggestion for English Box construction at the end of this chapter.

## SCALE OF POINTS

### English Boxes

1. Overall Beauty	15
2. Color & Pattern Combination	20
3. Cultural Perfection	45
4. Condition & Grooming	20
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100</b>

#### 1. Overall Beauty - 15 points

The English box as a unit is viewed from above. The blossoms selected must be uniform in size and freshness, form, substance, and texture. Harmony of flower characteristics should be achieved. The blossoms should appear to float without visible means of support. Under no circumstances should the falls touch the surface of the box.

**NOTE:** An exception to the uniformity rule would occur if the show schedule called for a theme, such as “progress in hybridizing.”

#### 2. Color & Pattern Combination - 20 points

There should be harmony in flower color or colors. Because of the viewing angle, colors in the heart of the flower (styles, beards, hafts) are more easily identified and may influence color harmony. The specifics of color and patterns to be displayed may be determined by the show schedule. Color need not have uniform intensity in all the flowers. Dark flowers combined with flowers with bright colors can be bold and pleasing. Bicolor flowers combined with self-color flowers can create a dramatic effect. Glaring color clash and poor color arrangement should be faulted.

#### 3. Cultural Perfection - 45 points

In viewing single blossoms of the English Box, the judge will find each element of the flower more emphasized. The horticultural quality of each flower should be typical of its variety in form, color, and size. Substance should be judged as in any specimen class. Division of the 45 points allowed for cultural perfection should be according to the

guidelines of the iris classification being judged, and the judge should refer to the appropriate chapter in the current edition of the *Handbook for Judges & Show Officials* as needed.

#### 4. Condition & Grooming - 20 points

The flowers should be fresh, mature (not past peak) and beautifully clean. Bruised or torn petals should be heavily faulted, and there should be no evidence of disease or insect infestation. Errors in presentation such as leaning blooms or falls touching the surface of the box should be penalized.

A judge may encounter trickery such as pinning or taping of flower parts or hidden supports and wedges. If any such alterations are found, the entry is to be disqualified from competition.

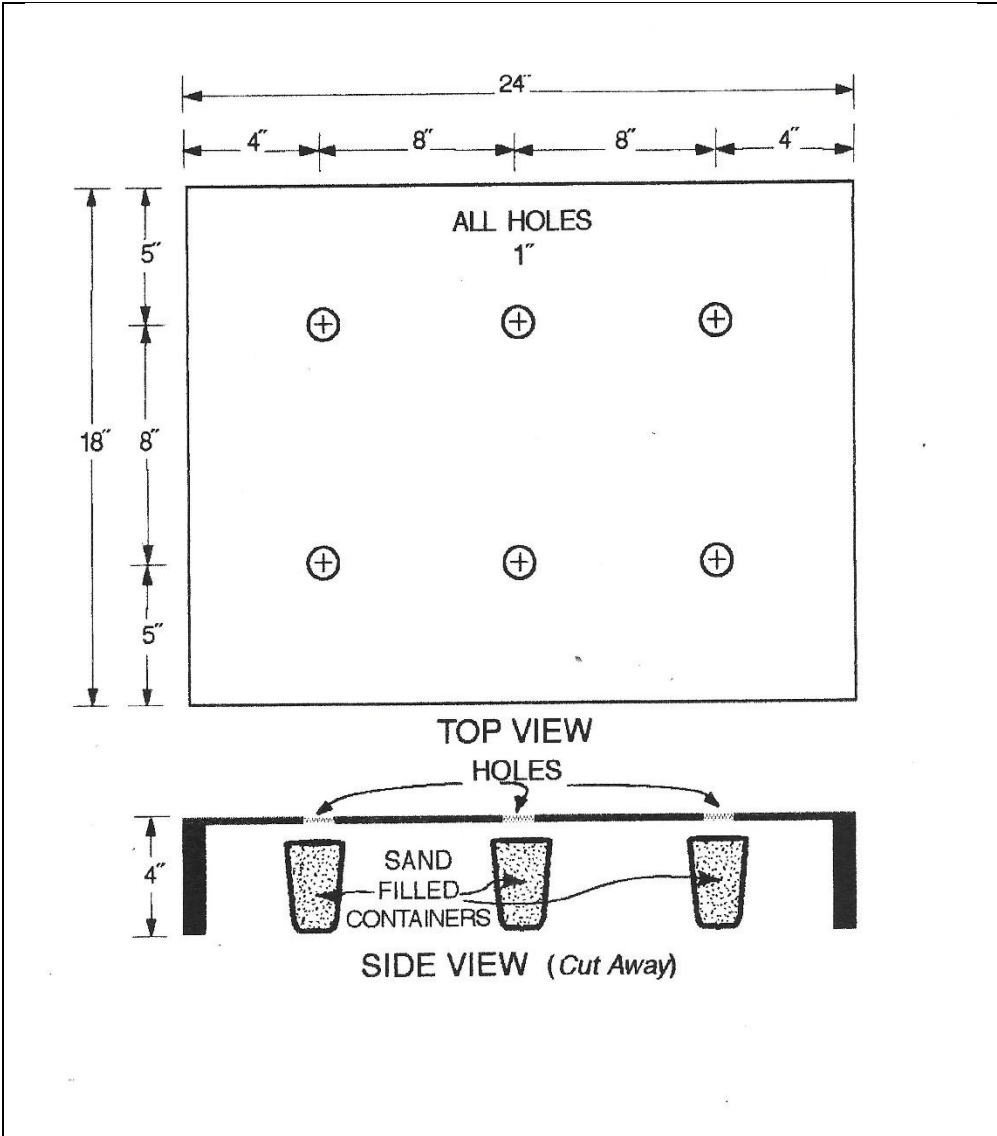
### CONSTRUCTION OF AN ENGLISH BOX

The purpose of the box is to provide an unobtrusive holder for the flowers. The background covering should be on non-reflective material and neutral in color, something that will never clash with the flower color(s). The show schedule should specify whether the box is to be furnished by the show committee or by the exhibitor. In the interest of uniformity, it is recommended that each club construct and make available the boxes for this exhibit.

Use of Styrofoam blocks and visible flower picks is permitted but should be discouraged, as this presentation detracts from the pleasing overall effect and prevents optimum display of each flower.

If displaying miniature tall bearded, standard dwarf bearded or Siberian irises, boxes may be proportionately decreased in size. A good supply of all sizes should be available at the show.

Suggested construction details are shown on next page.



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## Chapter 28

### CONTAINER-GROWN IRIS

Approved by the AIS Board of Directors, April 27, 2021

Revisions approved by the AIS Board of Directors, July 27, 2022

There is nothing more impressive than a plant growing and blooming in a container. Container gardens are used in homes with limited yard space and on the balconies of apartments in high-rise buildings. The tradition of growing plants in containers, such as some Japanese irises, goes back centuries. Particular strains of Japanese irises were developed for use as ornamental plants, to be brought into the house and admired while in bloom.

There are many reasons to grow irises in containers. A clump of iris in bloom in a pot can be a special feature brought out for viewing and when the flowers are spent, the pot can be moved to a growing area, out of sight, for the rest of the year. People living in snowy climates might choose to grow their irises in pots. The pots can be moved into a greenhouse during the winter and out into the open when the weather inspires growth. Small irises can be more visible when grown in a pot and displayed on a table or as part of a miniature landscape. Irises with special needs can be better nurtured when grown in a container. For example, moisture-loving irises might grow better in a trough garden. An iris grown in a raised pot can be safe from potential predators such as rabbits and gophers. A well grown clump of iris growing and blooming in a pot can make a better display than a bloom stalk stuck in a bottle.

Container-grown iris are not eligible for the Best Specimen of Show Award.

Each exhibitor is permitted to enter only one stalk of any particular cultivar, including registered but un-introduced seedlings, in any of the single stalk sections (e.g., Tall Bearded, Arilbred, Spuria) of the Open Horticultural Division. The same cultivar may also be entered in any of the Collection, English Boxes, Container-Grown Iris, or Single Blossom Sections. (Keep in mind that entries in the sections of Collections, English Boxes, Container-Grown Iris, and Single Blossom are not eligible for Best Specimen of Show.) For example, an exhibitor may enter 'Dusky Challenger' in the Tall Bearded Section as a single stalk and in the Container-grown Section, according to instructions in the show schedule. **This also applies to seedlings: they may be entered in the Seedling Division and in any of the Collection, English Boxes, Container-Grown Iris or Single Blossom sections following the guidelines in the following chart:**

Eligibility of a seedling entered by one exhibitor:

	Eligible for Seedling Division only	Eligible for Seedling <b>OR</b> Open Horticultural Division	Eligible for Seedling <b>AND</b> Open Horticultural Divisions	Eligible for sections that are <b>NOT</b> competing for Best Specimen in Show
A seedling not registered and not introduced (i.e., seedling with number only)	yes	no	no	yes
A seedling registered but <b>NOT</b> introduced	no	yes	no	yes

## EXHIBITION JUDGING

### Container-Grown Iris

Exhibition judging of irises is distinctly different from judging in the garden. On the show bench a judge is not trying to determine the qualities and attributes of a particular variety. Rather, the exhibition judge must pass judgement in two areas:

1. Cultural perfection - how well the specimen has been grown by comparing it to the maximum typical performance of the variety being judged.
2. Condition and grooming - how well the specimen was prepared for entry into the exhibition.

Exhibition judging evaluates the specimen as it is shown at the moment the judge sees it.

In a public display such as an iris show, the container of iris should be in best form with the goal of encouraging the public to grow irises.

**SCALE of POINTS**  
**Exhibition Judging of Container-Grown Iris**

1. Cultural Perfection			70
	a. Vigor and Condition of Plant	30	
	b. Floriferousness of Plant	40	
2. Condition & Grooming			30
	a. Appropriateness of Container for Growing the Plant	10	
	b. Presentation of Container	5	
	c. Grooming of Plant	15	
TOTAL			100

1. Cultural Perfection - 70 points

Container-grown plants may in some cases grow larger than normal because of extra pampering and in some cases, the plants might be smaller than normal because they have been grown out of their normal habitat. The container should be adequate and proportional to the way the plant is growing. A big floppy plant in a small container is not attractive nor is a dwarf plant in an over-sized ceramic pot. Container-grown plants should not be judged on how they grow in the garden but how appropriate their growth is for the choice of container.

The bloom stalk should stand freely within the clump without artificial support. The horticultural quality of the flowers should be typical of the variety. However, there should be no penalty for a cultivar with flowers smaller than is typical for the variety or fewer flowers than is typical for the variety if that cultivar is an unusual entry in the area of the show. For example, a container-grown Siberian iris grown in Las Cruces, New Mexico, is likely to have fewer and smaller flowers than the same cultivar grown in Omaha, Nebraska. In this case, the Las Cruces container-grown iris with flowers should be rewarded not penalized.

2. Condition & Grooming - 30 points

The container should be an appropriate size for the iris, in proportion with the size of the clump. The container should be clean. Spent bloom stalks, dead leaves and other debris should be removed from the clump. There is no penalty for the occasional

blemish on leaves. However, severe insect damage or disease should be penalized. Containers such as troughs are actually more desirable if they have moss or lichens growing on them, since they demonstrate real slices of nature. The expense of the container should not enter into the evaluation. A plain clay pot should be considered equal to a fancy ceramic version. However, an over-decorated container should be penalized if it overshadows the charm and beauty of the iris. Plants grown in black plastic pots may be inserted into more decorative pots, but if so, they should be top-dressed with gravel or sphagnum so that they appear to be growing in the decorative pot.

The skills of the exhibitor are evaluated here. The specimen should reflect visible improvement in the clump, flower and stem resulting from the exhibitor's grooming. This includes neat removal of diseased or damaged foliage; cleanliness of the stem and flower; absence of insect infestations; firm upright positioning of the specimen; facing of the specimen; and a neat removal of spent blossoms, including the ovaries, with no damage to the spathes. The result should be a specimen being presented in its best possible appearance.

A judge may encounter trickery such as pinning or taping of flower parts, flower replacement from another stem, the addition of flower spikes, splicing of stems, unattached leaves or leaf spathes, cracking of stems to make them appear straighter, or hidden supports and wedges. If any such alterations are found, the entry is to be disqualified from competition.

Containers offer the opportunity to time the opening of the flower with a scheduled show. Late-blooming irises can be forced into bloom while early-blooming irises can be held back from blooming. A container in peak bloom should be rewarded for reaching its peak on show day.

## ABOUT CONTAINERS IN EXHIBITION

Large containers of plants can be quite heavy and if too heavy, should not be placed up on display tables. In general, large plants are best viewed as they would be displayed in the garden, in other words at ground level. Short pedestals may be used to raise plants closer to eye level if they are secure. Smaller containers can be displayed on tables. Information about the display of container-grown iris in an exhibition should be available in the show schedule.

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## Chapter 29

### SINGLE BLOSSOM ENTRY

Approved by the AIS Board of Directors, June 8, 2021  
Revisions approved by the AIS Board of Directors, July 27, 2022  
Revisions approved by the AIS Board of Directors, March 26, 2025

The single blossom entry is the place to display a single flower without stalk, foliage, or the presence of buds. The entire emphasis is on the beauty of the single blossom.

A hybridizer, when conserving flowers for breeding purposes, can use this section of the show to display one flower of a new cultivar. Someone with a display garden and a limited number of stalks might use this section to display one gorgeous flower. A stalk damaged in transit might still hold a single blossom that could be entered in this section. The exhibitor who has run out of time might have a few minutes to set up one last flower for the show bench.

