

The Iris Society of Australia Handbook for Judges



First edition 2010

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FOREWORD

The publication of this judging handbook is the culmination of a long quest by members of the Iris Society of Australia to produce a resource for Australian iris judges. It represents a new era in Australian trial gardens, in that all regional trial gardens will now be judged using one points system.

In addition to the points systems for garden and show bench judging, this handbook includes detailed descriptions of the characteristics of different iris types, and guidelines for judging them. This is intended not just to assist judges, but also to educate hybridizers and exhibitors about the expected standard of entries for the trial garden and show bench, and the criteria on which their entries will be judged.

This Australian handbook is based primarily on the Handbook for Judges and Show Officials produced by the American Iris Society. We are indebted to the American Iris Society for permission to use some of their illustrations, judging criteria and guidelines, particularly for the section on Arils and Arilbreds.

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Coordinator, ISA Judges Handbook Subcommittee.

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ILLUSTRATIONS

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ACCREDITATION OF JUDGES

To receive accreditation as an iris society judge, a person must fulfil the following minimum requirements:

1. He / she must have held membership in the Iris Society of Australia, in any of its regions, for the past three (3) years.
2. He / she must have attended a minimum of two complete judges' training sessions within the past three (3) years. This must include at least one session on trial garden judging, and at least one session on show bench judging. Each of these sessions must include a practical judging component.
3. He / she must have submitted and passed a written examination. This may be an open book examination, at the discretion of the judging instructor.

After completing these requirements, the trainee is appointed by the Iris Society of Australia as a junior judge. To maintain accreditation, a judge must satisfy the requirements of their region, in regards to judging activity (trial garden and show bench) and ongoing judging refresher courses, etc.

After five (5) years of judging, with continuous maintenance of accreditation, a judge may be considered a senior judge. Only senior judges are eligible to judge and /or host the Dykes Medal Trial Gardens, and train new judges.

Judges who wish to seek further accreditation outside of Australia should request a written endorsement from the President of the Iris Society of Australia to the overseas judge trainer.

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF JUDGES

The most important requirement of a judge is a broad and in depth knowledge of irises, which should cover all iris types. In particular, the judge should understand the difference between judging seedlings in a trial garden, and judging named varieties on the show bench.

The best way to gain a good knowledge of irises is to grow them. Judges should aim to grow as wide a variety of iris types as possible, and to regularly update their collection, in order to keep in touch with new developments in hybridizing. After accreditation, judges should continue self-education by visiting other iris gardens and commercial nurseries, and by reading as much about irises as possible, in the form of overseas iris publications, nursery catalogues, etc.

Judges should be willing to judge trial gardens or shows whenever the opportunity arises, and those at a senior level should be prepared to help train new judges.

In all types of judging, it is important to keep an open mind, to judge fairly and impartially, and to set aside personal preferences. It is desirable for show judges to have prior experience in transporting and grooming exhibits for the show bench, and experience as a show steward.

In show judging, the judge should:

- be punctual
- familiarize him- / herself with the show schedule and associated rules of the society, and judge in accordance with those rules. If clarification of any details is required, this should be sought before judging commences.
- refrain from handling any exhibits, but ask the steward to move the exhibit if required for a clearer view.
- keep a clear mind about reasons for decisions, as the judge should be able to explain to exhibitors if requested, precisely why a particular decision was made.
- ensure that the stewards record decisions correctly.
- be willing to accept majority decisions when judging in a group. The judge should not be afraid to express an opinion, but neither should he/she verbally dominate other members of the team.
- be polite about exhibits at all times, and calm and polite to other judges, stewards and exhibitors.
- use a commonsense approach. It is important to encourage exhibitors, however awards should be withheld where exhibits are well below standard.
- admit any conflict of interest, and not participate in judging classes or special awards where the judges' own (or his/her family members') exhibits are competing.

A hybridizer who is judging as part of a panel may request not to judge a class or award where his / her own introductions are being exhibited.

In the event that a judge needs to classify an exhibit as NAS (Not According to Schedule), he / she should indicate the reason(s) for doing so on the exhibit's ticket.

STEWARDS' DUTIES

A steward essentially has two roles: (1) to assist the judge during judging, and (2) to record the judging results for each award judged, and pass these on to the relevant show official for completion of prize cards. The steward may also be required to assist exhibitors before judging begins.

It is the steward's responsibility to:

- read the show schedule thoroughly, and also any associated rules of the society or club.
- check that all exhibits comply with the schedule, and are entered in the correct class. If any entries have been misclassified, this should be brought to the attention of the show manager / chief steward. If possible, such entries should be moved to the correct class prior to the commencement of judging. All exhibits should be correctly named. Where unknown varieties are permitted, they must be labelled accordingly.
- be punctual, and on duty for the duration of the time required.
- ensure that only judges and stewards are present in the exhibit area during judging.
- know where each class is staged, and indicate to the judge the boundaries of the class being judged, and the number of entries.
- ensure the anonymity of exhibitors is preserved at all times by keeping prize cards face down, etc. until judging of all sections and overall awards has been completed.
- move exhibits as requested by the judge(s).
- be quiet during judging to avoid distracting or influencing the judge.
- record the exhibit's name, and exhibitor details for each award judged, and transfer the records to the relevant show officials for completion of prize cards.
- remind judges to judge overall awards, such as Best in Section, and record their decisions before they move on to the next section. The steward should be aware of which section winners are eligible for overall awards.
- be organised at all times, and have details for the next section / award ready, to avoid contributing to any delays in judging.
- on completion of judging, ensure that the judges sign the record books, and return these to the show manager or chief steward.

SHOW ABBREVIATIONS

ANS: Any Number of Stems / Stalks
CVA: Colour Variation Allowed
DV: Distinct Variety (one variety / cultivar)
DVS: Distinct Varieties
NAS: Not According to Schedule
NND: Not Necessarily Distinct (cultivars)
SS: Staged Singularly

GARDEN AND SHOW BENCH JUDGING

While many of the qualities required to be a good judge apply in all situations, judging seedling irises in a trial garden setting is vastly different to judging single stems or blooms of named varieties on the show bench. Not only is there a difference in the iris qualities to be considered, but the judging also serves a different purpose.

GENERAL GARDEN JUDGING

The purpose of a trial garden is to provide both an objective assessment of seedlings' overall merits and also their performance in gardens and climates which are different to their garden of origin. This assessment gives valuable feedback both to the hybridizer and, through the awards system, to the general public.

In the trial garden the whole plant must come under close scrutiny, and particular attention must be given to the plant's health and vigour. People are always going to buy irises that appeal to their particular colour preferences, but it is vital that those irises which win awards be good garden plants.

The most important criteria in trial garden judging are those which deal with the plant: its ability to produce increase, to produce numerous flowers of quality, and to resist disease.

Another point which is important to consider in garden judging is distinctiveness. To be worthy of introduction, a new seedling must have some qualities which make it different to, or an improvement on, the many thousands of irises already available.

Other issues to consider are:

Does it grow well in a variety of conditions and soils (within the limits of the species) and provide adequate increase?

Does it transplant readily (within the limits of the species)?

Is the foliage clean, healthy and of neat appearance?

Does it produce an adequate number of attractive bloom stalks and buds?

Is the bloom appealing as to form, colour and substance?

It is important to remember that the more times that a plant is observed growing in a garden situation, the easier it is to make an objective overall assessment of it. The plant's garden value is of prime importance and length of bloom season is an important factor here, as is general floriferousness.

To be deserving of awards, a cultivar should have its own particular charm and personality, which draw you in from across the garden. It should be an appealing garden plant, floriferous and healthy, with superior landscape value, and an overall appearance of grace, balance and beauty.

GARDEN JUDGING POINTS SYSTEM

Plant: 25

Growth and increase: 15

Health / disease-resistance: 10

Stem / Stalk: 30

Branching, strength and proportion: 15

Bud count, floriferousness and bloom sequence: 15

Flower: 30

Colour: 5

Form: 10

Substance, texture and durability: 15

Distinctiveness, beauty and garden appeal: 15

CORE CRITERIA FOR GARDEN JUDGING

The following is a list of criteria which are relevant to garden judging of most, if not all, iris types. Additional criteria specific to each iris type are listed under the headings for those types.

Plant

- The plant should give an overall appearance of vigour and good health.
- Foliage should be healthy and disease-resistant.
- The plant should increase well, as slow growth can lead to a risk of bloom out.
- Foliage and increase should be compared to other varieties grown nearby so that assessment of the cultivar is not biased by poor cultural conditions.

Stem / Stalk

Branching, strength and proportion

- The stem should be upright, and able to support the blooms without staking, unless there has been severe weather. Exceptions can be made for forms of *I. brevicaulis* or the taller evansias. Stem strength can be difficult to evaluate on first-year plants, however, as the root system is still being established.
- For most iris types, the flowers should be displayed at or above the level of the foliage.
- Stem thickness and height should be in proportion to flower size.
- Branches, when present, should display the flowers so that they are held clear of the stem, can open unimpeded, and do not interfere with one another.
- For details of expected number of branches, see details under the individual iris types.
- The stem should appear balanced and well-proportioned, with no crowding.
- The stem should be reasonably straight. A slight 's' curve is permissible for some iris types (e.g. Tall Bearded, Louisianas, Spurias), and zig-zag stems are permissible for Louisianas.

Bud count, floriferousness and bloom sequence

- Floriferousness and bud count, while closely related, are two distinct qualities. A variety may have low bud count per stem, but produce many stems per clump, giving a good display, whereas a variety which has stems with a high bud count may produce a small number of stems.
- Varieties which have a long bloom season or which rebloom or display repeat / sequential bloom should be rewarded for doing so.
- Varieties which bloom earlier or later than normal are also to be commended, as they extend the season of bloom.
- For details of expected number of buds and length of bloom, see details under the individual iris types.
- Varieties which open multiple flowers at a time should be carefully assessed, as this will result in shortened bloom time for the clump unless there are enough buds to allow for adequate bloom duration.