Single blossom entries in the Open Horticultural Division may be awarded ribbons. However, these ribbons are NOT included in the tally for the sweepstakes awards (i.e., Bronze and Silver Medals).

The Youth Division of a show schedule is encouraged to include single blossom entry. These entries in the Youth Division also may be awarded ribbons, but these ribbons are NOT included in the tally for the youth sweepstakes awards (i.e., the Youth Bronze and Silver Medals).

Single blossom entries in the Youth and Open Horticultural Divisions are NOT eligible for Best Specimen of Show Award.

Each exhibitor is permitted to enter only one stalk of any particular cultivar, including registered but unintroducted seedlings, in any of the single stalk sections (e.g., Tall Bearded, Arilbred, Spuria) of the Open Horticultural Division. The same cultivar may also be entered in any of the Collection, English Boxes, Container-Grown Iris, or Single Blossom Sections. (Keep in mind that entries in the sections of Collections, English Boxes, Container-Grown Iris, and Single Blossom are not eligible for Best Specimen of Show.) For example, an exhibitor may enter 'Dusky Challenger' in the Tall Bearded Section as a single stalk and in the single blossom, according to instructions in the show schedule.

**This also applies to seedlings: they may be entered in the Seedling Division and in any of the Collection, English Boxes, Container-Grown Iris or Single Blossom sections following the guidelines in the following chart:**

Eligibility of a seedling entered by one exhibitor

	Eligible for Seedling Division only	Eligible for Seedling <b>OR</b> Open Horticultural Division	Eligible for Seedling <b>AND</b> Open Horticultural Divisions	Eligible for sections that are NOT competing for Best Specimen in Show
A seedling not registered and not introduced (i.e., seedling with number only)	yes	no	no	yes
A seedling registered but NOT introduced	no	yes	no	yes

The show schedule should state who will furnish the container(s) for the single blossom section. The container should be short enough that the falls do not rest on the lip of the container but deep enough to display the flower and its perianth.

### SCALE OF POINTS

#### Exhibition Judging of the Single Blossom Entry

1. Overall Beauty	40
2. Cultural Perfection	30
3. Condition & Grooming	30
TOTAL	100

### 1. Overall Beauty - 40 points

The beauty of a flower comes from the overall harmonious effect of color, size, form, and substance. It is the color which attracts us. The flower with a blend of colors can be bright and intense or subtle and mellow as long as the total effect is pleasing. Occasional splotches and patches of an atypical color will sometimes occur on the petals due to weather or disease and should be faulted.

Size should be appropriate for the variety. However, size can be variable depending on soil and culture conditions of the local region. Consult the appropriate chapter in the current *Handbook for Judges* for information about sizes.

Flower form will depend on the class and variety of the flower, but in all cases should be balanced and pleasing to the eye. Consult the appropriate chapter in the current *Handbook for Judges* for information about standards and falls.

Petals should have good substance. Substance will aid with color retention in the petals and with flower form during weather events.

All of these, color, size, form, and substance, should work harmoniously to support and promote the beauty of the flower.

### 2. Cultural Perfection - 30 points

Cultural perfection addresses how well the flower has been grown. Color, size, form, and substance of the specimen should be compared to the variety's typical flower performance. However, recently introduced cultivars usually have limited distribution which will make it difficult to compare the specimen to the variety's typical flower.

### 3. Condition & Grooming - 30 points

The skills of the exhibitor are evaluated here. The specimen should reflect visible improvement of the flower resulting from the exhibitor's grooming. This includes cleanliness, absence of insect infestations, and a firm upright positioning and facing of the specimen. The result should be a specimen being presented in its best possible appearance.

A judge may encounter trickery such as pinning or taping of flower parts, and flower parts replaced. If any such alterations are found, the entry is to be disqualified from competition.

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## Chapter 30

# THE ARTISTIC DESIGN DIVISION EXHIBITION JUDGING

Approved by the AIS Board of Directors, April 13, 2021

The artistic design division of an iris show adds distinction and another dimension of beauty. Artistic design exhibits attract many exhibitors and visitors whose interest is in this particular art form. The rules, conditions of competition and judging in this division are applicable to all shows seeking American Iris Society (AIS) awards. Refer to the show schedule which will contain the rules for a iris show, including specific design rules.

## I. ARTISTIC DESIGN DIVISION JUDGES

The artistic design division should be judged by those who are trained and experienced, and therefore, are qualified in this specialized field. Some societies are lucky enough to have an AIS judge who is also certified by the National Garden Clubs, Inc., or a state garden club association. It is highly recommended that at least one judge on the panel be an AIS judge because this exhibition is about iris.

## II. JUDGING ARTISTIC DESIGNS

The following scale of points may be used unless the local show committee wishes to set up a different scale of points. The committee might want to place emphasis on color, interpretation or scale, for example, miniature and small designs.

## SCALE OF POINTS Artistic Design

1. Conformance to Schedule			10
2. Design			35
	a. Balance	5	
	b. Proportion	5	
	c. Scale	5	
	d. Rhythm	5	
	e. Dominance	5	
	f. Contrast	5	
	g. Unity	5	
3. Color Use			20
4. Creative Expression			20
5. Distinctiveness			15
TOTAL			100

### 1. Conformance to Schedule - 10 points

The schedule is the law of the show and sets forth the requirements for each class. Judges should evaluate the design and determine if the interpretation of the exhibitor conforms to the title of the class. If the requirement is ignored, judges should take off an appropriate number of points for nonconformance, according to the requirements of the class. A designer should avoid interpreting the theme in such an overwhelming manner so as to detract from the overall design. The theme should be carried out in a creative, but subtle way through plant material forms, containers, etc. A card of explanation should be placed to one side of the design by the exhibitor to assist judges and interested viewers with an interpretation. An accessory that is correct in proportion, scale, and contrast, placed by the designer, can also assist in interpretation.

### 2. Design - 35 points

The principles and elements of design are the same in all art disciplines regardless of the medium used. Plant material is the medium used in iris artistic designs with the emphasis on the iris flower. The principles of design are a set of rules to follow for creating visually attractive floral compositions. The principles of design make up an important part of the point scale. The elements of design offer a guideline to follow so

that all designs are judged by the same standards. If there is a lack of understanding in either the principles or elements, an iris design will not appear appealing and energetic. The elements of design are explained following the point scale.

The principles of design are balance, proportion, scale, rhythm, dominance, contrast, and unity.

**a. Balance** (5 points). Balance is the visual and physical stability that results from placing equal weight on opposite sides of an imaginary vertical axis. The design, therefore, stands sturdy and upright in place, rather than looking as if it will tip over. Balance should be evident when viewed from top to bottom, side to side and back to front (in mass designs). Balance can be affected by choice of a dark color (heavy) versus a light color (light). Since a mass of color creates a visual balance, it can obtain or destroy the designer's desired effect.

**b. Proportion** (5 points). Proportion is the relationship of areas and amounts to each other and to the whole. All proportions are relative. Amounts of plant material should be offset by pleasing amounts of spaces. The traditional golden rule for proportion of plant material to a container, is that the design should not be smaller than one and one-half times (1.5 times) the height or width of the container. When the rule of proportion is not met, the judge should take off points. If designs are cut in half, meaning the container is the same width or height of the design, all points should be taken off. The more modern trend, today, is to use even greater ratios, such as two to two and one-half times (2.5 times) the height and width of the container. Using greater ratios can create designs that are more interesting and distinctive. Proportion eliminates the overpowering of any part of a design and enhances the overall unity of the design.

**c. Scale** (5 points). Scale is the size relationship of the parts within a design. These include the relative size of the flowers to each other, width, and length of the leaves to each other, the size of plant material to container, and size of accessories to other materials. Scale is a big part of keeping proportion in a design.

**d. Rhythm** (5 points). Rhythm is the dominant visual path through a design, achieved by repetition or gradation. Examples of rhythm can be a sequence of gradual changes in size, color, or density in a linear direction, in traditional types of design. The exception would be with creative design types, which may or may not use gradation of materials. Successful rhythm makes a design flow and makes it appear to be lively, rather than static. The amount of rhythm incorporated into an exhibitor's design will be determined by the designer's interpretation of the class title.

**e. Dominance** (5 points). Dominance is the use of one characteristic of an element more than another, so that it attracts the eye. This can be achieved by using more curved lines, more round forms, or more than one color. In iris designs, the iris must always be the dominant plant element to warrant the five points. Therefore, placement of the material should draw the focus to the viewer's eye. Dominance implies subordination and gives character. It adds visual interest and relieves monotony.

**f. Contrast** (5 points). Contrast helps to create an emphasis on one or more elements in a design. It calls attention to and stimulates interest in elements that are completely different from one another in texture, color, size or form. However, too many equal amounts of contrast divide attention and/or create confusion, which detrimentally can affect overall unity or harmony.

**g. Unity** (5 points). Unity is defined as "the state of being one, united or complete". It is all about the compatibility that is created throughout the design. All parts of the design should blend in harmony with one another. If this principle is not contained in the design, it will not be a solid piece, enjoyable to view. An added way to create unity, in addition to following the other six principles, is by adding an accessory beside the design. An accessory can complete, in the viewer's mind, how all parts of the design fulfill the interpretation of the class. Points should not be taken off, however, if no accessory is used, as long as harmony leads directly into unity. Likewise, if an accessory leads to confusion in the judge's mind, if it does not seem "to fit" with the design or overpowers the design, through size or color, for example, points should be taken off.

### 3. Color Use - 20 points

The use of color has a powerful effect on artistic design, so it is scored separately. The maximum number of points should be given for harmonious use of color and how it affects the balance of the design. Color must also conform to class requirement and interpretation of the class title.

Color is a visual sensation in which vision responds to the wavelength of light reflected from a surface. Color is very faint where there is little light and intense where light is strong. Lighting in the area where designs are staged is very important and should be considered by the judges as enhancing or detracting from the design.

The principle of color is the one that evokes an immediate emotional response, even though judges may not be aware of it. The warm, stimulating colors of yellow, orange, red, purple, and black will create a dramatic effect that stands out in a design. The cool

colors of green, blue, and lavender will retreat from the eye in a design. White, grey and some tans and browns are considered to be neutral, and usually have minimal impact. White and yellow, however, can dominate a design, especially if a large, shiny container or very large iris are used. A background in a value lighter or darker will enhance a color in a design that is retreating, by creating a frame of reference. If the show schedule requires that a backdrop of board or cloth is to be staged behind the design, color must be carefully considered by the exhibitor, to create harmony with the design's colors.

#### 4. Creative Expression - 20 points

Creative expression is defined as the ideas in a person's mind that are shaped and executed in an original and imaginative way, rather than through the traditional or conventional approach. Creative expression in designs includes originality in the use of materials and unusual interpretation. A successfully expressed new idea should be scored highly, and a design that communicates this creativity to the viewer should receive high points. The card of explanation, provided by the exhibitor, will help judges with the interpretation.

#### 5. Distinctiveness - 15 points

Distinctiveness means marked superiority, or a clear, unmistakable, positive impression. Therefore, in artistic design, distinctiveness means to construct or fashion according to a plan. It denotes HOW material is used, not WHAT material is used. This quality is achieved through superb craftsmanship, mechanical control and expert handling of materials, resulting in a neat, clean appearance. Condition is also important, in the way of freshness and grooming of flowers and plant material and overall cleanliness of the design. In addition, overall errors in design principles lessen marked superiority and will affect distinctiveness according to the severity of each infraction.

### III. ELEMENTS OF DESIGN

The elements are important because they are interwoven into the principles to develop a finished iris artistic design. The elements are: light, line, form, color, texture, pattern and size. They are taken for granted, but if a problem occurs in the design, it could simply be too much, too little or the lack of one of these elements. In every design, the elements are evident.

**Light:** Illumination is necessary for vision, and it is either natural (sunlight) or artificial (manufactured). The type of light source used for floral designs can affect the overall end product by brightness, dullness, incandescence or fluorescence of the light. Colors change according to the light source, whether being dramatized and enriched, or lost in shadows by the light's direction. Moods and emotional impact can be lost or gained by lighting. It is important to consider that when a show is staged for horticulture and design, the lighting should be noticed by the judges.

**Line:** This is the element that creates the visual path throughout the design and establishes the rhythm and structural framework for it. Line can be long or short, strong or weak, bold or delicate, and thick or thin.

**Form:** The three-dimensional shapes or outlines of the plant material used in a design are called form. Placement of forms, by turning them at interesting angles, adds depth to the design and enhances it. Form is significant to avoid a static, one-dimensional design.

**Color:** This element was discussed previously. However, color is always affected by the amount of light present. It is one of the most expressive elements because of the emotional response that its quality causes.

**Texture:** This is the feel, appearance, or consistency of a surface or substance. So, everything used in a design has a texture, and it can be tactile or visual. Examples are rough, smooth, coarse, fine, shaggy, velvety or shiny. Judges are not allowed to touch any part of a design, except for the card of explanation beside the container, but different textures are usually visually evident. The combination of textures adds interest and overall impact to the design.

**Pattern:** A pattern is an arrangement of lines or shapes, many times repeated. All the components, from the container and accessories to the plant materials and different colors and forms, make up the pattern of a completed design. Every design has a pattern, many of which are geometric or circular in form, and it should be evident to the judges.

**Size:** The overall dimensions or magnitude of anything is size. Therefore, the lines, shapes, forms, and spaces, as well as the total designs, have size. The ratio of plant materials in relation to each other and to the whole was discussed previously.

## IV. TYPES OF DESIGNS

There are two main types of artistic floral designs: traditional and creative. Both must conform to the point scale. Emphasis in both types must be on the usage of iris. Both types have physical components: plants, container, background, mechanics, accessories and explanation card. Both types have actual arranging equipment, such as needlepoint holders, oasis, picks, tape, water tubes, etc., that are to be discreetly hidden within the design, so as to not distract viewers. Either type of design is to be judged the same, without bias toward one or the other type of design.

**Traditional:** The traditional floral type typically refers to all those designs originating worldwide prior to the twentieth century. These designs conform to a more traditional criteria, based on a single pattern from one of the geometric forms such as sphere, cylinder or pyramid. Usually, the center of interest is located near the focal point, where all materials emerge or radiate from the center of the design. Little or no abstraction is used and there are no intentional crossed lines. Plant material is displayed in a naturalistic way (stem down, flower up). Part of the lip of the container should be covered with material in the design.

**Creative:** Creative designs evolved in the modern era, and place a strong emphasis on angular components, with angles not limited to one type, and all components angular so as to create pleasing contrast. More original methods of placement within the design achieve more creative concepts. More than one container may be used. There may be two or more rhythms, rather than one, creating a different movement. Any degree of abstraction and more than one focal point is acceptable, and a "stretch component" may be used to connect more than one container. Use of space is a strong factor and restraint of plant materials is apparent. A show schedule, calling for a creative design, should allow designer's choice for plant materials and components to be used. Components are to be used solely to incorporate space and create NEW images, so they may be placed upside-down, sideways, moving, clustered, etc., to create new forms.

Even though traditional designs are different from creative designs, they have just as much creativity. Whereas creative designs show unusual organization of materials, traditional designs create beauty, harmony and unity through plant selection and placement. Traditional designs are art forms IN space, so an amount of space is given for the design, while creative designs are art forms OF space in their placement.

## V. DESIGN STYLES

There are three recognized styles of designs in association with the two types of designs: line, line-mass and mass. Within traditional and creative designs are different ways or styles that show how the flowers and plant materials are arranged in the container.

**Line:** This design style is the most popular today. It uses much more restraint in plant material and other components within the traditional or creative design type and allows the exhibitor room to create a more bold, dramatic effect. Line style can be described as “a one-dimensional visual path through the design.” Lines may be vertical or horizontal, but the judge should realize that the line may be implied, too, through a line of dots or other forms lined in a row, rather than an obvious solid line. A line design should have good depth and proportion by placing plant materials from front to back and sideways, allowing visual depth from different directions. Line designs have the most open spaces of the three design styles.

**Line-Mass:** This design was a new style, developed in the 1930’s in the USA and based on geometric forms. It has one focal point and an uneven number of any one plant material. The line is still equally important, but additional material is added to strengthen and enhance the line and less open spaces are evident, in conveying the exhibitor’s interpretation of the class. This style can be closer to a mass design, but the linear quality predominates. Line-mass designs follow vertical, horizontal, crescent and triangular directions of line designs. Traditional line-mass designs, then, are “open forms”, where plant material does not completely fill the geometric form on which the design is based. The trend now, however, is toward more airy, open spaces to allow iris to be more visible.

**Mass:** This is a design style that has a completed form overall and should have depth from all directions, since it is to be viewed from all sides. More material is used and placed in an upright way, creating a traditional type of design. The defined linear pattern is still evident, though, through the skillful placement of the forms. The silhouette is closed, so no large spaces exist on the outer edges of the design. However, more airy, less compact designs are the trend, to allow for the flower forms to be more visible. Geometric forms still must be apparent in the outline of a sphere, triangle, oval, etc., as well as rhythm, to lead the judge’s eye. It is not just a willy-nilly thrusting of all plant material in the container.

## VI. ETHICS FOR DESIGN JUDGES

The show schedule is the law of the show and should be based on the current *Handbook for Judges and Show Officials*. Judges should be familiar with the Artistic Division Scale of Points before the day of the show.

Judges serve by invitation only and must not solicit assignments. If judging is needed to fulfill show requirements, the show chair or designated individual should solicit and issue invitations for judges. After receiving an invitation to judge, an immediate response is expected as a courtesy. Judges may accept reimbursement for travel, in the way of mileage, plane fare, hotel stay, and meals, but must not ask for monetary payment for judging. A judge may accept any additional gifts from the show host, as a thank you for judging.

Designs are to be judged from a distance of three feet and directly in front of the exhibit. However, glancing at the sides of the exhibit to determine depth and mechanics of the design, and at the back of a mass design, is part of the judging. Judges may also pick up the card of explanation to read it, but no other part of the design may be touched.

Judges should not accept an artistic design assignment for which they are not qualified.

Judges should point score the exhibit if asked to do so by the show chairman. Comments, written on the back of the card of explanation or paper provided by the show chairman, are always helpful to the exhibitors. Constructive remarks that are given by a judge, that will help the exhibitor understand how to improve the design, without having to remake it, are important in influencing future exhibitor participation.

The work of other judging panels should not be criticized.

Judges should not mingle with exhibitors or watch them working on their designs.

New ideas and unusual or unique creativity in designing should be openly accepted by judges and not viewed as faults or fallacies.

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## Appendix A

### Show Schedule Template

Approved by the AIS Board of Directors, March 2, 2021

Revision approved by the AIS Board of Directors, February 28, 2024

[The following is a fill-in form for writing a show schedule.]

[The fill-in portion of this template show schedule is in **red text**. The person writing the show schedule will replace all red text with the appropriate details of their show. ]

[Text enclosed in square brackets is informational and once used, **should be deleted by the person submitting the show schedule**. Text enclosed in square brackets does not belong in a final show schedule.]

TITLE OF SHOW (optional)

Name of the AIS Affiliate

Affiliate of the American Iris Society [if your organization is affiliated]

-

Date(s) of the show

State, city and address (location) where the show is to be held.+ Hours the show will be open for public viewing

\*Admission to AIS sanctioned shows is open to the public at no charge.

**SHOW COMMITTEE**

SHOW CHAIR

[fill in the name]

Phone

[fill in contact information]

HORTICULTURE CHAIR

[fill in the name]

Phone

[fill in contact information]

ARTISTIC DESIGN CHAIR

[fill in the name]

Phone

[fill in contact information]

CLASSIFICATION CHAIR

[fill in the name]

CLERKS

Designated members of affiliate

PUBLICITY

[fill in the name]

JUDGES

[fill in the name]

AIS AWARDS AND BALLOTS

[fill in the name]

PHOTOGRAPHY

[fill in the name]

SCHEDULES AND COVER

[fill in the name]

STAGING & DISMANTLING

All members of our affiliate

**AIS AFFILIATE OFFICERS**

PRESIDENT..... [fill in the name]

VICE PRESIDENT ..... [fill in the name]

SECRETARY ..... [fill in the name]

TREASURER ..... [fill in the name]

JOIN our [fill in the name] IRIS SOCIETY, an affiliate of the American Iris Society

DUES \$..... Annual

Meetings held at .....Place.....day.....time.....

Everyone is welcome!

**JOIN THE AMERICAN IRIS SOCIETY**

Full membership: Annual \$45 per year single; \$50 dual.

Triennial \$115 single; \$130 dual.

Print membership: Annual \$30 per year single; \$35 dual.

Triennial \$70 single; \$85 dual.

E-membership: (online viewing of the *Bulletin* viewing and access to the online *Iris Register* database) \$15 per year.

Youth membership \$8.00 without *Bulletin* or \$12.00 with *Bulletin*.

Remit to: Jean Richter - [AIS Membership Secretary](#),

1226 High St., Alameda, CA 94501

e-mail: [memsec@irises.org](mailto:memsec@irises.org)

Or join online at [system.irises.org/membership](http://system.irises.org/membership)

## GENERAL RULES

1. This AIS sanctioned show is being held and judged under the rules and regulations of The American Iris Society as set forth in the latest edition of the *Handbook for Judges and Show Officials* and any subsequent rules and regulations approved by The American Iris Society Board of Directors. These rules and regulations may not be violated.
2. Accredited judges of The American Iris Society will judge all entries in the Horticulture Division(s). Judges' decisions will be final. Any award may be withheld at their discretion.
3. Entries will be received from **date and time** to **date and time**.
4. Judging will begin at **date and time**.
5. Only specifically authorized personnel will be allowed in the show area during judging.
6. The Classification Committee may divide, sub-divide, combine or create groups as necessary.
7. Youth exhibitors (persons under 19 years of age) may enter exhibits in the Youth Horticulture Division or the Open Horticulture Division but not both, in the same show.
8. Show judges are not permitted to exhibit in the show. [This is the preferred statement. However, a local Show Committee may decide that judges and/or members of their immediate families **are** permitted to exhibit. The Show Schedule should explicitly state this, and under what circumstances.]  
However, in emergency situations, the show chair can allow a qualified judge with exhibits to judge the show.
9. The Show Committee will exercise all possible care but is not responsible for loss or damage to exhibits.
10. Exhibits will remain in place until **date and time**.  
All exhibits must be removed by **date and time**.

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## SPECIAL RULES – HORTICULTURE DIVISIONS

1. This is a VARIETY/CULTIVAR show, staged according to the type of iris and in alphabetical order within the various sections and groups. Each variety constitutes a separate class and must be correctly named. No unnamed variety may be exhibited except seedlings which may be entered under number.
2. Division, Section, and Group numbers and name of variety must appear on the entry card. In the Seedling Division the number or registered name of iris must appear on the entry card. The entry card should be prepared by the exhibitor.
3. The Horticulture and Seedling Divisions are open to any grower.
4. Entries (except for seedlings) **must have been grown and entered in person by the exhibitor whose name appears on the entry tag.** Members of a family may exhibit from the same garden as a single exhibitor or as separate exhibitors (but not both, in the same show) provided they all work in the garden.
5. An exhibitor may enter a seedling originated or grown by another person, but the hybridizer's name and the seedling name or number must appear on the entry card.
6. Exhibitors may enter **only one stalk of a variety** in single specimen and seedling sections but may enter any number of varieties, unless there are entry limits specified by the show schedule.
7. Unnamed stalks (except seedlings), potted entries (except for entries in the container section) or labeled irises grown by another person **are not eligible** for AIS ribbons and awards but may be displayed on the table marked "FOR DISPLAY ONLY."
8. Containers will be furnished for all single specimens. Containers appropriate for the exhibit must be furnished by the exhibitors of collections.
9. Unobtrusive material may be used for bracing stalks at the necks of containers. [If Show Committee wishes to limit and/or provide the kind of material that can be used, this should be stated here.]

10. Single specimens should be placed by the Placement Committee. Collections may be placed by the exhibitor.

11. An English Box will consist of multiple individual flowers, **usually five or six [specify which]**. individual flowers. of the same classification of irises. Flowers may be all different cultivars or all of the same variety **[specify which, or state that both are allowed]**. Each blossom must be correctly named and labeled. A 3" X 5" card with the names of the irises in the correct position must be prepared and mounted outside the box. If reservations are required, contact [fill in name and/or contact information] .

12. Collections, English boxes, bulbous irises, container-grown irises, and single blossom entries are eligible to receive award ribbons, special section awards, and section rosettes. Award ribbons for individual stalks, collections, English boxes, bulbous irises, and container-grown irises are included in the tally for Silver and Bronze Medals/Certificates. Award ribbons for single blossom entries, seedlings, and Artistic Design are NOT included in the tally for Silver and Bronze Medals. Collections, English boxes, bulbous irises, container-grown irises and single blossom and NOT eligible for the Best Specimen of Show.

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## DIVISION I – OPEN HORTICULTURE

By AIS Board action, November 2017, introduction is no longer required for entering a registered cultivar in the Open Horticultural Division.

- SECTION A. Tall Bearded Iris
- SECTION B. Miniature Dwarf Bearded (MDB)
- SECTION C. Standard Dwarf Bearded (SDB)
- SECTION D. Intermediate Bearded (IB)
- SECTION E. Border Bearded (BB)
- SECTION F. Miniature Tall Bearded (MTB)
- SECTION G. Space Agers
- SECTION H. Novelty Bearded
- SECTION I. Any other Bearded
- SECTION J. Siberian (SIB)
- SECTION K. Louisiana (LA)
- SECTION L. Spuria (SPU)
- SECTION M. Japanese (JI)

SECTION N. Pacific Coast Natives (PCI)

SECTION O. Any other Beardless

SECTION P. Historic Iris (Introduced 30 years or more prior to the date of the show). Include year of introduction on the entry tag. For an iris that has not been introduced, the date of registration can be used.

SECTION Q. Aril (AR) and Arilbred (AB)

Group 1. Aril

Group 2. Arilbred

Group 3. Arilbred median

Other groups as needed

SECTION R. Species (SPEC) and Species-cross (SPEC-X)

SECTION S. Bulbous Irises (not eligible for Best Specimen of Show)

SECTION T. Collections (not eligible for Best Specimen of Show)

Group 1. 3 stalks/one variety

Group 2. 3 stalks/all different

Group 3. 5 or more stalks/one variety

Group 4. 5 or more stalks/all different

SECTION U. English Box (not eligible for Best Specimen of Show)

Check with show chair for the type and size of box and whether it is provided by Show Committee or by the exhibitor.

SECTION V. Container-Grown Irises (not eligible for Best Specimen of Show)

SECTION W. Single Blossom (not eligible for Best Specimen of Show)

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## **DIVISION II – SEEDLINGS**

Any unIntroduced iris of any type. Seedlings must be entered under seedling number or registered name and must be made in the name of the owner or originator of the clone. An iris that has been registered, but not yet introduced, may be entered in the Open Horticultural Division or in the Seedling Division, but not both, in the same show. Only entries in the Seedling Division may be considered for an Exhibition Certificate.