Flower

Colour

- Colours should be clean and clear.
- While colour is usually the most obvious feature when approaching an iris in bloom, a judge should examine all other criteria first, and avoid being distracted by the colour.
- Colours which are new and different to what is already available are considered desirable, and merit points for distinctiveness. However, all colour patterns must be considered.
- All colour combinations and patterns should appear harmonious.
- Flowers which display streaking or blotches of colour are acceptable, provided that the pattern is repeated on all equivalent parts of the same flower (e.g. on every standard), and on every flower.

Form

- Flowers should appear symmetrical, with no twisted or distorted flower parts.
- Standards must be held firmly in position and not flop.
- Flowers should appear well-proportioned.
- For additional form criteria, see details under the individual iris types.

Substance, texture and durability

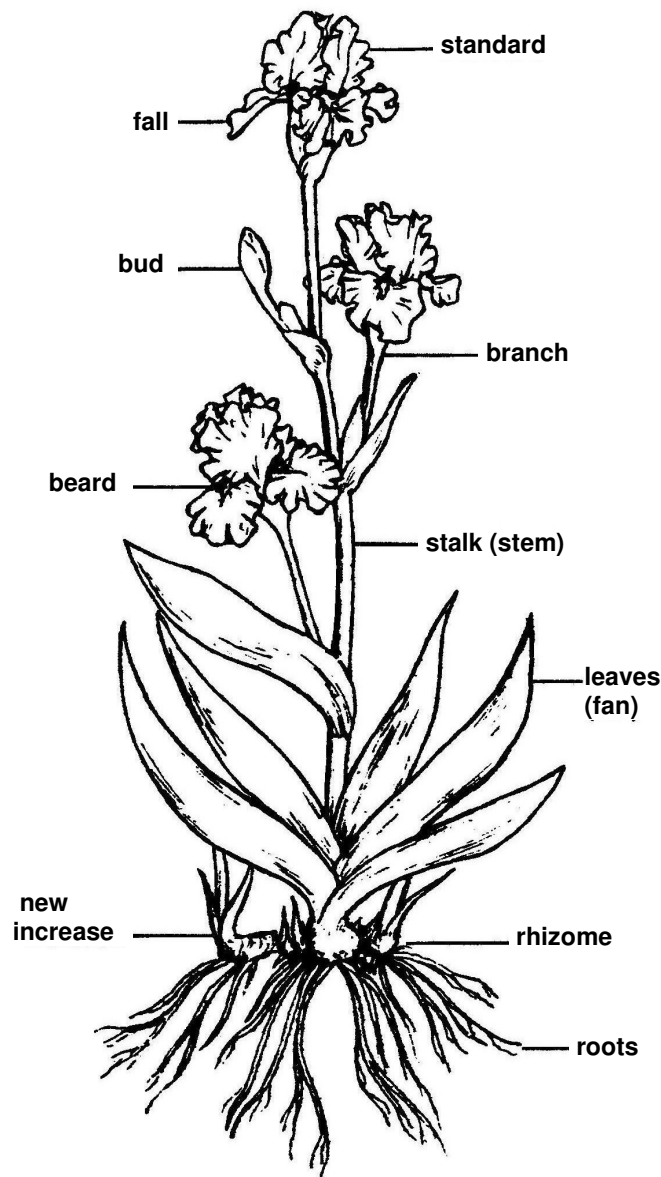
- The durability of the flower, in all its aspects, is determined by the substance, or inner tissue structure. The substance is what maintains the flower form until it folds, and helps the colour to hold its saturation.
- Substance should be sufficient to enable the flower to hold its form and not flop.
- The flower's texture e.g. velvety, smooth, leathery, laced, etc. may influence colour impact as it reflects or absorbs light. Any texture is acceptable, providing that the flower has good substance.

Distinctiveness, beauty and garden appeal:

Many different attributes of plant, stem and flower contribute to a variety's distinctiveness and appeal. Foliage colour (e.g. red or purple-based or variegated), length of bloom season or rebloom, and fragrance (especially if strong or unusual) can all make a significant contribution. Improvements in disease-resistance or adaptability to different growing conditions can also set a new variety apart from others. To merit full points for distinctiveness, a new variety should be distinctive enough to be recognized if garden labels were removed.

The plant should be vigorous, floriferous and healthy, an embodiment of grace and beauty.

A Bearded Iris Plant



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GENERAL SHOW JUDGING

INTRODUCED VARIETIES

The purpose of judging named cultivars on the show bench is not to determine the qualities and attributes that a particular variety has, but to assess the exhibitor's skill in growing and presenting that variety. Unlike in trial garden judging, where breeding advancements are sought, in show bench judging, both older and newer varieties should be considered equally. The judge should never allow his/her personal preferences to influence judgement, but should remain as objective as possible. It is desirable for the judge to be familiar with as many varieties as possible, of all iris types.

In the event that a judge thinks that an entry may have been misnamed, or entered in the wrong class, the judge may refer to the AIS Check Lists. The Check Lists should be available to the judge at the time of judging. Judges should take care when querying an entry's identity on the basis of colour alone, as some colours can look different under artificial lighting, or as a result of garden / weather conditions. A misnamed entry is not eligible for awards. If an entry has been placed in the wrong class, it should not be given an award, however if the error is discovered before judging commences, the show manager / steward should be asked to place it in its correct class. If that class has already been judged, the decision of whether to rejudge the class or disqualify that entry is at the discretion of the show manager.

A judge must not judge an exhibit as it *might* be, e.g. as it will be in an hour's time when the flower is fully open, or as it would be if the stem had been better presented. Instead, the judge must always judge the exhibit as it appears at the time of judging.

A judge who is judging at a show outside his/her local area should seek information from the show manager or show stewards regarding the local weather conditions experienced in the lead up to the show. This should be done before judging begins, as extreme weather in the preceding days or weeks or longer-term climate / weather conditions (e.g. drought) can affect the quality of entries, and should be taken into account when judging.

Points scales should not be used routinely in show bench judging, but are useful in providing guidelines as to the relative values of the different criteria. Point scales can also be of assistance when entries are of a similar standard, or when a panel of judges cannot reach agreement on the winner of a particular class, section or overall award.

SHOW JUDGING POINTS SYSTEM: INTRODUCED VARIETIES

Cultural Perfection: 75

Flower: 45

Colour (fading/markings/intensity): 10

Size (typical of cultivar): 5

Substance and texture: 10

Form (symmetry, presentation of standards, falls flared/not flared, distortion of flower parts, rips/tears, horns/flounces present): 20

Stem / Stalk: 30

Flowers (number of open blooms): 15

Branch Balance, Bud Placement and Stem Proportion: 15

Condition and Grooming: 25

Overall condition and grooming of the stem and flowers in preparation for presenting the stem / bloom for exhibition.

CORE CRITERIA FOR SHOW JUDGING

The following is a list of criteria which are relevant to show bench judging of most, if not all, iris types. Additional criteria specific to each iris type are listed under the headings for those types.

Flower

- Flowers should be fresh with no signs of aging.
- Flowers should appear symmetrical, with no twisted, distorted or extra flower parts.
- Bad tears or multiple tears should be heavily penalized, as should any significant damage from insects or animals.
- Substance should be adequate for maintenance of colour and form, however a judge is not permitted to touch the flower in assessing substance.
- Flower size should be typical of the cultivar, and in proportion to the size of the stem.
- Undersized flowers indicate poor culture.
- Colour should be clear with no discolouration, e.g. there should be a complete absence of the splotches and patches of atypical colour that occasionally occur due to weather conditions or virus. However, it is acceptable for 'broken colour' varieties, to display streaking or blotches of colour, as this is a typical feature.
- Standards must be held firmly in position and not flop.
- Flowers should appear well-proportioned.

Stem / Stalk

- Each stem should have at least 1 flower fully open.
- Where there is only 1 flower open, it should be in the terminal socket, except for stems of Louisianas.
- The stem should appear reasonably straight. A slight 's' curve is permissible for some iris types (e.g. Tall Bearded, Louisianas, Spurias), and zig-zag stems are permissible for Louisianas.
- The stem should appear well-balanced and –proportioned.
- There should be an adequate number of branches, and flowers should be spaced evenly down the stalk, rather than bunched at the top.
- Stems should not appear crowded.
- Open blooms should not interfere with each other, or be distorted by unopened buds or foliage.
- Multiple open blooms are good, but it should be remembered that the potential for faults increases with the number of blooms.
- Stem height and thickness should be in proportion to the flower size.
- Foliage should appear healthy, and free of disease and discolouration.
- All branches and flowers present must still be attached to the stem, otherwise the exhibit must be marked as N.A.S. (Not According to Schedule).
- Where a species is exhibited in the same class as modern hybrids, the species should not be penalized for having lower bud-counts or other characteristics typical of that species.
- Stems which are undersized indicate poor culture and should be penalized.
- Stems which are larger than expected with proportionately large flowers should be rewarded.

Condition and Grooming

- Spathes should be intact. If a flower or seed pod has been removed, the spathe should remain intact.
- A branch may be removed where a leaf conceals its connection to the stem, but there should be no visible damage.
- Stems should be exhibited with an appropriate height, which should be in proportion to the flower size.
- Stems should not have any foreign material left on them, such as name tags, cobwebs, etc. The presence of one or two aphids or other small insects is not a major fault as they can travel from stem to stem during or after entry, however infestation is completely unacceptable.
- There should be no dying flowers or seed pods left on the stem.
- Where trimming of foliage is necessary, only a small amount (e.g. less than 5mm (1/4")) should be removed, and trimming should follow the natural contour of the leaf.
- The bottom branch of the stem should be held above the top of the container. (This frequently requires a wedge to be used when placing the stem in a bottle).
- Where wedges are used to prop the stem in place in the container, the top of the wedge should be level with the top of the container, or protruding not more than 5mm (1/4") above it, so as not to distract attention from the iris itself. For the same reason, it is preferred that the wedge be iris material.
- Foliage should be clean.
- The leaf which covers the connection of a branch to the stem may be trimmed, but must not be removed.
- In some regions, it is preferred that the stalk is free of smudges and finger prints.