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## **DIVISION III – YOUTH HORTICULTURE**

Same Sections and Groups as in DIVISION I above.

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## **DIVISION IV – EDUCATIONAL EXHIBITS**

1. [Specify limitations on size or table space allotted.]
2. Reservations for an Educational Exhibit are required. Contact [fill in name and/or contact information] to reserve space.
3. The objective of an Educational Exhibit is to convey a message quickly and clearly. Legible printing, descriptive pictures and/or objects and organization of the materials all tell a story. The dramatic impact can be attained with color combinations, humor, clever titles, etc., all designed to interest the viewer. The organization and placement of the materials should cause the eye to flow through the exhibit. Handouts are a plus.
4. The Educational Exhibit should tie in with the theme of the show through signs, show color combinations or some other way.
5. The Bronze Medal and Certificate may be awarded to the exhibitor of an educational exhibit found to be of outstanding merit by the judges.

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## **DIVISION V – COMMERCIAL EXHIBITS**

The same requirements as stated above for Educational Exhibits. The Show Committee will determine if an exhibitor is to be given commercial status.

1. [Specify limitations on size or table space allotted.]
2. Reservations for a Commercial Exhibit are required. Contact [fill in name and/or contact information] to reserve space.
3. Sale of plants or other products is not allowed.
4. The Bronze Medal and Certificate may be awarded to the exhibitor of a commercial exhibit found to be of outstanding merit by the judges.

**DIVISION VI – ARTISTIC**  
**[THEME OF THE SHOW]**  
**DESIGN RULES AND REGULATIONS**

1. An exhibitor may enter only one exhibit per class but may enter as many classes as desired.
  2. Exhibitors under age 19 may enter adult classes in addition to the youth classes.
  3. One or more iris bloom(s) must be used in each design and must be the dominant flower(s) in the design. The use of iris foliage in a design is the choice of the designer.
  4. The design must be made by one exhibitor, but plant material used in a design does not have to be grown by the designer.
  5. Accessories are permitted in all classes unless prohibited by the show schedule.
  6. Fresh plant material should predominate and may not be treated in any manner. A minimum of dried and/or weathered plant material is permitted. Treatment of dried material is allowed.
  7. No artificial flowers, foliage, fruit or vegetables are permitted. Fresh cut fruits and vegetables, and any other non-perishable food products are allowed, but must be sealed if the possibility exists for attracting insects or producing undesirable odors.
  8. The use of any part(s) of plants on the **[appropriate state's]** conservation list is strictly prohibited.
  9. The use of the American Flag or any international flag is prohibited. The use of the colors or bunting is permitted and encouraged if it helps interpret the theme.
  10. Each design must be accompanied by a 3" X 5" card listing all plant material used. Include the iris cultivar name, if possible.
  11. Experienced, qualified judges will judge this Division.
-

[Insert Artistic Schedule of Classes here, with a theme and design categories. Include any specific requirements regarding table space, niches, pedestals, backgrounds, platforms, hanging facilities, columns, etc., and any color schemes or dimensions specific to a class. Clearly state which specific items will be provided by the Show Committee and which by the exhibitor]

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## AWARDS

### Awards by The American Iris Society

1. **Ribbons** - Each specimen can be awarded **only** one ribbon. One first-, one second-, and one third-place ribbon may be given to each cultivar in any given section **except** in the Seedling Division. As many honorable mention ribbons may be awarded as the panel of judges deems worthy.
2. **Best Specimen of Show** (seedlings, bulbous iris, English box, container-grown iris, collection sections, and single blossom entries are excluded) - Large purple rosette and certificate.
3. **Best Specimen of Show, Youth** (seedlings, bulbous iris, English box, container, collection sections, and single blossom entries are excluded) - Small purple rosette and certificate.
4. **Runners-up** [specify how many] to **Best Specimen of Show**: Small purple rosette. (Each runner-up must have earned a first-place ribbon.)
5. **Horticultural Sweepstakes** (most first-place ribbons) - Silver Medal and Certificate and large purple rosette. (To award the Adult Silver Medal and certificate there must be at least five exhibitors and at least twenty cultivars at a spring show and at least three exhibitors and at least ten cultivars at a fall show.)
6. **Horticultural Sweepstakes, Youth** (most first-place ribbons): Youth Silver Medal and certificate and small purple rosette. (To award Youth Silver Medal and certificate requires at least two youth exhibitors and at least ten cultivars for a spring show and at least two youth exhibitors and at least five cultivars for a fall show.)

7. **Horticultural Sweepstakes Runner-up** (second most first-place ribbons): Bronze Medal and certificate. (Same minimum requirements and counting conditions as under 5 above.)

8. **Horticultural Sweepstakes Runner-up--Youth** (second most first-place ribbons): Youth Bronze Medal and certificate. (Same minimum requirements and counting conditions as under 6 above.)

In the event of a tie for any medal or certificate award, second-place award ribbons will be counted. If a tie still exists, third-place ribbons are to be counted, and if a tie still persists, honorable mention award ribbons are to be counted. If such procedure does not determine a winner, duplicate Silver Medals (and NO Bronze Medal) will be awarded. If the tie involves the Bronze Medal, duplicate Bronze Medals will be awarded.

9. **Best Seedling** – Large purple rosette and Exhibition Certificate.

The Best Seedling of Show automatically receives an Exhibition Certificate (E.C.). At the end of judging the show, the judges will view the seedlings and deliver their E.C. ballots to the show chair.

(1) An E.C. is awarded to any seedling that receives a total of five or more votes cast by the judges of this show and by any visiting certified judges.

(2) An E.C. will be awarded to any seedling that receives a cumulative total of at least five votes from all other AIS sanctioned shows in this current calendar year.

(3) The count of E.C. votes from all sanctioned shows will be completed by the AIS exhibition reports chair.

(4) An iris can win only one E.C. in each show but can win multiple E.C.s when entered in multiple shows.

10. **A Section Medal Certificate** for most first-place ribbons in a section may be awarded in each section where there are at least three exhibitors and at least five cultivars in the section.

11. A **Best Specimen of Section Rosette** may be awarded in each section where there are at least three exhibitors and at least five cultivars in the section.

12. **Educational Exhibits** may receive the Bronze Medal and Certificate for outstanding educational exhibit.

13. **Commercial Exhibits** may receive the Bronze Medal and Certificate for outstanding commercial exhibit.

14. **Artistic (Design):**

**Best Design of Show** (adult): Large purple rosette and certificate.

**Artistic Sweepstakes** (adult): Large purple rosette and certificate.

**Best Design of Show** (youth): Small purple rosette and certificate.

**Artistic Sweepstakes** (youth): Small purple rosette and certificate.

**NGC Awards**

[Any National Garden Clubs, Inc. (NGC) awards that are given should be listed here.]

**AIS Affiliate Awards**

[Any local society awards should be stated here.]



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## Appendix B

### VIRTUAL SHOW SCHEDULE TEMPLATE

Approved by the AIS Board of Directors, March 2, 2024

[The person writing the virtual show schedule will need to:

**Replace all red text** with the appropriate details of their show.

Text enclosed in **square brackets** is informational and once used, should be deleted by the person writing the virtual show schedule.]

[Your show schedule should be submitted digitally at least four weeks prior to the opening of your virtual show. Submit your virtual show schedule to the AIS exhibition schedules chair.]

**TITLE OF VIRTUAL SHOW [optional]**

Sponsored by

**Name of your club or other iris organization**

An affiliate of The American Iris Society

**SHOW DETAILS**

Entries will be accepted from **date and time** to **date and time**.

After judging has ended, the show will be available for viewing by the public. Check with the show chair for more information about entering and/or viewing this virtual show.

**SHOW COMMITTEE**

**[It is recommended to use your affiliate's or sponsoring organization's email address and avoid using any personal email addresses.]**

**EMAIL ADDRESS** for information and entry forms: **email address**

SHOW CHAIR: **name**

HORTICULTURE CHAIR: **name**

ARTISTIC DESIGN CHAIR: **name**

REGISTRAR: **name**

PUBLICITY CHAIR: **name**

AWARDS CHAIR: **name**

CLERKS: Designated members of this affiliate club

**Name of your affiliate club OFFICERS**

PRESIDENT: **name**

VICE PRESIDENT: **name**

SECRETARY: **name**

TREASURER: **name**

## **JOIN our name of your affiliate club**

DUES are \$..... per year

Meetings held at place and time

Everyone is welcome!

## **JOIN The American Iris Society**

**[check current prices on The [AIS website](#)]**

Full membership: Annual \$45 per year single; \$50 dual.

Triennial \$115 single; \$130 dual.

Print membership: Annual \$30 per year single; \$35 dual.

Triennial \$70 single; \$85 dual.

E-membership: (online viewing of the *Bulletin* viewing and access to online *Iris Register* database) \$15 per year.

Youth membership \$8.00 without *Bulletin* or \$12.00 with *Bulletin*.

Remit to: Jean Richter - [AIS Membership Secretary](#),

1226 High St, Alameda, CA 94501

e-mail: [memsec@irises.org](mailto:memsec@irises.org)

Or join online at [system.irises.org/membership](http://system.irises.org/membership)

## **GENERAL RULES**

1. This virtual show is sanctioned by The American Iris Society. It is being held and judged under the rules and regulations of The American Iris Society as set forth in the latest edition of the *Handbook for Judges and Show Officials* and any subsequent rules and regulations approved by The American Iris Society Board of Directors. These rules and regulations may not be violated.

2. Accredited judges of The American Iris Society will judge all entries in the Horticultural Division(s). The judges' decisions will be final. Any award may be withheld at their discretion.

3. Exhibitors may obtain a registration form, unique exhibitor number, and instructions by contacting **name and email address**.
4. The registration form should be prepared by the exhibitor.
5. Correct and complete information must appear on the registration form for all entries. This might include but is not limited to exhibitor number; division, section, group or class; correct name of variety/cultivar or seedling number; and photo numbers or names.
6. All photographs must have been taken during this current calendar year by the exhibitor whose name appears on the registration form. The photographs of entries must be of irises grown by the exhibitor. Photographs that have been cropped are acceptable.
7. Entries are submitted by email. The subject line of the email should contain **the subject line phrase**. The text of the email should contain **the required content of email text**. The entry with registration form and photographs attached should be emailed to **the registrar's email address**.
8. Entries will be accepted from **date and time** until **date and time**, which is the deadline for all entries. Judging will begin following the deadline for entries.
9. Youth exhibitors (persons under 19 years of age) may enter exhibits in the Youth Horticulture Division or the Open Horticulture Division but not both, in the same show.
10. Entries from the same family can be made of iris grown in the same garden. Family members may enter as a unit or individually, but not both, in the same show.
11. Show judges are not permitted to exhibit in the show. However, in emergency situations, the show chair may allow a qualified judge with entries in the virtual show to participate as judge in the show.
12. An entry in any division will consist of **the quantity of required** photographs. These photographs are required: **the list of required photographs for each division, each with a detailed description**.
13. Each photograph must be **the type of photo such as jpeg, BMP, or other** and of a size between **size in units such as bytes, pixels per square inch, or other**.

14. Each photograph must be labeled with: **the label requirements**
15. Photographs that contain an identifiable image of a person will be disqualified.
16. Photographs become the property of this sponsoring organization, **the name or your club or organization**.
17. Credit for each photograph will be given to the photographer when a picture is used for publicity or in any article or video.
18. The Virtual Show Committee will exercise all possible care but is not responsible for loss or damage to entries.

### **SPECIAL RULES**

1. This is a VARIETY/CULTIVAR show, organized into sections according to the type of iris (e.g., tall bearded, Louisiana, spuria, bulbous, etc.) and in alphabetical order by name of cultivar within each section and group. Each variety/cultivar constitutes a separate class. Only correctly named cultivars will be judged, except for seedlings, which may be entered in the Seedling Division under its number or registered name. Unnamed cultivars may be entered in the “Display Only” group where they will not be judged.
2. The Horticultural and Seedling Divisions are open to any grower of iris.
3. An exhibitor may enter only one entry per cultivar in the single specimen and seedling sections.
4. The virtual show chair or designee may divide, sub-divide, combine or create sections and groups of entries as necessary.
5. An English Box will consist of **five, six [five or six, specify which]** individual flowers. One of the photographs in this entry must correctly name each blossom in its correct position.
6. Collections, English boxes, bulbous irises, container-grown iris, and single blossom entries are eligible to receive virtual award ribbons and Best of Section rosettes. Award ribbons for individual cultivars, collections, English boxes, bulbous iris, and container-grown iris are included in the tally for Silver and Bronze Medals/Certificates. Award

ribbons for single blossom entries, seedlings, and Artistic Design are NOT included in the tally for Silver and Bronze Medals.

7. Collections, English boxes, bulbous irises, and single blossom entries are NOT eligible for the Best Specimen of Show Award.

8. An exhibitor may enter a seedling originated by another person, but the hybridizer's name and the seedling name or number must appear on the entry form.

9. An exhibitor may have multiple entries in the Artistic Design Division, but only one entry in each class.

10. Entries in the Artistic Design Division must be designed and photographed by the exhibitor.

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### **DIVISION I – OPEN HORTICULTURE**

By AIS Board action, November 2017, introduction is no longer required for entering a registered cultivar in the Open Horticultural Division.

SECTION A. Tall Bearded Iris (TB)

SECTION B. Miniature Dwarf Bearded (MDB)

SECTION C. Standard Dwarf Bearded (SDB)

SECTION D. Intermediate Bearded (IB)

SECTION E. Border Bearded (BB)

SECTION F. Miniature Tall Bearded (MTB)

SECTION G. Space Agers (SA)

SECTION H. Novelty

SECTION I. Rebloomers (RE)

SECTION J. Siberian (SIB)

SECTION K. Louisiana (LA)

SECTION L. Spuria (SPU)

SECTION M. Japanese (JI)

SECTION N. Pacific Coast Irises (PCI)

SECTION O. Any other Beardless

SECTION P. Historic Iris (Introduced 30 years or more prior to the date of the show). Include the year of introduction on the registration form. For a historic iris that has not been introduced, the date of registration can be used.

SECTION Q. Aril (AR) and Arilbred (AB)

Group 1. Aril

Group 2. Arilbred

Group 3. Arilbred median

**[Other groups as needed]**

SECTION R. Species (SPEC) and SPEC-X

SECTION S. Bulbous Iris (Not eligible for Best Entry of Show)

SECTION T. Collections (Not eligible for Best Entry of Show)

Group 1. Three stalks/one variety

Group 2. Three stalks/all different varieties

Group 3. Five or more stalks/one variety

Group 4. Five or more stalks/all different varieties

SECTION U. English Box (Not eligible for Best Entry of Show)

Check with the show chair for the type and size of box.

SECTION V. Container-Grown iris

SECTION W. Single Blossom (Not eligible for Best Entry of Show)

SECTION X. Display Only (e.g., unnamed iris.) **Not judged.**

**[Reminder that sections and groups may be combined or divided.]**

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## **DIVISION II – SEEDLINGS**

A seedling is any type of iris that is un-introduced. A seedling must be entered under its seedling number or registered name and must be entered under the name of the owner or originator of the clone, not the photographer. An iris that has been registered, but not yet introduced, may be entered in the Open Horticultural Division or in the Seedling Division, but not both, in the same show. Only entries in the Seedling Division will be considered for an Exhibition Certificate.

SECTION Y - Bearded Seedlings

SECTION Z - Beardless Seedlings

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## **DIVISION III – YOUTH HORTICULTURE**

Same sections and groups as in DIVISION I & II above.

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## **DIVISION IV – EDUCATIONAL EXHIBITS**

1. The educational exhibit is limited to **specify maximum size, duration, or other limitations.**
2. The objective of an Educational Exhibit is to convey a message quickly and clearly. Legible printing, descriptive pictures and/or objects and organization of the materials all tell a story. The dramatic impact can be attained with color combinations, humor, clever titles, etc., all designed to interest the viewer. The organization and placement of the materials should cause the eye to flow through the exhibit.
3. The Educational Exhibit should tie in with the theme of the show through the use of signs, show color combinations, or some other way.
4. A virtual rosette and certificate may be awarded to the exhibitor of an educational exhibit found to be of outstanding merit by the judges.

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## **DIVISION IV – ARTISTIC DESIGN** **THEME OF THE SHOW**

1. An exhibitor may enter only one exhibit per class but may enter as many classes as desired.
2. Exhibitors under age 19 may enter adult classes or youth classes, but not both.
3. One or more iris bloom(s) must be used in each design and must be the dominant flower(s) in the design. The use of iris foliage in a design is the choice of the designer.
4. The design must be made and photographed by one exhibitor, but plant material used in a design does not have to be grown by the designer. Photographs that have been cropped are acceptable.
5. Accessories are permitted in all artistic design classes unless prohibited by the show schedule.
6. Fresh plant material should predominate and may not be treated in any manner. A minimum of dried and/or weathered plant material is permitted. Treatment of dried material is allowed.

7. No artificial flowers, foliage, fruit or vegetables are permitted. Fresh cut fruits and vegetables, and any other non-perishable food products are allowed.
8. The use of plants or plant parts that are on your state's conservation list or are illegal is prohibited.
9. The use of the American Flag or any international flag is prohibited. The use of colors or bunting is permitted and encouraged if it helps interpret the theme.
10. All plant material used in the design must be included on the registration form. Include the iris cultivar name, if possible.
11. Experienced, qualified judges will judge this Division.
12. The theme of this show is **the theme or title**  
The classes in this division are: **the list of classes**. **Include any specific requirements regarding backgrounds, colors schemes, dimensions, or any special instructions specific for each class.**

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## AWARDS

### Awards by The American Iris Society

[After a show schedule has been approved, the exhibition schedules chair will include in the approval package templates for the virtual certificates, ribbons, and rosettes. After a show report has been accepted, the exhibition reports chair will send the show chair any appropriate Exhibition Certificates and sweepstakes medals.]

1. **Virtual Ribbons** - Each entry can be awarded **only** one ribbon. One first-, one second-, and one third-place ribbon may be given to entries in any given class **except** in the Seedling Division. As many honorable mention ribbons may be awarded as the panel of judges deems worthy.
2. **Best Entry of Show** - will receive a virtual AIS certificate and rosette. [Seedlings, bulbous iris, English box, collections, and single blossom entries are excluded.]
3. **Virtual Rosettes** - In addition to being awarded Best Entry of Show, a virtual rosette may be awarded to any Best Entry of Section, if merited, or any exhibit or entry of unusual merit in any division.

4. **Best Entry of Show, Youth** - will receive a virtual AIS certificate and rosette. [Seedlings, bulbous iris, English box, collections, and single blossom entries are excluded.]

5. **AIS Horticultural Sweepstakes** - The Silver Medal and virtual certificate are awarded to the exhibitor with the most first-place ribbons. [To award the Open Silver Medal and certificate there must be at least five exhibitors and at least twenty entries represented by twenty cultivars.]

6. **AIS Youth Horticultural Sweepstakes** - The Youth Silver Medal and virtual certificate are awarded to the youth with the most first-place ribbons. [To award the Youth Silver Medal and virtual certificate there must be at least two youth exhibitors and at least ten entries representing ten cultivars.]

7. **AIS Horticultural Sweepstakes Runner-up** - The Bronze Medal and virtual certificate are awarded to the exhibitor with the second most first-place ribbons. [To award the Bronze Medal and virtual certificate there must be at least five exhibitors and at least twenty entries, representing twenty cultivars.]

8. **AIS Youth Horticultural Sweepstakes Runner-up** - The Youth Bronze Medal and virtual certificate are awarded to the youth with the second most first-place ribbons. [To award the Youth Bronze Medal and virtual certificate there must be at least two youth exhibitors and at least ten entries, representing ten cultivars.]

In the event of a tie for any medal or certificate award, second-place award ribbons will be counted. If a tie still exists, third-place ribbons are to be counted, and if a tie still persists, honorable mention award ribbons are to be counted. If such procedure does not determine a winner, duplicate Silver Medals (and NO Bronze Medal) will be awarded. If the tie involves the Bronze Medal, duplicate Bronze Medals will be awarded.

9. **Best Seedling** – Exhibition Certificate (E.C.) The Best Seedling of Show automatically receives an E.C. At the end of judging the virtual show, the judges will deliver their E.C. ballots to the virtual show chair.

(1) An E.C. is awarded to any seedling that receives a total of five or more votes cast by the judges of this show.

(2) An E.C. will be awarded to any seedling that receives a cumulative total of at least five votes from all other AIS sanctioned shows in this current calendar year.

(3) The count of E.C. votes from all sanctioned shows will be completed by the AIS exhibition reports chair.

(4) An iris can win only one E.C. in each show but can win multiple E.C.s when entered in multiple shows.

10. **Best Entry of Section** - an AIS virtual rosette may be awarded to the Best Entry of Section where there are at least three exhibitors and at least five entries represented by five cultivars in the section.

11. **Best Educational Exhibit** – an AIS virtual rosette may be awarded to an outstanding educational exhibit, if one is worthy.

12. **Artistic Design**

**Best Design of Show** (adult) - virtual AIS rosette & certificate

**Artistic Design Sweepstakes** (adult) - virtual AIS rosette & certificate for having the most first-place ribbons.

**Best Design of Show** (youth) - virtual AIS rosette & certificate

**Artistic Design Sweepstakes** (youth) - virtual AIS rosette & certificate for having the most first-place ribbons.

**Awards by Your club/organization**

[Any of your club or organization awards should be listed and described here.]

[A reminder that the person writing the virtual show schedule should have:

**Replaced all red text** with the appropriate details of their show.

Read and deleted all the information inside the square brackets, including this reminder.]

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## Appendix C

### Preparing Iris for an Exhibition

Written by Leigh Moon (Region 15)

Note: This list is a guide. Requirements and rules might be different at each iris club. Always read and follow your club's show guidelines.

#### I. Training Iris in the Garden

##### A. Garden training kit

- 1) Large garden stakes (18"- 48" depending on what size iris you grow).
- 2) Wooden BBQ skewers (for the smaller iris such as PCN, SDB, or MDB).
- 3) Stretchy green garden ties so stalks are not bruised or damaged.
- 4) Foam peanuts, cut up iris stalks, or tightly folded pieces of paper towel.
- 5) Sharp scissors to snip out dead blooms. Smaller, precision tips are best.
- 6) Tweezers.

##### B. Pre-selecting the week before

- 1) Look for proportionate bloom stalks. Thick sturdy stalks for the taller TBs and smaller/thinner stalks for the smaller iris.
- 2) Select stalks with well-spaced branches and with buds covering approximately 2/3 of the stalk.
- 3) Candelabra branching is ideal. However, branches/buds that appear to be bunched can be trained to grow outward.
- 4) Choose stalks that are healthy, with good color, and have no (or minimal) blemishes.
- 5) Train the stalks that have a chance for open blooms at show time. Or stalks that will have a second bud in the terminal that can be induced to bloom.
- 6) You need only one open bloom to have your iris be judged. A good quality well-groomed stalk with one gorgeous, open flower can win a first-place ribbon.

##### C. Staking

- 1) Stake any bloom stalk that is leaning. Stake any stalk that is close to another and is in danger of its flower becoming damaged. Especially stake bloom stalks if expecting high winds.
- 2) Use the large garden stakes on the TBs and affix the tie BELOW the spathes to allow them to grow and not inhibit the flowers.
- 3) Use small bamboo skewers for the little guys.

#### D. Training

- 1) If a branch or bloom is too close to the main bloom stalk or is growing at an unattractive angle, place a spacer between the branch or spathe and the main bloom stalk.
- 2) Spacers can be foam peanuts, cut iris stalks (strong, but also easy to miss later when grooming), or paper towels swatches.

#### E. Flowers

- 1) Remove dead flowers to allow room for the new ones to form. Be careful not to tear the spathe. Terminal bud: carefully remove it if it will open more than 3 days before show and only if there is a second bud in the terminal socket.
- 2) Remove pests that may damage or chew your flowers or stalks.

## II. Traveling to the Show

#### A. Labeling

- 1) It is best to tag or label your stalk before you cut. Even the best of us forget what the name was, or it starts to look like that other purple iris you cut.
- 2) You can use hanging paper tags on string or cheap cut up paper. Write with a Sharpie!
- 3) Along with the name of the cultivar, consider adding the class of iris, especially if it is one of the smaller iris (e.g., BB, IB, PCI, etc.).

#### B. Cutting

- 1) On warmer days, the ideal time to cut is early morning or the second option is late evening. If the day is cloudy and cool, choose the evening or just before transporting.
- 2) If possible, hold the stalk by the spathe, so as not to knock off the “frost.” Avoid touching or holding the bud.
- 3) Cut the bloom stalk taller/longer than you need. At the show, you will want to make a fresh cut and be able to select an appropriate height for the container.
- 4) After cutting the bloom stalk, remove all base foliage and immediately place the stalk upright in a container of water in the shade or indoors.

#### C. Holding overnight (if necessary)

- 1) If cutting the day before the show, store stalks with open flowers in a cool, dark area.
- 2) For those buds that you need to encourage to open, place them in a brightly lit area (you might even use grow lights), with several warm (not HOT) water changes. The

most ideal way to force opening, but most difficult to achieve, is to place the bloom stalk in a heated, humid space like a bathroom with both a space heater and humidifier.

#### D. Types of containers for transporting

- 1) The ideal method is to allow each bloom stalk to have its own container, spaced away from the others to prevent bumping. I use a PVC transport container (a DIY project for you), which is ideal.
- 2) You can also use buckets with spacers (spacers being chicken wire, tape grids, foam, rolled up paper towels or newspaper).
- 3) Some use wine bottles, water bottles or even vases, but these are not as ideal.
- 4) For the smaller iris, use test tubes, plastic cigar holders, cough syrup bottles, etc. that have been placed in a partitioned box.

### III. Grooming

#### A. Suggested grooming kit and tools

- 1) Pruners or garden shears.
  - 2) Sharp scissors (larger for long leaf cuts and small ones for fine, precision cuts).
  - 3) X-acto knife (optional).
  - 4) Tweezers.
  - 5) Q-Tips, cotton balls, cotton pads, or soft rag.
  - 6) Small container of rubbing alcohol. Another container of water might be useful, too. The rubbing alcohol works better at forcing bugs out of their hiding places.
  - 7) Paint brushes.
  - 8) Paper towels.
  - 9) Pens (ball point or waterproof ink).
  - 10) Extra cut up iris stalks or wood wedges\*
  - 11) Hooks\* for the exhibition tags.
  - 12) AIS exhibition tags\*
- \*Provided by the show officials.