Vases

Where a show schedule provides for several stems to be displayed in the same vase, the following criteria should be considered:

- The entry must meet all requirements specified in the show schedule, such as the number of stems, colour variation allowed, etc.
- Where the schedule does not specify the number of stems, there should be 3 – 6 stems per vase.
- The stems should be arranged evenly around the vase, with no interference between stems, and with each stem able to be seen to its best.
- Stems should appear as fresh as possible.
- Each stem should have at least 1 flower open. Note that this does not have to be in the terminal socket for Louisianas.
- Stems should be displayed at equal heights, and flowers should be of equal size.
- The stem's natural foliage should be present, with any trimming kept to a minimum.
- Where the class calls for distinct cultivars, or allows colour variation, the combination of colours and patterns should be harmonious.

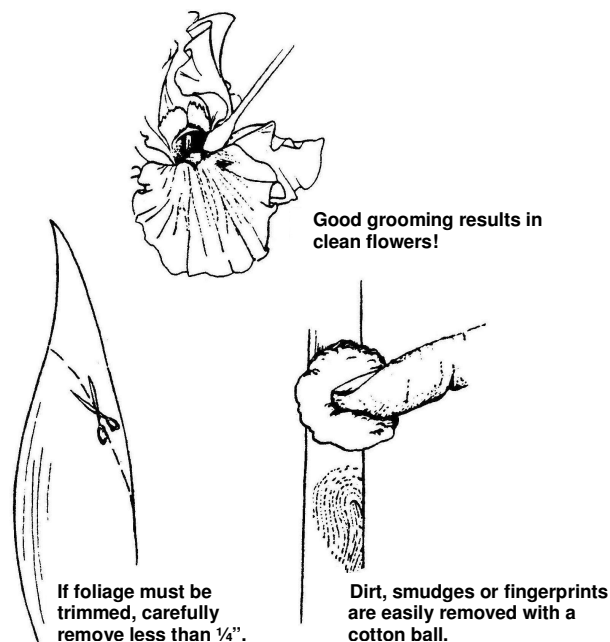
Single flowers (florets)

- Flowers should appear fresh, and fully open.
- Single flowers should be exhibited without buds or seed pods. Stems should be short, and some show schedules may state maximum allowable length (measured from the base of the ovary).
- Flowers should have a good balance and proportion between the standards and the falls.

For additional criteria, see listings under Flower on the previous page (Show Bench Judging section).

Plants exhibited in pots or containers

- The plant should have adequate increase, but should not over fill the pot or container.
- A pot should usually contain a single plant, however 2 plants are permissible, if they completely fill the pot.
- Flowers, stems and leaves should all appear fresh and clean.
- The condition of the plant should be considered: it should appear healthy and well-grown, with no evidence of disease, insect infestation or slug or snail damage.
- The plant should have at least 1 open flower on each stem.
- Stakes are permissible to support stems in pots of Tall Bearded or Louisianas, however they must be unobtrusive, and never taller than the plant.
- The pot must be clean, with no apparent spray residue, watermarks, protruding roots, etc.
- Pots must be weed-free, and any labels should have been removed.
- Where the potting mix is visible, it should appear freshly scarified (i.e. the surface should have been loosened to make it look fresh).



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GENERAL SHOW JUDGING OF SEEDLINGS

The purpose of judging seedling classes is to assess whether the seedlings being exhibited represent advancements in breeding. Features which are new, distinctive, or represent an improvement over existing varieties are sought. Here grooming is not an important factor, as it is the merit of the seedling that is being judged, not its presentation.

When judging seedling classes, it is important to remember that the same criteria apply as in garden judging, except that you are judging flower and stalk, rather than the whole plant. It is important that the judge keep abreast with recent developments and trends in hybridizing, as a good knowledge of what is already commercially available is essential here, as it is in garden judging.

As with introduced varieties, points scales should not be used routinely in show bench judging of seedlings. However, it is important to note the different emphasis reflected in the point scale for judging seedlings as opposed to introduced varieties. In particular, Condition & Grooming receive no points, but 25 points are given for Distinctiveness.

Seedling number and parentage, where known, should be clearly displayed. At shows where it is felt that the seedling number and parentage may serve to identify the hybridizer, they may be concealed during judging.

SHOW JUDGING POINTS SYSTEM: SEEDLINGS

Flower: 40

Colour: 15

Form: 15

Substance and Durability: 10

Stalk: 35

Proportion, Poise and Balance: 15

Bud count: 10

Branching: 10

Distinctiveness: 25

CLASS: POGON (Bearded)

TALL BEARDED IRISES

Height: 71cm (27.5 in.) and above

Rather than having originated from only one or two species, Tall Bearded irises feature virtually all of the true bearded species in their genetic background, and possibly even one or two of the aril species. Many of the plants used by hybridizers in developing the early commercial varieties were not true species themselves, but were most likely naturally arising species hybrids. Those species which have played the greatest role in the development of tall bearded hybrids include forms of *I. pallida*, *I. variegata*, *I. trojana*, *I. mesopotamica*, *I. kashmiriana*, *I. cypriana*, *I. aphylla*, *I. imbricata*, *I. reichenbachii*, and *I. germanica*, which is often incorrectly used as a name for all bearded iris species.

The complex genetic background of the bearded irises has led to an incredible diversity of colour and pattern. Many of these colour patterns have been given specific names, which it is essential that both judges and stewards should understand. Those commonly used in show schedules include: amoena, bicolour, bitone, blend, fancy, luminata, neglecta, plicata, self and variegata. Definitions of these and other useful terms can be found in the glossary at the end of the manual.

GARDEN JUDGING

For overall guidelines, see the General Garden Judging section.

Judging seedling irises in a trial garden setting is vastly different to judging single stems or blooms of named varieties on the show bench. There are different iris qualities to be considered, and awards are given for different reasons.

In the trial garden the whole plant must come under close scrutiny, and particular attention must be given to the plant's health and vigour. Distinctiveness is very important when considering new seedlings, however distinctiveness alone is not enough to merit awards or introduction.

"Novelty" irises, such as those with flat-shaped flowers, broken colour blooms or variegated foliage should be judged according to their merits. In evaluating these, the judge needs to remain objective, and assess both the expression of the unusual feature and the overall plant habits intelligently, rather than to merely dismiss them as being abnormal. It is important to note that in most "novelty" irises, the unusual feature is not completely consistent, but it should appear at least 65 percent of the time.

The plant's garden value is of prime importance and length of bloom season is an important factor here, as is general floriferousness. The plant should be an asset to the landscape, and give a well-proportioned, appealing view from a distance, as well as up close.

The criteria listed below should be read in conjunction with the Core Criteria for Garden Judging.

Plant

Growth and increase, health / disease-resistance

The variety should not take too long to form a clump but should not become overcrowded with increases. It should produce 3 – 5 increases per rhizome per year. Fewer than 3 increases should be penalized, as slow growth can lead to a risk of bloom out. Varieties should be able to perform dependably for 3 bloom seasons without being divided.

The plant should have an overall attractive appearance, with foliage in proportion to the stem height. Foliage should be erect, with little leaf spot or other discolouration.

Stem / Stalk

Branching, strength and proportion

The branching of a tall bearded stem should display the flowers so that they can be seen clearly, and are held well above the foliage.

Poor branching comes in many forms. These include: high branching where the branches are all on the upper third of the stem; excessively long branches where a number of flowers are displayed at the same level, giving an unpleasant effect; and an absence of branching, where the stem has very few lateral branches, with correspondingly reduced bud count and overall balance.

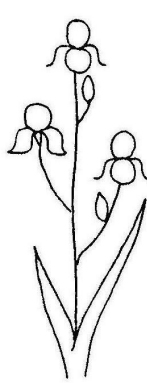
Evaluating branching in an established clump can be different to evaluating branching on a first-year seedling, as with multiple stems, there is possibility of interference of one stem's flowers with another's. Thus a modified candelabrum-type branching is usually considered the most desirable in garden judging. Stems should have at least two branches in addition to the terminal, arranged evenly on the upper two-thirds of the stem. An additional branch, or a secondary bloom stem from the rhizome is desirable if positioned so as to avoid crowding.

The single bud which is often seen just below the highest flowering position is known as a "spur" rather than a branch. A spur present in that position or which appears as a bonus on a lateral branch is considered desirable so long as the flowers are not crowded.

Bud count, floriferousness and bloom sequence

A variety should be able to remain in bloom for a minimum of two weeks. Stalks which display more than 2 flowers open at a time will result in shortened bloom time for the clump. Varieties which overbloom or which produce a small number of bloomstalks for the number of fans should be penalized. Stem to fan ratio should be between 1:4 and 3:4.

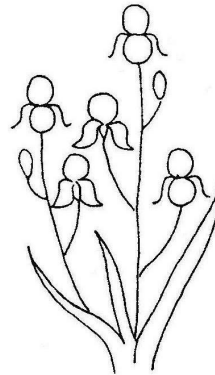
Each stem should produce a minimum of 7 buds.



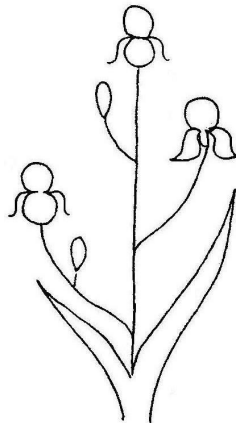
2 branches & spur



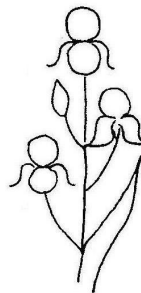
high branching
"Bunched"



secondary bloom stalk



wide candelabra



short

TYPES OF BRANCHING

© The American Iris Society.

Flower

Colour

In blended colours and bitones, look for subtle and harmonious tones whose colour appeals, and is fresh and clean. Muddy or drab colours can be considered unattractive. Flower colour should remain attractive for at least 3 days before fading.

Haft markings are judged according to whether they add to or detract from the flower's overall appearance. Beards which are well-matched or contrasting can enhance the colour of the flower, and a wide beard is generally preferred to a thin, sparse one.

Form

Flower form has a significant impact on a plant's overall appearance. A flower with wide, modern form has a much greater surface area on which to display the colour than the narrow flowers of historic irises. Flower form is perhaps the area of most rapid change in iris breeding, and a range of forms are acceptable, provided that the flowers are well-balanced and well-proportioned.

Standards may be erect or domed. They may be open, touching or overlapping, but must always be symmetrical. Standards which are flat are acceptable, but must be held flat from the time the flower opens. Strong midribs are essential, as in all form types, standards must be held firmly in position and not flop. The falls should provide a good balance to the standards. Variability in fall shape is acceptable, and falls may be flared or hanging, but should not droop. Narrowness at the hafts is detrimental to the appearance of the flower and pinched, narrow or strappy falls are to be avoided. Wide falls with overlapping hafts are considered desirable.

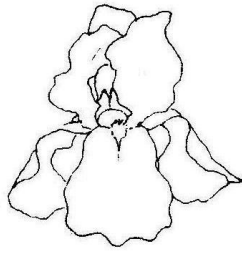
The beard extensions seen in "space age" irises (e.g. horns, spoons or flounces) are completely acceptable and should be in proportion to the rest of the flower.

Substance, texture and durability

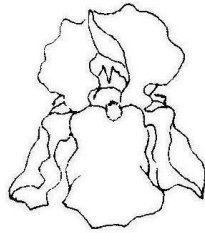
Substance should be sufficient to hold the standards upright in wet weather, and to enable the flower to withstand all but the most extreme weather conditions. Flowers that develop white spots in the sun or which rapidly develop watery edges are lacking in substance, and it should be noted that a crepe-like texture is also often associated with poor substance. A cultivar should be penalized points for substance if it is not able to maintain its form and colour saturation for at least 3 days.

Distinctiveness, Beauty and Garden Appeal

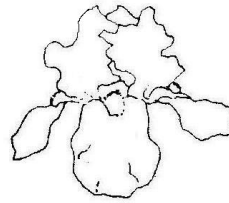
See under Core Criteria for Garden Judging.



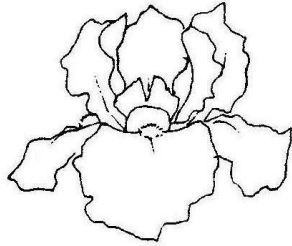
narrow haft tucked falls



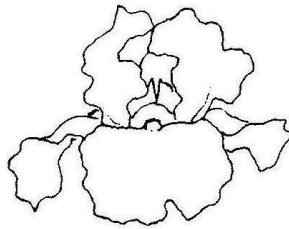
hanging, narrow, pinched falls



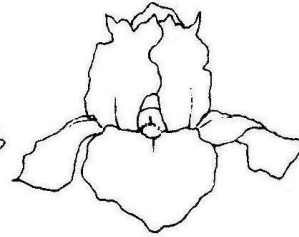
narrow falls



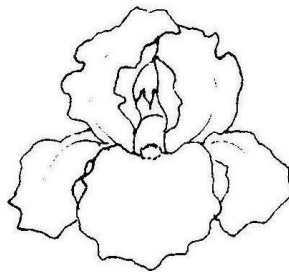
open standards



wide, flaring falls

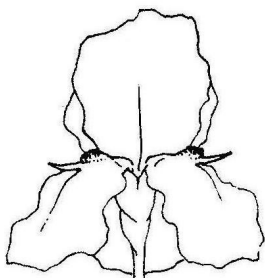


conical standards

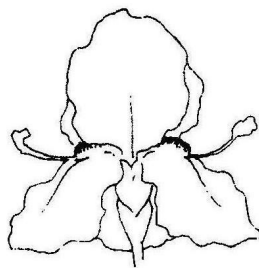


domed standards

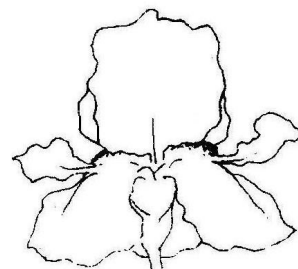
FLOWER FORM



“horned” iris



“spooned” iris



“flounced” iris

SHOW JUDGING of Tall Bearded Irises

SHOW JUDGING OF INTRODUCED VARIETIES

The criteria listed below should be read in conjunction with the Core Criteria for Show Judging.

Flower

- Aging flowers exhibit slight watery, almost transparent areas near the petal edges, especially at the hafts. These should be penalized in judging.
- Colour should not display any fading due to age. Where a stem has several open blooms, they should all have a similar intensity of colour.
- Standards may be touching, overlapping or open.
- Falls should be in proportion to the standards.

Stem / Stalk

- A stem should appear straight, or may have a slight 's' shape.
- Foliage should be neat.

Condition and Grooming

- Spathes may appear green or papery.

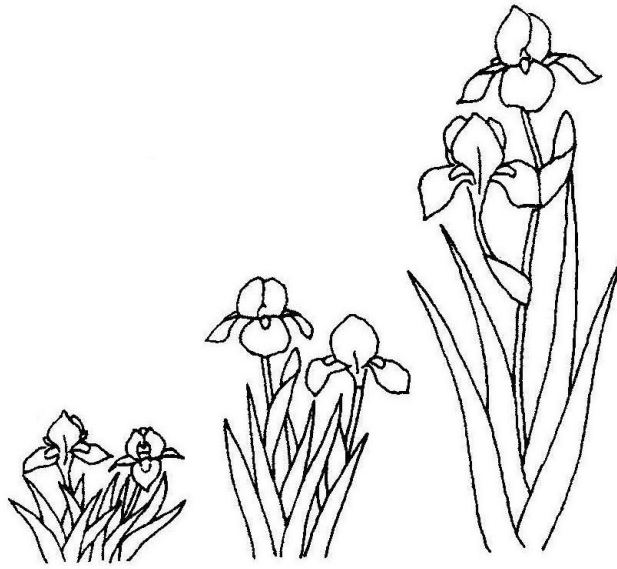
Point judging should not be used routinely on the show bench, where efficient judging is required. However, a points system can be useful where entries in a class are of almost equal quality, where there is disagreement between judges, or in selection of the show champion. See the General Show Judging: Introduced Varieties section for the points system.

When judging a class designated for Historic irises, judges should be aware that many diploid bearded varieties do not conform to the height classifications of modern cultivars.

SHOW JUDGING OF SEEDLINGS

For guidelines and points system, see the General Show Judging: Seedlings section.

The Bearded Irises



MDB

SDB

IB



MTB

BB

TB

JUDGING DWARF AND MEDIAN IRISES

Definitions and Characteristics

When judging dwarf and median irises, a judge needs first and foremost to be familiar with the characteristics and height limits of the different types.

The term median is sometimes defined as referring to any bearded iris shorter than a Tall Bearded (TB), (71 cm or 28 in.), but is perhaps more commonly used to refer to those irises larger than a Standard Dwarf Bearded but smaller than a TB, especially Intermediate Bearded and Border Bearded.

Miniature Dwarf Bearded (MDB) irises grow **up to 20 cm (8 in.)** and stems usually have no branches. These are the earliest of all bearded irises to bloom, and *Iris pumila* features heavily in their breeding background.

Standard Dwarf Bearded (SDB) irises are **21-40 cm (9-15 in.)** tall. Stems most often carry 3 buds, with 2 in the terminal socket. They bloom after the miniature dwarfs and before the intermediate bearded irises. Both MDB and SDB irises combine a daintiness of flower with garden qualities of vigour and floriferousness quite different to those of other bearded iris types.

Intermediate Bearded (IB) irises are **41-70 cm (16-27 in.)** tall and are branched. They bloom after the dwarf types and before Tall Bearded. Their parentage is most commonly half dwarf, half Tall Bearded, so they show some characteristics from each. However, there is also some diversity in this class. The type of branching and number of buds varies depending on the species background to the breeding, but there should be a minimum of two branches and four to five buds.

Border Bearded (BB) irises have the same height range as IBs, being **41-70 cm (16-27 in.)** tall, however BBs are generally derived from TB breeding, so bloom at the same time as the TBs and have similar flowers. However, as with other median irises, proportion is of paramount importance. In particular, a BB should not just look like a TB with a short stem, but should have bloom size, stem thickness and leaf height all reduced, in keeping with the stem height. Border Bearded should have at least 2 branches, with a minimum of five buds.

Miniature Tall Bearded (MTB) irises grow **41-70 cm (16-27 in.)** tall. (Flowers must not have a combined height and width of more than 15 cm (6 in.)) Stems should be slender and graceful, and should carry at least two branches with an overall minimum of six buds, but preferably eight or nine. Proportion is everything, as a MTB should not look like a TB with miniature flowers, but must have the slender stalks and thinner leaves vital for an overall appearance of delicacy and grace.

Arilmeds (AM) are Aril or Arilbred irises **under 71 cm (28 in.)** in height. The shorter arilbreds often have a median as the bearded parent. Arilmeds should display some aril characteristics, such as the prominent signal patch on the falls and flower shape. As with taller aril or arilbred irises, branching and bud count should be viewed in the context of parentage (eg. proportion of aril content, and oncocyclis or regelia heritage).

General guidelines:

- Cultivars whose bloom time differs from that typical of their class should not be penalised.
- Bearded iris classifications have changed over the years, however show exhibits should be entered according to the category in which they were registered (e.g. IB). Judges should take into account that the characteristics of that iris class at the time of registration may differ from the expectations of that class today.

Miniature Dwarf Bearded Irises (MDB):

Height: up to 20 cm (8 in.)

The criteria listed below should be read in conjunction with the Core Criteria for Garden and Show Judging.

GARDEN JUDGING

Plant

- Lack of vigour is a greater problem than overabundant increase.