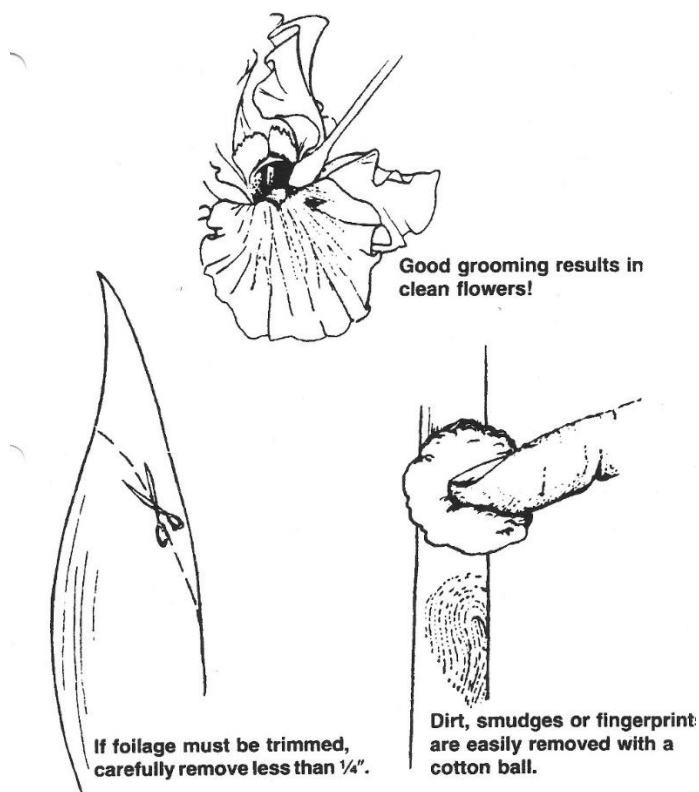
#### B. Remove all peanuts, cotton balls, and other training materials.

C. Check for pests, dirt, and debris

- 1) Remove aphids, spiders, ants, and other critters.
- 2) Use a Q-tip or small paint brush to pick up individual critters. Tip: Dip Q-tip or small brush into rubbing alcohol (or water) and use it to clean dirt, debris, and bugs out of the flower, spathe, and leaf junctions.
- 3) If the bloom stalk, branches, or leaves have dirt, debris, fingerprints, or sticky residue on them, gently wipe them with a damp cloth or cotton ball.

D. Trimming (Trim only if absolutely necessary!)

- 1) Neatly trim off faint discolorations, diseased foliage, or leaf damage.
- 2) Cuts on the foliage should be less than 1/4" and should follow the natural contour of the leaf.
- 3) Blunt or choppy edges, massive amounts of trimming, or any trimming that is obvious and distracting is unacceptable and will be graded down.



### E. Removing flowers

- 1) Remove any dead flowers.
- 2) You only need one open flower for judging and that flower must be in good shape.
- 3) Remove all flowers that are fading (watery edges, wilting, curling) or have obvious faults that will cost points. However, remove the fading flower only if there is another bud in the socket. Be sure that no “stub” of the removed bloom is left visible.
- 4) If no other unopened buds are in the socket then you should remove the entire branch. Refer to F (1) for information about removing branches.

### F. Remove spurs or branches (if necessary)

- 1) A branch may be removed where a leaf or bract conceals its connection to the stalk. There should be no damage to either the stalk or the leaf.
- 2) Although a spur might add flowers to the bloom stalk, it is likely that the spur will upset the proportion of the bloom stalk. This mis-proportion generally will cost more points than you would gain from the extra blooms.

### G. Position in container

- 1) Place your entry into the container with the bottom branch (or leaf) **above** the container opening.
- 2) Position the bloom stalk so that it presents the best proportion to the viewer.
- 3) My rule of thumb for the height of the bloom stalk is 1.5 to 2 times the height of the container, maybe even 2.5 if the entry is a taller cultivar. The height of the bloom stalk depends on the type of iris you are showing. For example, spuria iris will be much taller than 2.5 times the container, and Louisiana iris are pretty tall too.
- 4) Ideally side branches should be positioned on 2/3 of the exposed bloom stalk. If they occupy only 1/3 of the stalk, consider cutting the stalk down a bit to improve the proportion. However, be careful not to cut off so much stalk that it looks under grown for that particular variety.
- 5) Place the entry with its “best face forward,” which would ideally have the bloom(s) straight up or slightly tipped forward, and the side branches out to the sides.
- 6) Wedge the bloom stalk securely so that it does not shift, rotate, or lean in the container.

### H. Cleanliness

- 1) Do a last-minute check to see if you missed cleaning off the dirt, insects, and smudges. If you are an exhibitor who doesn't mind removing the “frost” or whitish powder, do a wipe down of the bloom stalk, from top to bottom.
- 2) Don't forget to check the leaves AND the backside of your entry! The judges may ask to have your entry turned around.

## IV. Presenting Your Iris Cultivar

### A. Exhibition paperwork

- 1) When you arrive at the show, you should receive a show schedule.
- 2) Ask for your assigned exhibitor number.
- 3) Collect AIS exhibition tags and an exhibitor's list of entries sheet (blank) at the registration desk.

### B. AIS exhibition tags

- 1) You need one tag per entry. These may be filled out in advance (at least partially).
- 2) You will need the Show Schedule to determine the appropriate division number as well as sections and classes (if appropriate).
- 3) Write all appropriate information on the top of the card: division number, section letter, (class if needed), the registered name of the variety, exhibitor name (that is you!) For safety, I recommend NOT including your street address or phone number. Just write your city's name.

### C. Exhibitor's entry list

- 1) List the registered name of every variety you have entered. Include the section of each variety.
- 2) The entry list will also need your name, city, and exhibitor number.
- 3) Make sure you give this list to the show chair or assistant.

### D. Finalizing your entry

- 1) Hang your completed AIS entry tag onto your entry via a hook (provided) by the club.
- 2) Place the entry tag exactly in the center of the container, the way you want your entry to face. The clerks will use the tag to orient your entry on the show bench.
- 3) I like to insert the hook into a green stalk-wedge. This way the hook doesn't slip to the side causing my entry to be placed in the incorrect direction.
- 4) Place your entry (entries) onto the table for the clerks to take out to the exhibition floor.
- 5) Hand your completed Exhibitor List to the appropriate show staff member.
- 6) Good Luck!

## V. Judging: Scale of Points

Time to practice judging. Choose one to three entries in the show to evaluate, then compare your scores to the scores of another exhibitor or judge.

### Scale of Points

PRACTICE: Exhibition Judging for Horticultural Entries of **Tall Bearded Iris**

				#1	#2	#3
1. Cultural Perfection (75 pts)						
	a. Flower (45 pts)					
		i. Color	15			
		ii. Size	5			
		iii. Substance	10			
		iv. Form	15			
	b. Stalk (30 pts)					
		i. Open Blooms	15			
		ii. Branch Balance & Bud Placement	15			
2. Condition & Grooming (25 pts)						
TOTAL (100 pts)						

## VI. Final Thoughts

After the official judging has ended and the show chair has opened up the show, walk around the room to compare your entries with others on the show bench. Look on the back sides of your AIS entry tags to read comments written by the judges or clerks.

Take notes about how to improve your entries at the next show. One of the best ways to learn how entries are judged is to be a clerk. Ask the show chair how you can be a clerk at the next show. And again, good luck to you!!

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## Appendix D: Practice **Garden** Point Scoring

### Practice Garden Judging for **Tall Bearded Iris**

			#1	#2	#3
1. Plant (30 pts)					
	a. Foliage	10			
	b. Durability/perennial qualities	15			
	c. Floriferousness	5			
2. Stalk (35 pts)					
	a. Proportion	5			
	b. Strength	10			
	c. Branching	5			
	d. Bud Count & Bloom Sequence	15			
3. Flower (25 pts)					
	a. Color	5			
	b. Form	10			
	c. Substance & Durability	10			
4. Distinctiveness (10 pts)					
TOTAL (100 pts)					

### Practice Garden Judging Introduced Cultivars & Seedlings of **Border Bearded Iris**

		Poss.	#1	#2	#3
1. Overall Proportion (25 pts)					
2. Flower (30 pts)					
	a. Color & Finish	10			
	b. Form	10			
	c. Substance & Durability	10			
3. Stalk (20 pts)					
	a. Proportion	10			
	b. Branching & Buds	10			
4. Plant & Foliage (10 pts)					
5. Distinctiveness (15 pts)					
TOTAL (100 pts)					

Practice Garden Judging for **Intermediate Bearded Iris**

			#1	#2	#3
1. Overall Proportion (20 pts)					
2. Flower (35 pts)					
	a. Color & Finish	15			
	b. Form	10			
	c. Substance & Durability	10			
3. Stalk (20 pts)					
	a. Proportion	10			
	b. Branching & Buds	10			
4. Plant & Foliage (10 pts)					
5. Distinctiveness (15 pts)					
TOTAL (100 pts)					

Practice Garden Judging of **Introduced Varieties & Seedlings of MTB Iris**

			#1	#2	#3
1. Proportion (25 pts)					
2. Flower (40 pts)					
	a. Color & Finish	20			
	b. Form	10			
	c. Substance & Durability	10			
3. Stalk (15 pts)					
	a. Buds & Branches	10			
	b. Characteristics	5			
4. Foliage (10 pts)					
5. Distinctiveness (10 pts)					
TOTAL (100 pts)					

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## Appendix E: Practice **Exhibition** Point Scoring

### Practice Exhibition Judging for Horticultural Entries of **Tall Bearded Iris**

				#1	#2	#3
1. Cultural Perfection (75 pts)						
	a. Flower (45 pts)					
		i. Color	15			
		ii. Size	5			
		iii. Substance	10			
		iv. Form	15			
	b. Stalk (30 pts)					
		i. Open Blooms	15			
		ii. Branch Balance & Bud Placement	15			
2. Condition & Grooming (25 pts)						
TOTAL (100 pts)						

### Practice Exhibition Judging for Horticultural Entries of **Louisiana Iris**

				#1	#2	#3
1. Cultural Perfection (75 pts)						
	a. Stalk (35 pts)					
		i. Foliage	10			
		ii. Height & Form	5			
		iii. Bloom Positions & Placement	20			
	b. Flower (40 pts)					
		i. Size	10			
		ii. Color	10			
		iii. Form & Substance	20			
2. Condition & Grooming (25 pts)						
TOTAL (100 pts)						

Practice Exhibition Judging for Horticultural Entries of **Spuria Iris**

1. Cultural Perfection			75
	a. Flower	40	
	b. Stalk	35	
2. Condition & Grooming			25
TOTAL			100

Practice Exhibition Judging for Horticultural Entries of **Pacific Coast Native Iris**

1. Cultural Perfection			75
	Flower & Stem		
2. Condition & Grooming			25
TOTAL			100

Practice Exhibition Judging for Horticultural Entries of **Siberian Iris**

1. Cultural Perfection					75
	a. Stalk			35	
		i. Proportion of Flower to Stalk	10		
		ii. Branching	10		
		iii. Spathes, Bracts & Stem	10		
		iv. Size & Color of Stem & Foliage	5		
	b. Flower			40	
		i. Floral Display	10		
		ii. Form, Proportion & Substance	10		
		iii. Patterns & Texture	10		
		iv. Color	10		
2. Condition & Grooming					25
TOTAL					100

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## Appendix F

### Ethics: Rules of Conduct for Judges

Approved by the AIS Board of Directors July 27, 2022

#### Garden Judging

It is an honor to be an American Iris Society judge. Everyone who starts down the path of becoming a judge should know and respect these ethical points.

#### BEFORE YOU START THE TRAIL TO BECOMING A JUDGE

1. Agree to do the job of being a judge when you sign up for the program.
2. Understand that becoming a judge requires an investment of time and money.
3. Expand your knowledge of iris by growing a variety of iris and annually, adding newer cultivars to your garden.
4. Visit multiple gardens to see, compare, and evaluate iris.
5. Write articles for newsletters, bulletins, and Facebook pages.
6. Be willing to speak about your knowledge of iris to clubs and societies.
7. Promote the American Iris Society (AIS) and iris at all levels: local, regional, and national.

#### WHEN YOU BECOME A JUDGE

1. The AIS judge evaluates iris in the garden and on the show bench. However, garden judging is more important because the AIS Official Ballot is based on garden performance.
2. Judges should study the AIS awards in order to understand the requirements of each category and be able to vote intelligently.
3. Judges should vote only in AIS Ballot categories where they are truly familiar with the iris of that category. If a judge has not seen a sufficient number of the irises in a particular Ballot category to know that those listed are truly worthy, then **NO VOTE SHOULD BE CAST** in that category.
4. To become familiar, the judge should have seen the iris growing over a two-year period and in multiple gardens.
5. Judges should never cast a vote for an iris that does not conform to the requirements of the class in which it is listed.
6. It is unethical to vote for an iris that only has been seen in an iris show, a slide show, or a catalog.

7. Judges should never vote for or against an iris based on who the hybridizer is. AIS awards are for the irises.
8. The judge should read the AIS Ballot instructions carefully, so the maximum number of votes is not exceeded. Too many votes cast in a category will cancel all the votes in that particular category.
9. Judges must pay attention to the deadline for submitting the AIS Ballot. Ballots postmarked after the deadline are void and the judge is considered to have not voted.
10. The judge should be truthful when evaluating iris in the garden and follow ethical guidelines when voting the Ballot.
11. Fully accredited judges should be willing to volunteer to help train, be a mentor to and help other judges who are working on their hours to become certified as garden/exhibition and artistic design judges.