Stem / Stalk

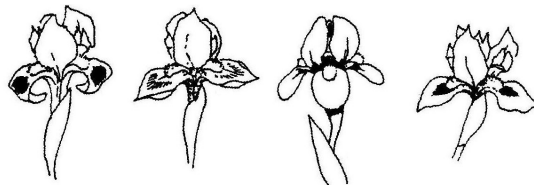
- When looking at floriferousness, varieties should be judged as clumps, with length of bloom duration of the clump important as well as the total number of flowers. Some varieties may produce multiple stems per rhizome.
- Foliage should never be taller than the flower stalks.
- There is a wide range of heights within this class, and varieties which grow taller than the 20 cm (8 in.) specified height should not be penalised if all other characteristics (especially bloom size) fit the MDB class.
- If branching occurs, it should not cause the flowers to be crowded. Bud count is usually 2.
- The stalk should be slender, and may simply be an elongated perianth tube, with the ovary immediately above the rhizome.
- Good proportion is essential and all aspects of the plant must be evaluated together.

Flower

- Flowers should be dainty, with flower size in proportion to plant size.
- Open standards that reveal a pleasing view of the interior are as desirable as closed ones.
- Flaring or horizontal falls are preferred to vertical ones, as flowers are generally viewed from above.
- Falls may be simply flared, curl under or roll to a point, any of these is acceptable if it does not detract from the overall appearance, or adversely affect the display of colour and pattern.
- Colour can vary according to season and soil type, and the *pumila* spot pattern may appear well-defined in one location or year and fuzzy in another. Where the spot pattern appears well-defined on one variety, but indistinct on surrounding plants, the clear one should be rewarded.
- Likewise, varieties which do not display irregular dark-coloured streaks or blotches in cold, wet weather when others around them do should be rewarded, although it should be remembered that these streaks / blotches are generally most apparent on light-coloured flowers.
- The colour and form of beards can have a significant impact on overall appearance and distinctiveness. Beard colours that match flower colour or contrast well are desirable, and bushy beards are preferable to thinner ones.
- Flower features such as ruffles, lace or beard extensions (eg. horns, spoons, etc.) should not overwhelm or distort the basic flower shape.

SHOW JUDGING

- The stalk should be slender, and may simply be an elongated perianth tube.
- If branching occurs, it should not cause the flowers to be crowded. Bud count is usually 2.
- Flowers should be small and dainty.
- Falls may be simply flared, curl under or roll to a point, any of these is acceptable if it does not detract from the overall appearance.
- Open standards that reveal a pleasing view of the interior are as desirable as closed ones.
- Irregular dark-coloured streaks or blotches may appear in cold or damp conditions.
- The flower should be fully open, but as fresh as possible.



The dainty flowers of the very early miniature dwarfs have striking colour patterns and variations in form.

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Standard Dwarf Bearded Irises (SDB):

Height: 21-40 cm (9-15 in.)

The criteria listed below should be read in conjunction with the Core Criteria for Garden and Show Judging.

GARDEN JUDGING

Plant

- Garden judging of Standard Dwarf Bearded Iris should not be done on first-year plants as performance in the first year may not be typical for the cultivar.

Stem / Stalk

- Stems usually carry three buds, with two in the terminal socket.
- When looking at floriferousness, cultivars should be judged as clumps, with length of bloom duration of the clump important as well as total number of flowers. Numerous stems are expected, and an established clump should stay in bloom for at least 10-15 days.
- More stems with fewer buds to each are acceptable if the overall bloom period is adequate.
- The ratio of stems to fans should not exceed 50%.
- Some varieties produce taller bloom stalks as the bloom season progresses, and should not be penalised for doing so.
- Foliage should not be taller than the flower stems.
- Good proportion is essential and all aspects of the plant must be evaluated together.

Flower

- Flowers should be dainty, with flower size in proportion to stem height and plant size.
- Standards can be open or closed, but must have strong midribs so that they do not flop.
- Horizontal or flaring falls are desirable, as they enhance the display of colour and pattern.
- Owing to the diversity in background, there is a range of acceptable flower forms for SDBs, but long narrow falls or ones which are pinched or tucked under should be avoided. Falls which roll to a point are acceptable.
- The colour and form of beards can have a significant impact on overall appearance, and distinctiveness. Beard colours that match flower colour or contrast well are desirable.
- *Pumila* spot patterns on the falls are desirable, but should appear well-defined rather than fuzzy.
- Substance should be good enough for the bloom to stand up to the variable weather which often occurs during the SDB bloom season.
- Flower features such as ruffles, lace or beard extensions (eg. horns, spoons, etc.) should not overwhelm or distort the basic flower shape.

SHOW JUDGING

- Stems can be branched and 2 flowers out is good, providing they are well spaced.
- Standards can be open or closed, but must have strong midribs so that they do not flop.
- Falls should not be tucked under, but ones that roll to a point are acceptable.
- Horizontal or flaring falls are desirable.
- Flower size should be in proportion to stem height.
- In seedlings, *pumila* spot patterns on the falls are desirable, but should appear well defined rather than fuzzy.
- Flowers should be fresh and fully open.
- Flowers should have a dainty appearance.

Intermediate Bearded Irises (IB):

Height: 41-70 cm (16-27 in.)

The criteria listed below should be read in conjunction with the Core Criteria for Garden and Show Judging.

GARDEN JUDGING

Plant

- The intermediate class encompasses a wide range of plant and flower types, and no one type should be preferred, so long as the variety satisfactorily fulfils general quality requirements.
- Intermediates are generally free-blooming, with good vigour – failure to meet these standards, should be severely penalised.
- Plant shape should ideally be neat and compact, but without sacrificing vigour.

Stem / Stalk

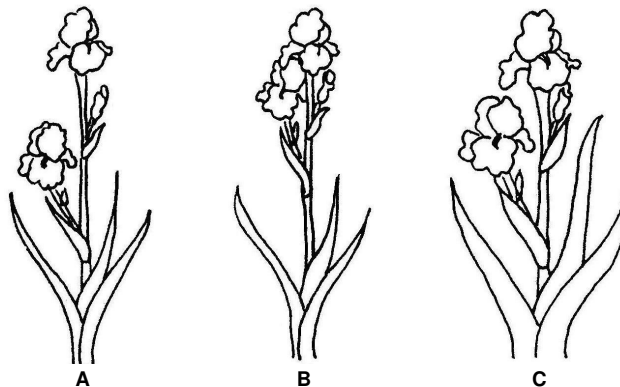
- Type of branching varies depending on species background, but there should be at least 2 branches and 4-5 buds.
- When looking at floriferousness, varieties should be judged as clumps. Higher bud counts are preferred, but varieties which have a long season of bloom due to repeat or sequential stems should not be penalised for having fewer buds per stem.
- The stem should appear balanced, with branching evenly spaced.
- Foliage should be in proportion to stem dimensions, and should not be so tall that it interferes with the flowers during bloom.
- Good proportion is essential and all aspects of the plant must be evaluated together.

Flower

- Flower size should be in proportion to the stem height and diameter.
- Standards can be open or closed, but must have strong midribs so that they do not flop.
- Flower features such as ruffles, lace or beard extensions (eg. horns, spoons, etc.) should not overwhelm or distort the basic flower shape.
- *Pumila* spot patterns or halos on the falls are desirable.

SHOW JUDGING

- Type of branching varies depending on species background, but there should be at least 2 branches and 4-5 buds.
- Flower size should be in proportion to the stem height and diameter.
- Standards can be open or closed, but must have strong midribs so that they do not flop.
- Foliage should be in proportion to stem dimensions.
- The stem should appear balanced, with branching evenly spaced.
- In seedlings, *pumila* spot patterns or halos on the falls are desirable.
- Varieties which have been registered as intermediates must be entered as such, even if their bloom and height characteristics appear better suited to another class.



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

Border Bearded Irises (BB):

Height: 41-70 cm (16-27 in.)

The criteria listed below should be read in conjunction with the Core Criteria for Garden and Show Judging.

GARDEN JUDGING

Plant

- Lack of vigour or tendency to bloom-out should be severely penalised as it is important to ensure that BB varieties are not merely TBs which display slow and stunted growth.

Stem / Stalk

- BBs which frequently grow taller than the specified maximum height of 70 cm (27 in.) should not be registered in this class, however an occasional slightly taller stalk should not be penalised in a variety which usually conforms to size requirements.
- Stems should have at least 2 branches and 5 buds. Greater numbers of branches and buds are preferred, especially in taller varieties, however flowers and stalks should not be crowded.
- A general guideline for stem / flower proportion is that the stem height be approx. 3 times the overall size of the flowers, but this is a guide, not an absolute, as colour impact and other factors also contribute to an overall appearance of balance and harmony.
- Foliage should be in proportion to stem dimensions.
- Stems should appear balanced, with branching evenly spaced.
- Stems must be strong enough to support the blooms, but should appear graceful rather than excessively thick.
- Good proportion is essential and all aspects of the plant must be evaluated together.

Flower

- Flower form is usually similar to that of TB irises, but since BBs are generally viewed from above, falls should be flaring, with the degree of flare in keeping with the height of the stem.
- Standards which are closed or nearly so are preferable, but open standards are acceptable provided they are held firmly erect or cupped, and present a balanced and harmonious appearance.
- Flower features such as ruffles, lace or beard extensions (eg. horns, spoons, etc.) should not overwhelm or distort the basic flower shape.
- Flower substance should be good, but not so thick that it prevents the bloom opening easily or makes it rigid and prone to fracture.

SHOW JUDGING

- Stems should have at least 2 branches and 5 buds.
- Flower form is usually similar to that of TB irises.
- Standards which are closed or nearly so are preferable, but open standards are acceptable provided they are held firmly erect or cupped, and present a balanced and harmonious appearance.
- Both flowers and foliage should be in proportion to the stem dimensions.
- Stems should appear balanced, with branching evenly spaced.
- Stems must be strong enough to support the blooms, but should appear graceful rather than excessively thick.
- Varieties which have been registered as BBs must be entered as such, even if the bloom size and height characteristics appear more suited to a TB class.

Miniature Tall Bearded Irises (MTB):

Height: 41-70 cm (16-27 in.)

The criteria listed below should be read in conjunction with the Core Criteria for Garden and Show Judging.

GARDEN JUDGING

Plant

- The plant should give an overall impression of daintiness and grace.

Stem / Stalk

- A variety whose typical performance does not meet the guidelines for height, flower size and stem diameter should be penalised, however an occasional slightly taller stalk or larger bloom should not be penalised in a variety which usually conforms to requirements.
- Stem diameter should be 3-5 mm at the base of the terminal flowers, gradually increasing to 16mm at the base of the stem.
- Stem height of 53-56 cm is ideal, but height is not as important as overall proportion and balance.
- Stems should be well-proportioned, slender and flexible, giving a graceful appearance.
- Foliage should be in proportion to stems. Leaves which exhibit a slight twist or sickle-shape are acceptable.
- Flowers should be held well above the foliage.
- Stems should have at least 2 branches. While a bud count of 6 is acceptable, 8 to 9 is preferred.
- When looking at floriferousness, varieties should be judged as clumps. More stems with fewer buds to each are acceptable.

Flower

- Flowers which are tailored or lightly ruffled may be preferable to heavily ruffled but less dainty forms.
- Closed standards are preferred, but open standards are acceptable, if they are held erect and reveal a pleasing view of the interior.
- Falls should be flaring or semi-flaring.
- Clean stripes in flowers are not considered a fault, as these are a common characteristic in MTBs.
- Flower texture should be smooth rather than grained.
- Bloom size should be typical for the variety, but should not have a combined height and width of more than 15 cm (6 in.).
- Flower substance should be sufficient for the bloom to stand up to normal weather conditions, ideally for 3 days.
- It is favourable if there is a pleasant fragrance.

SHOW JUDGING

- Stems should have at least 2 branches and 6 buds.
- Bloom size should be typical for the variety, but should not have a combined height and width of more than 15 cm (6 in.).
- Stems should be well-proportioned, slender and flexible, giving a graceful appearance.
- Foliage should be in proportion to stems. Leaves which exhibit a slight twist or sickle-shape are acceptable.
- Closed standards are preferred, but open standards are acceptable, if they are held erect and reveal a pleasing view of the interior.
- Falls should be flaring or semi-flaring.

Arilmed Irises (AM):

Height: under 71 cm (28 in.)

Arilmeds should be evaluated according to the criteria for arils and arilbreds, but where the bearded parent of an arilbred is a median, it should be remembered that this may influence the bearded characteristics accordingly.

PURE ARILS AND ARILBRED IRISES

Contributed by Pat Toolan (*With permission from the American Iris Society (AIS) and based on the AIS judges handbook section written by the Aril Society International aril/arilbred growers and breeders of note.*)

Definitions and Characteristics

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) irises.

These irises are not grown extensively but they are suited to many parts of Australia.

They are very different and come in many forms that make judging them difficult without a detailed knowledge of the variation to be found in this group.

It is recommended that judges learn more about these irises from the Aril Society International website:

<http://www.arilsociety.org>

ARILS (A)

Arils may be pure or hybrid species between:

ONCOCYCLUS (O and OH), species or hybrids involving only oncocyclus.

REGELIA (R and RH), species or hybrids involving only regelia.

REGELIOCYCLUS (RC) hybrids involving regelia and oncocyclus with the regelia characteristics predominating.

ONCOGELIA (OG), hybrids involving oncocylus and regelia, with oncocyclus characteristics predominating.

ARILBREDS (AB)

ONCOBRED (OB), hybrids involving only oncocyclus and other bearded irises.

REGELIABRED (RB), hybrids involving only regelia and other bearded irises.

ONCOGELIABRED (OGB), hybrids involving oncocylus, regelia, and other bearded irises.

Each of the three classes of arilbreds is divided into three subclasses based on the amount of aril content in the hybrid, i.e. less than ½ aril; ½ aril; and over ½ aril. This is shown respectively by a minus (-), no sign, or a plus (+) after the class abbreviations, eg. RB-, OB, OGB+

Hints to recognising the different characteristics of the species include:

Regelia type flowers:

1. elongated in both standards and falls as in *I. korolkowii*
2. linear beards on standards as well as the falls
3. remarkable veining
4. a prominent V-shaped spot in a contrasting colour.

Onco type flowers:

1. broadly domed and reflexed standards as in *I. gatesii*
2. ruffled and reflexed standards, as in *I. lortetii*
3. accentuated globular form as in *I. susiana*
4. extremely broad falls.
5. well recurved falls
6. thick, heavy or broadly spread beards as in *I. susiana* or *I. gatesii*
7. exaggerated styles as in *I. bismarkiana* and *I. iberica*
8. a definable signal spot on the falls at the end of the beard
9. flaring and lanceolate falls as in *I. acutiloba*
10. narrow and flaring falls as in *I. paradoxa*
11. linear beards as in *I. meda* and beards on the standards as well as the falls.

ONCOCYCLUS SPECIES AND HYBRIDS

As the variation of characteristics in flower types has shown it is only to be expected that with 50 different species the plant characteristics are also as equally diverse.

- Only a single flower to a stem.
- Flower size: from dwarf to the size of tall bearded iris.
- Stem height from 8 to 71 cm (3 to 28 inches).
- Stem width from wiry and small to thick and fleshy.

REGELIA SPECIES AND HYBRIDS

- Usually two buds on a slender stem with the flower smaller in proportion to the height of the stem.
- Standards are usually pointed and touching but may also be widely open in some species.
- Some have prominent veining while others may have a smoothness of colour and texture.
- Beards on both falls and inside standards – often brightly coloured.
- Signal spots are small and on the upper part of the V-shaped coloured spot.

REGELIOCYCLI

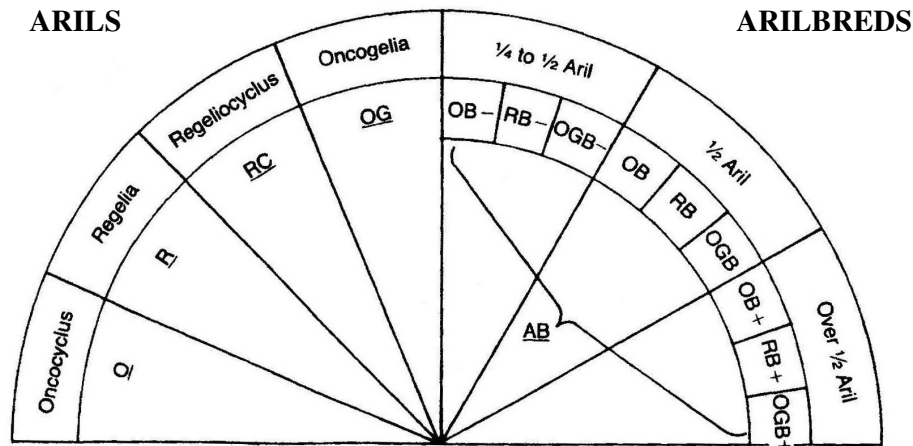
- Plant, stem and flower size is mostly between regelia and oncocycli.
- Usually two buds, flowers have ornamental veining.

This group is easier to grow and maintain than the oncocycli.

ONCOGELIAS

Hybrids of this group show more oncocycli characteristics than the regeliocycli.

- One or two buds to a stem.
- Easier to grow and flower than the oncocycli due to the regelia component.



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GARDEN JUDGING

When judging arils and arilbreds in the trial garden, it is important to remember that points should be awarded according to how well the flower and plant perform for their class. In particular, criteria such as vigour, disease-resistance, bud count, etc. should be assessed not in comparison to tall bearded growing nearby, but against what would be considered good performance for that particular type of aril / arilbred.

Points to look for:

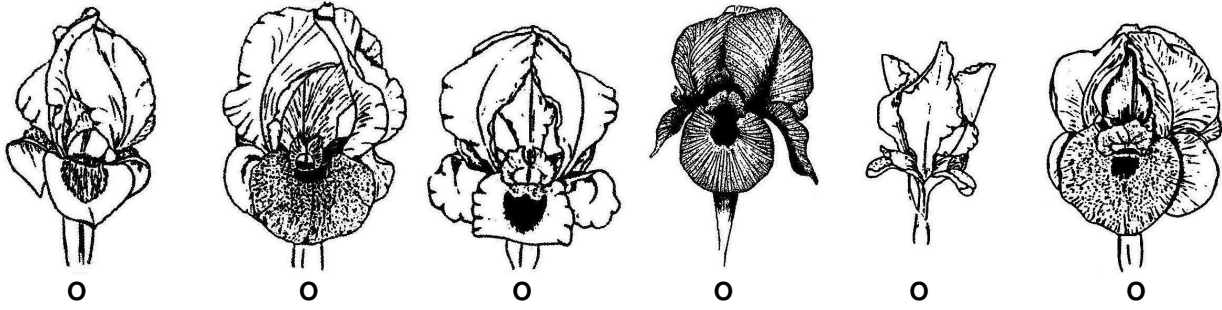
1. desirable improvement
2. diversity
3. expectations of the type and class
4. increased cultural and weather tolerances
5. regularity of bloom
6. number of stems
7. rate of increase
8. general vigour
9. better substance
10. disease resistance

Remember that there is no “normal” form of either aril or arilbred. Diversity of form and flower types are “normal”. Clean colours are desired in all forms and types. Flowers should be above the foliage and the stem should be strong enough to support the flower under normal conditions.

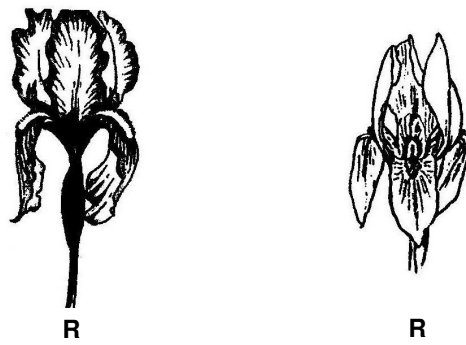
Flower size should be in proportion to the stem and flower should be distinctive.