#### ETHICS for GARDEN JUDGING

1. Call first to make an appointment before going to visit a hybridizer's or anyone else's garden.
2. Arrive on time.
3. Leave big bags, camera bags, and purses in the car.
4. Wear clothing that is not likely to damage flowers.
5. Do not touch, move, or groom any plant for any reason without permission of the gardener.
6. Stay on the established walkways and do not step into or across flower beds.
7. Do not lift plant labels for better viewing without permission of the gardener.
8. Carry a notebook and pen or pencil. Consider recording your observations with camera, phone, or tape recorder. Your observations of the iris could include:
  - Number of increases
  - Quality of bloom
  - Branching
  - Bud count and bloom sequence
  - Color
  - Substance and durability
  - Distinctiveness
  - Health, vigor, and resistance to disease
9. Never smoke in someone else's garden.
10. Leave young children at home.
11. If you must bring a young, future irisarian to the garden, never let them run around unsupervised.
12. Leave your shovel, clippers and tweezers at home.

13. Carry away your empty water bottles, used papers and other trash. Do not leave any trash behind.
14. Make a restroom stop before you visit the garden. Do not ask to use the gardener's facilities except in case of emergency.
15. Treat the host's garden the way you would want your garden treated.

To be a well-informed judge, it is vital to visit multiple iris gardens. Plan to visit the gardens of your local hybridizers, iris society members, and friends. Organize a group excursion to a commercial iris garden in your area. Visits to gardens shows respect for the people who have worked hard to grow iris. Garden visits to evaluate iris are also your duty as a judge. If you can go halfway across the country to see gardens at national conventions, then you can visit the local gardens, too.

## EXHIBITION JUDGING

### Show Committee, Exhibitors, Guests, and Judges

A well organized and smoothly run show is an enjoyable, learning experience for all involved. Ethical standards will ensure that the show will result in a positive outcome for all.

#### SHOW COMMITTEE ETHICS

1. The show schedule must be formatted so that all types of irises, designs, photos, youth, and educational exhibits are equally represented according to the show type.
2. Show rules should be clear and follow American Iris Society (AIS) rules and regulations.
3. All show chairs should study the schedule and understand their duties before the day of the show.
4. The show chair should remind the clerks of their responsibilities and duties. This includes refraining from speaking during judging, being prepared to move horticultural entries when requested, and assisting the judges with anything they need. Clerks also should be instructed not to repeat anything they hear the judges say.
5. The show chair is responsible for informing the judges about garden conditions such as recent weather events.
6. The show chair places the judges in panels and directs them to where they should judge in the show. Preferably, relatives should not be in the same judging panel.

7. The show chair should ensure that the *AIS Check Lists, AIS Registrations and Introductions (R&Is)* and access to the online *Iris Encyclopedia* ("The Wiki") are available for the judges and clerks to consult during the judging event.
8. It takes many people to put on a smoothly run show. Everyone must follow the rules and do everything ethically.

#### EXHIBITOR ETHICS

1. Exhibitors have the responsibility to perform ethically, since their behavior affects the show committee as well as other exhibitors.
2. The first thing exhibitors should do is acquire a show schedule and AIS entry tags.
3. Exhibitors should study the schedule to understand the categories and with that information, practice filling out their entry tags.
4. Entries in the historic section must include the date of introduction on the entry tag. For an iris that has not been introduced, the date of registration can be used on the entry tag.
5. All horticultural specimens entered must be grown and entered by the exhibitor. Designs must be arranged by the exhibitor. Photographs must be taken by the exhibitor. Educational displays and demonstrations must be made by the exhibitor. It is unethical to enter the work of someone else as your own.
6. Exhibitors should understand the open hours of the show, allowing plenty of time for the preparation and the placement of exhibits.
7. Exhibitors should be aware and careful of other people's entries so as not to bump or break them.
8. Exhibitors should collect containers and prepare their entries for the show, closely following the schedule.
9. Exhibitors should promptly return borrowed tools and property.
10. Exhibitors should refrain from saying anything negative about anyone else's entries, before, during and after the show.
11. Exhibitors must never touch or move another exhibitor's entry. If more space is needed, the exhibitor should ask for assistance from the clerk, placement chair, or the show chair.
12. It is not ethical to artificially change a horticultural exhibit with the use of pins, glue, tape, toothpicks, or any other similar additive.
13. It is common courtesy to thank people involved with putting the show together and offer to help in future shows.

## ETHICS FOR GUESTS AT THE SHOW

1. Guests should refrain from saying anything negative about the exhibits or judging processes.
2. Guests should view the displays without touching anything.
3. Guests are encouraged to talk to a club member, asking for information about entries, future shows, and club membership. The show is presented for the public's pleasure and education. Anyone will be happy to help you!

## ETHICS FOR THE SHOW JUDGE

The judge's job is to evaluate the exhibits and award the ribbons. Judges should show sincerity, integrity, humility, courtesy, practical wisdom, charity, intelligence, empathy, and autonomy. All of these traits show character and ethical behavior when judging at a show.

A judge should:

1. Promptly reply to invitations to judge a show.
2. Study all areas of the show schedule before judging.
3. Arrive on time and avoid interactions with the exhibitors.
4. Bring a current copy of the *Handbook for Judges & Show Officials* to the show.
5. Before judging begins, walk through the show to assess the overall quality. Listen to the show chair describe garden conditions of the entries.
6. Evaluate the exhibit as it is, and not as it will be or as it was.
7. Judge all exhibits assigned using your current *Handbook for Judges & Show Officials*.
8. In normal circumstances, never judge your own or a relative's entries.
9. Never refuse to judge a category or entry because you don't grow that category of iris. The *Handbook for Judges & Show Officials* provides guidance for all categories.
10. Follow the approved or modified show schedule. The show chair will clarify any changes made to the show schedule before judging commences.
11. Judge at a reasonable speed and try to finish in the allotted time.
12. Never touch an entry. If necessary, ask the clerk to move or adjust the exhibit.
13. Judge with consistency.
14. Confer with all judges for top awards. Be ready to point score if necessary.
15. Be respectful of all entries. When judging the Design Division, be open to creative and new ideas.
16. Disqualify an obviously misnamed variety. For questionable entries, ask a clerk to consult the *Registration and Introductions, Check Lists*, or the online *Iris Encyclopedia* ("The Wiki"). If the entry is still questionable, consult the show chair.

17. Guard against being a dominating judge in a panel. Judges should alternate taking the lead during judging. After the show, the decisions of judges should not be criticized or questioned.

18. Know the rules about what an apprentice judge may or may not do, such as not participating in selection of Best of Show and other high awards. Apprentice judges are there to listen and learn, but not to vote.

19. Judges are expected to tutor but are also expected to be brief. Give the apprentice a chance to speak but stick to the rules. Judges cannot properly evaluate an apprentice who has been unable to participate.

20. Only one apprentice can be tutored by a panel of judges.

21. Before judging begins, make sure the apprentice judge is listed as an apprentice judge. For this information, check AIS *Irises: The Bulletin* or the AIS website.

22. Judges should appreciate the hard work of all committee members, applaud their efforts, and express their thanks for being invited to judge. If asked for suggestions, judges should be willing to tactfully give necessary advice.

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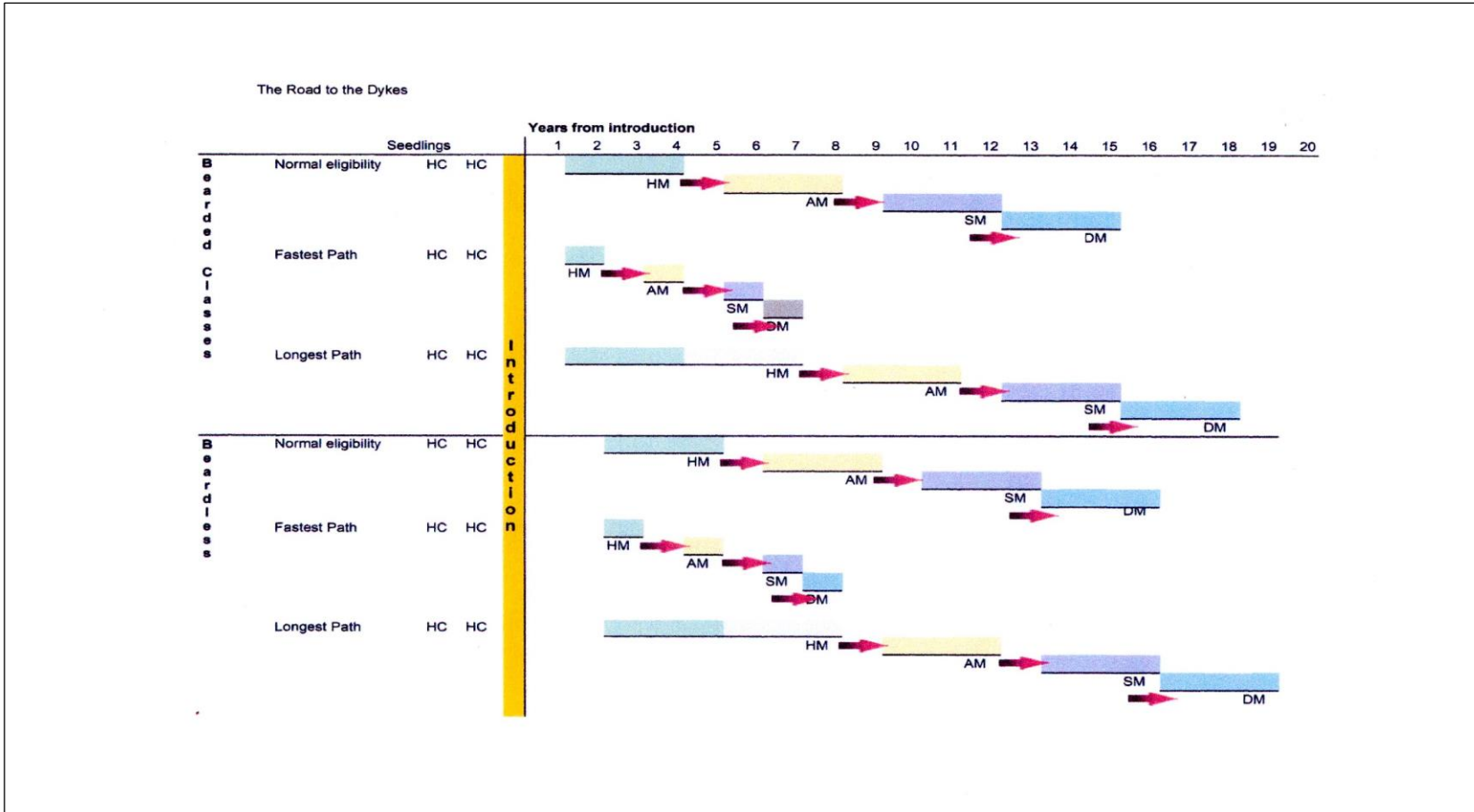
## Appendix G: Fast Track to the Dykes Medal

TB BB IB SDB MTB MDB Aril AB							
Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	Year 8
Year of introduction	1 <sup>st</sup> year after year of intro	2 <sup>nd</sup> year after year of intro	Following year	2 <sup>nd</sup> year after receiving HM	Following year	2 <sup>nd</sup> year after receiving AM	1 <sup>st</sup> year after receiving Special Medal
Not Eligible for any awards	Not Eligible for any Awards	Eligible for and receives HM	Not eligible for AM	Eligible for and receives AM	Not eligible for Special Medal	Eligible for and receives Special Medal	Eligible for and wins Dykes Medal

OTHER IRIS CLASSES								
Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9
Year of introduction	1 <sup>st</sup> year after year of intro	2 <sup>nd</sup> year after year of intro	3 <sup>rd</sup> year after year of intro	Following year	2 <sup>nd</sup> year after receiving HM	Following year	2 <sup>nd</sup> year after receiving AM	1 <sup>st</sup> year after receiving Special Medal
Not Eligible for any awards	Not eligible for any awards	Not eligible for any awards	Eligible for and receives HM	Not eligible for AM	Eligible for and receives AM	Not eligible for Special Medal	Eligible for and receives Special Medal	Eligible for and wins Dykes Medal

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## Appendix H: Road to the Dykes Medal



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## GLOSSARY

Revisions approved by the AIS Board of Directors, January 28, 2026

**AIS (The American Iris Society)** - Formed in 1920, the AIS is an organized group of people interested in the culture and preservation of iris and in the development and research of iris species and cultivars. The AIS welcomes all people regardless of race, religion, socio-economic status, ethnic background, gender, or sexual orientation.

**AIS Check Lists** - A book that compiles a decade of the registrations and introductions (R&Is) of iris, which have been previously published annually in the R&Is. See **AIS R&I**. Entries in the Check List may differ from their original description in the AIS R&Is due to typographical corrections, wordsmithing (changes to improve clarity), or a hybridizer's revision of the original description. Some entries in the R&Is might have been deleted in the Check List by hybridizer request.

**AIS Iris Encyclopedia ("The Wiki")** - An online database of iris and other information related to the AIS. Resources include a library of over 2,500 articles, more than 200,000 images of iris, a list of awards and winners, cultivation and distribution information, a list of hybridizers and much more.

**AIS R&I (Registrations & Introductions)** - A booklet that is published or is posted online annually that contains the names and descriptions of all iris registered and/or introduced during that year.

**Amoena** - A flower color pattern with white standards and colored falls. (An iris with white falls and colored standards is called a **reverse amoena**.)

**Aril** - The small white collar surrounding the hilum or region of attachment to the capsule of seeds of *Oncocyclus* and *Regelia* iris.

**Aril Iris** - A group of pogon iris species found in semi-arid to desert climates from Central Asia to the Middle East. *Oncocyclus* and *Regelia* are two subgroups.

**Arilbred Iris** - The hybrid iris from the cross of an aril iris species with an eupogon iris.

**Band** - See **Border**.

**Beard** - A cluster of hairs along the center of the falls, emerging at the base of the falls and extending about a third of the length of the falls on bearded iris.

**Bicolor** - A flower color pattern where the standards have a DIFFERENT color than falls of the flower and the falls are darker than the standards. (An iris with darker standards and lighter falls is called a **reverse bicolor**.)

**Bitone** - A flower color pattern where the standards and falls of the flower have different amounts of the SAME color and the shade of the falls is darker than the standards. (An iris with darker standards and lighter falls is called a **reverse bitone**.)

**Blade** - Each leaf in the iris clump. May also refer to the larger portion of the fall or standard in the iris flower, e.g., the blade of the falls.

**Blend** - A flower color pattern where the combination or mixture of two or more colors are present in the same parts of the flower.

**Binomial** - The scientific name of a species that consists of two words: the genus and specific epithet. Scientific names are italicized or underlined, and the genus is capitalized while the specific epithet is not. Examples of binomials are *Iris setosa*, *Iris tectorum*, *Homo sapiens*, and *Iris aphylla*.

**Border** - The edge of the falls is pale or a different color than the rest of the perianth (standards and falls). When the border is narrow, it can be called a **halo** or **rim**. When the border is very wide it can be called a **band**.

**Broken Color** - Random splashes of color on the standards and falls of a flower.

**Chimera plant** - A plant with a mixture of two or more genetically different types of cells that produces a random streak of color on a standard or fall, a single dark standard or fall, or one half of the flower a different color or white. Another example of chimera is the flower where different parts of the flower are diploid or tetraploid.

**Claw** - The narrow base of the standard and fall of spuria iris flowers.

**Clump** - The rooted group of interconnected rhizomes from one iris parent. After being divided into separate rhizomes, the clump has reproduced asexually, each rhizome being a genetically identical clone.

**Complement** - The quantity of genetic material. For example, an arilbred iris must contain one-quarter or more of aril species complement.

**Crepe** - A flower texture that looks like seer-sucker material. The surface has randomly indented and raised areas that produces an uneven surface.

**Crest** - The elevated, often toothed ridge in the center of the falls in certain iris, e.g., *Iris cristata*, *I. tectorum*, etc., hence the group of crested iris. .

**Cultivar (Cultivated Variety)** - A plant variety usually developed by selective breeding. The cultivar name usually is enclosed in single quotation marks. For example, 'Bottle Rocket', or *Iris laevigata* 'Violet Constellation'.

**Diamond Dusted** - Tiny, raised cells on standard and fall surfaces that act as prisms, reflecting light to create the appearance of diamond dust on the flower.

**Diploid plant** - A plant with two sets of chromosomes. Compare to **Tetraploid**.

**Distinctiveness** - Unique characteristics that set the iris apart from other iris, often making the iris recognizable without its name plate.

**Domed** - The standards of an iris flower that are arched upward and rounded inward to create a dome over the top of the flower.

**Emma Cook Pattern** - A flower color pattern with a narrow border of blue on the falls and none on the standards.

**Eupogon** - The group of iris whose beards consist of multicellular hairs. Examples are tall bearded and miniature dwarf bearded iris. Compared to pogon iris which have beards consisting of unicellular hairs.

**Falcate** - Shaped like a sickle, hooked.

**Falls** - The lower three petals of an iris flower. Falls can hang down, curve under, arch, flare or extend horizontally. Botanically, falls are sepals.

**Fancy** - An extreme plicata-type color pattern having a riotous mixture of colors.

**Flared Falls** - A flower where the falls extend horizontally from the center of the flower.

**Flexuous** - Curving or undulating.

**Floriferousness** - About flowers. Floriferousness can be increased through the duration of each bloom, the number of buds per stalk, and/or the number of stalks per plant.

**Flounce** - An appendage extending from the end of a beard with ruffles that gives the appearance of a flouncy petticoat.

**Form** - Refers to the shape of a flower. Form can also refer to a particular kind of plant, for example, a color form of a species.

**Genotype** - All the genetic information of an organism, whether expressed or not. All the information carried on the chromosomes of a particular individual. Compare to **phenotype**.

**Genus** - A unit of classification consisting of one or more related species. For example, *Iris* is a genus that consists of more than 100 species. Genus names are italicized or underlined.

**Glaciata** - A flower color pattern lacking any anthocyanin (blue, black, or red) pigments.

**Ground Color** - The base color of the standards and falls produced by carotenoid pigments (cream, yellow, pink, peach, red-orange, and orange) or lack of pigment (white) that is under the dots and stippling on the standards and falls. Ground color is usually mentioned with the plicata color pattern.

**Haft** - The top part of the falls where it inserts into the flower base. Also called the shoulder. The haft is the constricted part of the standards and falls near the center of the iris flower.

**Halo** - In the special case for *Iris ensata*, a halo is a band of color surrounding the flower's signal. In many cases, the halo on *I. ensata* sharply contrasts with the falls, highlighting the signal.

See **Border** (on page 2)

**Historic Iris** - An iris introduced thirty (30) or more years ago.

**Horn** - An extension protruding from the end of the beard into a point. Found on "Space Age" iris flowers.

**Horticultural Division** - The division in an iris show for correctly named and registered iris cultivars and species that may or may not have been introduced.

**Hybrid** - The offspring of genetically unlike parents.

**Increases** - A term that refers to the number of additional rhizomes emanating from the original parent rhizome. Increases are an example of asexual reproduction.

**Inflorescence** - The total cluster of flowers on a branch or stalk. For example, the expected inflorescence of a tall bearded iris is seven flowers produced by seven buds per stalk.

**Interspecies hybrids** - The plant that results from the cross of two different species. Synonym = species cross.

**Introduced Iris** - An introduced iris is one that has been registered and offered for sale to the public and recorded by the AIS registrar. Compare to **Registered Iris**.

**Lace** - The edges of the standards and falls are serrated or notched, giving the appearance of lace.

**Lanceolate leaf** - A leaf with the shape of a lance head: long, tapering to a point at its apex.

**Luminata** - A color pattern in iris where the hafts and heart of the flower are white or yellow, without markings. This contrasts with the darker falls, producing the effect of a light within the center of the flower.

**Magnolia-shaped flower** – An iris flower that only partially opened such that it has the shape of a magnolia or tulip blossom. Also known as a tulip-shaped flower. The magnolia-shaped flower is a very rare novelty iris. For example, ‘Blue Tulip’ (Frederick Knocke 1964, TB)

**Matte** - A flower surface texture that is flat, non-reflective, or non-lustrous.

**Mutation** - An inherited change within a chromosome of an individual.

**Nectaries** - The area at the base of the falls where nectar is produced located on each side of the beard on bearded iris. Beardless irises also have nectaries. They are very well developed on the spuria iris, located at the base of the flower and on the spathes. An iris flower will have six nectaries. Nectar attracts pollinators.

**Neglecta** - A flower color pattern of blue or blue-violet bitone.

**Node** - Areas of the stem where leaves and new growths or increases are produced.

**Novelty** - Iris cultivars with unique and unusual features. For example, six falls on the flowers, irregular color patterns, having too many or lacking flower parts, and “space age” appendages on the beards.

**Oncobred** - A hybrid iris from *Oncocyclus* and *Eupogon* parentage typically showing resemblances of both parents.

**Oncocyclus (O)** - A group of species of aril iris. See the essay, “Terminology of AR & AB” for more information.

**Oncogelia (OG)** - A hybrid iris involving the cross of a species of *Oncocyclus* and *Regelia* that has a predominately *Oncocyclus* phenotype. *Regelia* is abbreviated “G” when hybridized with *Oncocyclus* iris.

**Ovary** - The seed-bearing structure at the base of the flower. After fertilization, the ovary matures into a seed pod that contains seeds.

**Pallida** - This is the name of a European species of diploid, tall-bearded iris, *Iris pallida*, with self-colored, lavender-blue flowers borne on closely branched stems. Garden varieties with other characteristics of this species are described as pallida-type iris.

**Perennial** - A plant that lives for two or more growing seasons.

**Perianth** - The collective term for the petals or standards and falls of the iris flower. For example, the perianth of 'Dusky Challenger' is a ruffled, rich purple.

**Perianth-tube** - The slender tube in the iris flower connecting the ovary with the separate perianth parts.

**Petaloid** - A structure that resembles a flower petal.

**Petiole** - The stalk that connects the blade to a stem.

**Phenotype** - Appearance. The set of observable characteristics of an individual that are the result of the interaction of its genotype and the environment. Compare to **Genotype**.

**Plicata** - A flower color pattern where a lighter ground color is stippled, dotted, or stitched with a darker color.

**Pogon** - A word of Greek origin meaning "beard." Pogon refers to the group of iris with beards consisting of unicellular hairs. Oncocylus and Regelia species are in the group of pogon iris. Eupogon refers to an iris with a beard consisting of multicellular hairs. Apogon refers to irises without beards.

**Pollen** - The male gametes or their antecedents of a flower.

**Position** - A specific place on the bloom stalk where flower buds emerge.

**Purple-Based Foliage (PBF)** - Purple coloration at the base of the leaves and sometimes on the stalk and buds.

**R&Is** - See **AIS R&Is**.

**Reblooming Iris (RE)** - An iris that blooms in the spring and again in the same growing season. See "Chapter 23: Reblooming Iris," for more information.

**Reflexed** - A condition of bending abruptly downward and inward. For example, the falls of an arilbred flower can be noticeably reflexed.

**Regelia (R)** - A group of species of aril iris. Regelia is abbreviated “G” when hybridized with *Oncocyclus* iris. See the essay, “Terminology of AR & AB,” for more information.

**Regeliabred** - A hybrid iris of Regelia and *Eupogon* parentage typically showing resemblances of both parents.

**Regeliocyclus (RC)** - A hybrid iris involving the cross of a species of *Oncocyclus* and Regelia that has a predominately Regelia phenotype.

**Registered Iris** - An iris whose registration application has been accepted and approved by the registrar of the American Iris Society. Compared to an **introduced iris** which is one that has been offered for sale to the general public.

**Remontancy** - See **Reblooming Iris**.

**Rhizomatous** - Producing or having a rhizome.

**Rhizome** - A modified creeping or underground stem with roots and buds developing from the nodes. The iris rhizome is often enlarged, serving as a storage organ.

**Rim** - See **Border**.

**Ruffled** - The edges of the standards and/or falls are wavy or ruffled.

**Seed** - The fertilized embryo and various surrounding structures of a seed plant. Note: Only seed plants reproduce via seeds. Some plants reproduce via spores or other structures instead of seeds.

**Self** - An iris with standards and falls the same color. The beard might or might not be the same color.

**Sib (sibling)** - Offspring from the same parents. A sib-cross is a cross between sibling plants.

**Sibtosa Iris** - A hybrid iris that is the result of the cross of *Iris siberica* and *I. setosa*.

**Shoulder** - Another term for haft which is the top part of the falls.

**Signal** - A patch or spear of color at the top center of the falls, emanating from the throat. Signals are common in beardless irises, such as Louisiana, Japanese and spuria iris.

**Sophisticated Flower** - An elegant, complex, classy, cosmopolitan flower. Compared to a flower that is simple, unrefined, plain, and quiet.

**Space Age Iris (SA)** - A bearded iris with a projection from the end of its beard such as a horn, spoon, or flounce.

**Spathe (spathe-valve)** - A bract or modified leaf subtending a flower or group of flowers. Spathes can be green and fleshy or dry and papery. In early stages of development, the spathes enclose and protect the young flower buds. Iris often have an inner and outer spathe.

**SPEC** - The class of iris for named species that originally were collected in the wild as a division, seedling, or seed. SPEC iris also can come from seeds of the former plants grown in cultivation (whether hand pollinated or open pollinated).

**SPEC-X** - The class of iris for any hybrid iris that does not fall into a conventional category such as Louisianas, Siberians, or Junos. The SPEC-X class contains more iris than interspecies crosses. See “Chapter 20: SPEC & SPEC-X” for more information.

**Spoon** - An appendage at the end of the beard that looks like a small spoon.

**Spur** - A short side stem on the main bloom stalk with only one flower.

**Stamen** - The pollen-bearing structure of the flower consisting of a filament and anther.

**Standards** - The upper three petals of the iris flower; the inner series of the perianth. Compare to **Falls** and **Perianth**.

**Style arms** - The three flattened petal-like branches of the style, between the ovary and stigma, ending in style crests above the stigmatic lip.

**Style Crest** - A projection from the top of the style.

**Substance** - The inner tissue structure of the perianth (standards and falls) that determines the durability of the flower. Flowers with “good” substance will have improved longevity of color and form of the flower.

**Sweepstakes** - In an iris show, sweepstakes refers to the quantity of first-place ribbons won. The sweepstakes winner in an iris show, the exhibitor with the most first-place ribbons, will receive the Silver Medal, certificate, and large purple rosette. The sweepstakes runner-up receives the Bronze Medal and certificate.

**Terminal Position** - The upper-most position. For example, the terminal flower on a bloom stalk would be the flower emanating from the highest point on the stalk.

**Tetraploid** - Having four sets of chromosomes. Compare to **diploid**.

**Texture** - A surface characteristic which influences the impact of color of the standards and falls. Examples are matte, crepe-like, and diamond dusted.

**Variegata** - A flower color pattern of yellow or nearly yellow standards with darker, often red, falls.

**Variegation** - is the appearance of differently colored zones in the leaves, and sometimes the stems, of plants. Variegated leaves occur rarely in nature.

**Variety** - A cultivated plant which has been given an identifying common name. Botanically, a variety can be a group of individuals within a species that differs sufficiently from the rest of the species population to be distinguished and given a Latin varietal name. A horticultural synonym for variety is **cultivar**.

**WIKI** - See AIS Iris Encyclopedia.

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