ARIL SPECIES AND HYBRIDS

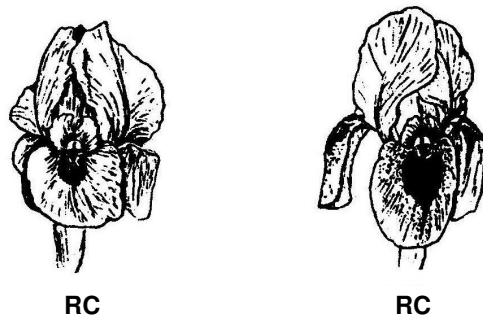
ONCOCYCLUS



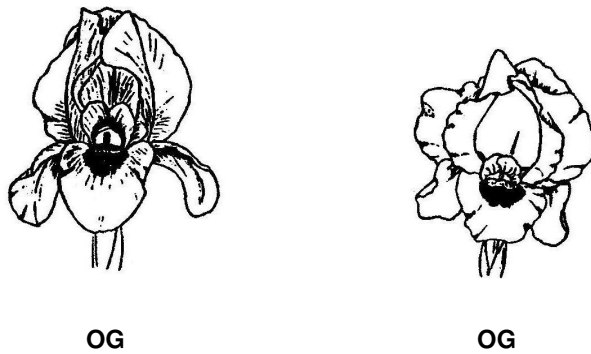
REGELIA



REGELIOCYCLI



ONCOGELIAS



EVALUATION OF ARIL FLOWERS

Hybridising goals include

- new and improved forms
- new colours and combinations of colour
- transfer of signal colour, size and shape to different plants
- different patterns and combinations of patterns.

Flower form is of utmost importance but no variety should be dismissed if it has a different or unfamiliar form.

Standards should be domed rather than paddle shaped.

Undesirable flower traits:

- Excessive recurving, rolling or snapping of the falls.
- Excessive flagging of the standards.
- Pinching or swirling of flower segments.
- Narrow haft area in relation to the fall width.

Desirable colour aspects:

- Signals or colour spots should be noticeable.
- Signal size, colour, shape and definition.
- If present, decorative patterns, veining, and stippling should be well defined and have good colour intensity.

Undesirable colour aspects:

- Irregular colour flecking, streaking, or splotching which may indicate disease rather than true aril traits.

EVALUATION OF ARILBRED FLOWERS

Basically the same as for aril flowers.

Hybridising goals include:

- Continuance of exotic forms, signals, colourations, and patterns
- More hardiness and better disease resistance
- Increased branching and bud count
- Adaptability to growing conditions
- Transferring the prominent dark or brightly coloured signal patch and form of the aril species, flower shape and size.

The most important aspect of judging arilbreds is to evaluate the extent to which desirable aril flower characteristics are present in the cultivar. The number of aril characteristics should be appropriate for the class, with the following guidelines:

Less than one-half aril content (OB- , RB- or OGB-)

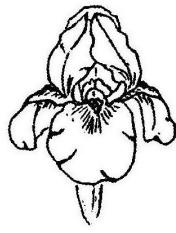
- Requires two recognizable aril characteristics.

One half or more aril content (OB, RB, OGB, OB+, RB+, OGB+, RC, OG, R, RH, O or OH)

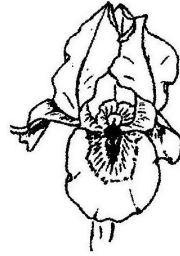
- Requires three recognizable aril characteristics.

ARILBREDS

Less than one-half aril content

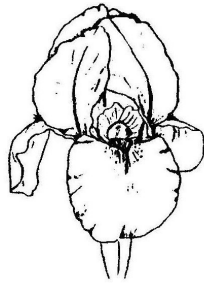


OGB-

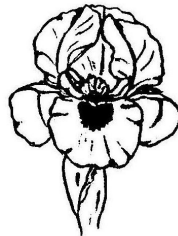


OGB-

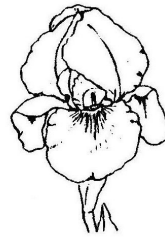
One-half aril content



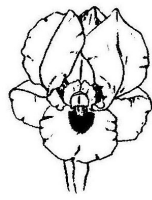
OGB



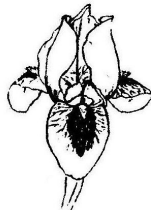
OGB



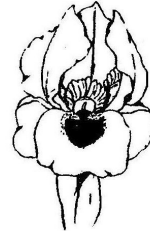
OGB



OGB

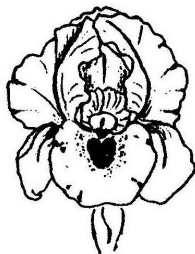


OGB

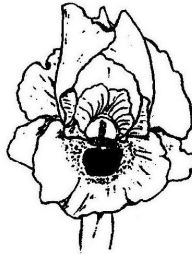


OGB

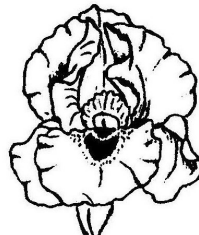
Over one-half aril content



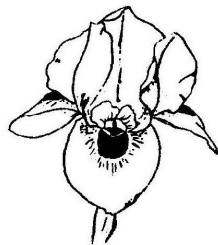
OGB+



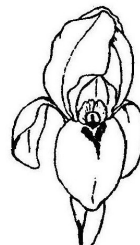
OGB+



OGB+



OGB+



OGB+

EVALUATION OF ARILBRED BRANCHING

- Branches to be well placed, evenly spaced and held away from the stem
- Judges should remember the amount of aril content affects the amount of branching (*aril content of 50% or more profoundly reduces the number of buds and branching*)
- Some cultivars have more or less branching and budcount than stated in the guidelines, however the plant should be judged as a whole, giving proper considerations to both flower and plant.

Less than one-half aril content (OB- , RB- or OGB-)

- Height, branching and budcount are sometimes equal to, but generally slightly reduced from that of the eupogon parentage. Although branching may be intermediate between that of the aril and eupogon parent, it is usually closer to the eupogon parent.

One half aril content (OB, RB or OGB)

- Branching typically intermediate between the aril and eupogon parents.
- Should usually have one branch, a spur, plus terminal, with a total of 4 buds, where the eupogon parent is a Tall Bearded. Less branching or budcount should not be penalised, but the plant evaluated as a whole.

More than one-half aril content (OB+, RB+ or OGB+)

- Unlikely to display any branching at all. Usually has two buds.

Prime objective of arilbred hybridising:

- Amount and degree of desirable aril flower characteristics present in the cultivar for its particular class.

Judges should visit as many gardens growing arils and arilbreds as possible to familiarise themselves with the class.

SHOW JUDGING

SHOW JUDGING OF INTRODUCED VARIETIES

The aim of an entry on the show bench is to show the grower's skill and accomplishment in culture and grooming. In close selection of awards, judges should consider the degree of horticultural skill required in growing a particular iris – those arils / arilbreds which are easier to grow should not be awarded over those which are more difficult.

For points system, see the General Show Judging: Introduced Varieties section.

Flower

Form:

Consistent petal count and symmetry of form are most important.
Typical form is reached 8-24 hours after opening.

Faults:

- Irregular or abnormal recurving, rolling, or snapping of the falls
- Pinching, twisting, or rolling at the edges of flower segments
- Severe or multiple tears and deformities, including missing or extra flower parts.

A small tear is a minor fault unless it detracts from the flower form.

Colour

- This should be typical for the variety
- Signals and spot patterns should be normal size and colour intensity
- Decorative patterns, veining, stippling, and dotting should be evaluated.

Faults:

- Pale or abnormally intense for the variety
- Fading and diffusing of colour in any aspect
- Irregular colour flecking, streaking, or splotching which may indicate disease rather than true aril traits.

Size

- Should display a full sized flower or flowers in proportion to the stem.

Faults:

- Undersized flower for the variety.

Substance

- Should be adequate to retain the specimen's definition of form in every case.

Faults:

- Signs of damage from wind, refrigeration, sun or frost.

STEM

Height and straightness

- Should be almost straight
- Typical height for the variety
- Adequate strength and rigidity to support the flower

Some cultivars may normally have a slight curving in one plane near the top.

- The entire stem should be visible to the judge.

Branching and Bud Placement

- Evenly spaced with buds pointing upwards and outwards.
- Buds should be on opposite sides of the stem, not on the same side as this is badly out of balance.

A stem having one open flower with a well developed bud plus a spur is better balanced and may rate higher than crowded blooms.

Faults:

- Branches should not be crowded near the top portion of the stem.
- Random buds around the stem
- Lack of terminal flower.

CONDITION AND GROOMING

See under Core Criteria for Show Judging.

SHOW JUDGING OF SEEDLINGS

- If in the opinion of the judge the quality of any seedling does not warrant further consideration as a garden flower it should not be given an award.
- Seedlings from bee pods should not be excluded (not more than one generation).
- Aril or eupogon content eg. OGB-, OGB, OGB+, RH, etc should be shown, and be visible to the judge.

For guidelines and points system, see the General Show Judging: Seedlings section.

CLASS: APOGON (Beardless)

PACIFIC COAST IRISES

Pacific Coast Iris are hybrids of the genus *Iris*, subsection *Apogon* series *Californica* of which there are eleven recognised species, four of them: *I. douglasiana*, *I. innominata*, *I. tenax* and *I. munzii*, have been hybridised extensively.

Pacific Coast cultivars are not generally entered in the Australian Trial Gardens as they are difficult to transplant and need to be an established clump to be judged, as a small clump does not display to its advantage.

Because of the ease of growing Pacific Coast Iris from seed, both named and unnamed cultivars are seen on the show bench, and should be treated equally.

SHOW JUDGING

The criteria listed below should be read in conjunction with the Core Criteria for Show Judging.

Flower

- Flowers should be clean, and fully formed.
- There is no correct flower form, but the flowers must be in proportion and have balance between the flower size, form and colour.
- Standards may be erect or spreading.

Stem / Stalk

- Most Pacific Coast Iris have the characteristic of deep green – blue green foliage, not yellow green.
- Any branching should complement, not detract from the balance of the stalk.
- The stalk of some varieties may curve so that the terminal flower is displayed in a tilted position, this should not be penalised.
- Each stalk should have a minimum of one flower position with two buds, except for *I. innominata* for which 1 bud is acceptable.

Condition and Grooming

- Untrimmed foliage is preferred.

LOUISIANA IRISES

Louisiana irises are modern hybrids of the Genus *Iris*, subsection *Apogon*, series *Hexagonae*, of which there are five recognized species: *I. hexagona*, *I. fulva*, *I. brevicaulis*, *I. giganticaerulea* and *I. nelsonii*. These species are native to parts of the southern U.S., where they typically grow in marshland. However, they adapt well to a wide range of climatic conditions.

The species Louisianas show great diversity in flower and plant traits, and these traits appear in many different combinations in modern Louisiana hybrids. Therefore, there are no set guidelines for hybrids in regards to height (which can vary from 25 cm (10 in.) to 125 cm (50 in.) or more), stalk shape, or flower size and form.

GARDEN JUDGING

The criteria listed below should be read in conjunction with the Core Criteria for Garden Judging.

Plant

Growth and increase, health / disease-resistance

- Vigorous growth and disease-resistance are essential. A Louisiana iris should be able to grow and increase well in appropriate garden situations (e.g. damp and acidic) and normal weather conditions. There should be a minimum of 2 increases per rhizome per year, with 2 - 6 increases the most common.
- Fewer than 2 increases should be penalized, as slow growth can lead to a risk of bloom out.
- Louisiana irises can have a tendency to develop leaf spot and rust, and susceptibility to these should be evaluated in comparison to other cultivars growing in the same garden conditions.
- Foliage that is crinkled is not a fault, but a normal growth pattern in response to weather conditions.
- Foliage may be yellow-green or blue-green. In those with yellow-green foliage, however, it is important to determine that this is the true colour of the foliage, and is not due to chlorosis, which can occur in poor cultural conditions.
- Leaf miners can cause grey streaks in foliage and associated loss of vigour, however this is considered the result of poor culture, so should not be penalized.
- Louisiana irises typically produce larger plants with longer rhizomes than other iris types. Short rhizomes are preferred, as they tend to make a more compact clump.

Stem / Stalk

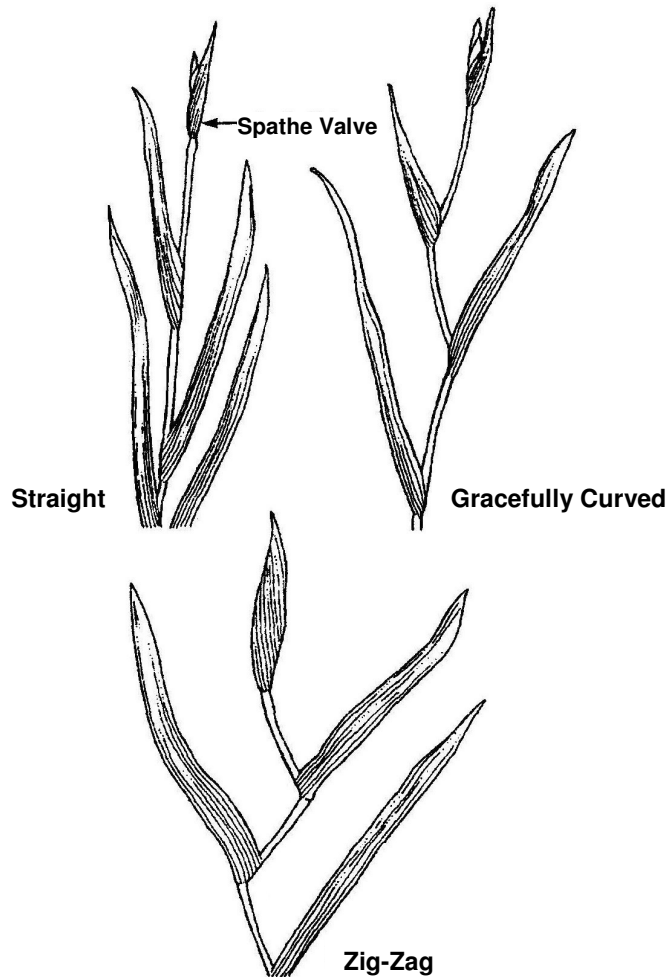
Branching, strength and proportion

- The flowering positions should be distributed evenly over the top two-thirds of the stalk to achieve a balanced appearance.
- Additional branches are desirable, provided that they do not interfere with the flowers at other positions or give the stem a crowded or bunched appearance.
- Stalks can be straight, curved ('s' shape) or zig-zag. All are acceptable, but stalks which are twisted and excessively snaky should be penalized.
- Stem height should be reasonably consistent within a clump.
- Stems should be able to remain upright without staking, except when seed pods are maturing. Those which grow at a 45 degree angle to the ground or even horizontal should be penalized.
- The leaves should not hide the flowers, especially those in the terminal position, which should be held above the foliage. It should be noted, however, that the spathe valve for the terminal position is typically longer on one side than the other, and may extend above the flower or curl underneath it. This is not considered a fault.
- Varieties which form acute angles between the stem and the foliage that prevent the buds and branches from emerging properly should be penalized.
- In many varieties, flowers in the lowest bud position bloom tight against the stalk and face forwards, while those in the higher positions face upwards. This should not be considered a fault. There are also a few varieties in which all flowers face forwards rather than upwards. If this is a consistent feature of the variety, then it should not be penalized.

Bud count, floriferousness and bloom sequence

- There is no correct sequence for flowers to open. The terminal bud does not have to open first, and some cultivars may begin their flowering sequence at the bottom of the stem.
- Each stem should produce a minimum of 6 buds, although an exception may be made for varieties which produce many stems per clump.

- Stems should have at least three flowering positions in addition to the terminal, with at least 1, preferably 2 buds at each position. The terminal may have a third bud. Taller-growing varieties should have four or more flowering positions, with correspondingly higher bud counts.
- Stalks often have two or three flowers open at once. However, varieties which open multiple flowers at a time should be carefully assessed, as this will result in shortened bloom time for the clump unless there are enough buds to allow for adequate bloom duration.



Variations in stalk types of Louisiana irises

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Flower

Colour

- Flowers should be colourfast, except where fading results in a pleasing effect, and does not look bleached-out, or detract from the appearance of the clump.
- Bicolours should display a good contrast of colours.
- The colour of the style arms is often different to that of the standards and falls. This is considered desirable if it results in an attractive and harmonious effect.
- Signals vary in size from very large to almost nonexistent. They present in many different variations, and some Louisianas display signals on both standards and falls. Each variation is considered desirable if it adds to rather than detracts from the flower's appearance.

Form

- Louisiana irises have a great diversity of flower form. The most common forms are: flat/flaring, pendent, recurved, open (spider), rounded, overlapping and double or semi-double. Some varieties even display upright standards like a tall bearded. All forms should be considered equally desirable.
- A flower is considered semi-double if it has more than six major flower parts (standards / falls) or has additional petaloids. However, a flower which only presents with an extra standard, fall or style arm is considered the result of garden / weather conditions rather than a true double / semi-double. Penalize the stalk at your discretion – if it only happens on the first bloom of the first stalk it is not considered a major fault.
- Double form consists of 9, 12 or more flower parts, which often includes extra petaloids.
- In double and semi-double forms, no two blooms are identical, which is considered normal, and not a fault. There are also some varieties which have unstable genes, and may produce both single and double flowers on the same plant, or even the same stem.
- The flower may be tailored or ruffled. Style arms may also be ruffled, and vary in size.
- There are often some changes in form as the flower ages.
- Flower size may vary from approx. 7.5 cm (3 in.) to more than 18 cm (7 in.), but should be in proportion to the stalk's height and thickness.

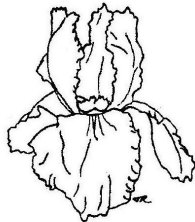
Substance, texture and durability

- Excessive substance can be a problem. Flowers which never open fully, or have edges that curl inwards should be penalized.
- Flowers should be able to remain attractive for at least 2 - 3 days in normal weather conditions.

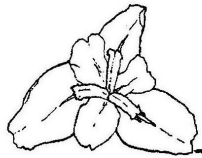
Distinctiveness, Beauty and Garden Appeal

See under Core Criteria for Garden Judging.

Flower Form in Louisiana Irises



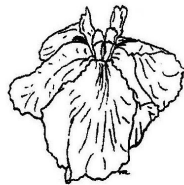
Upright Standards



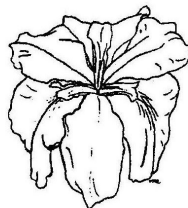
Semi-flaring to Flat



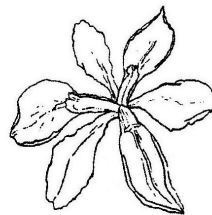
Pendent Form



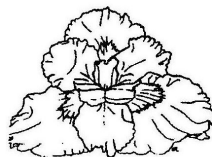
Umbrella Pendant Form



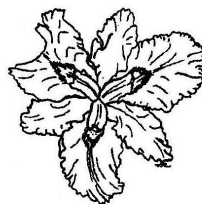
Recurved Form



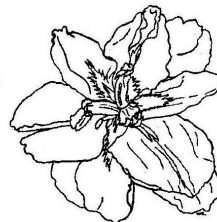
Open Form



Full Overlapping Form



Ruffled Form



Semi-double Form

SHOW JUDGING of Louisiana Irises

SHOW JUDGING OF INTRODUCED VARIETIES

It is preferable for Louisiana irises to be staged either on the floor or on lower tables, so that they can be viewed easily without significant trimming of the stems.

While Bearded classes in shows have divisions according to the registered height limits (e.g. there are usually separate divisions for median and dwarf bearded), most Australian shows have no such divisions for the different heights of Louisiana irises. It is therefore important to be aware of the natural diversity in height and flower size of Louisianas, so as to avoid discriminating against the lower-growing cultivars in show judging.

The criteria listed below should be read in conjunction with the Core Criteria for Show Judging.

Flower

- Some fading of colour is acceptable, provided that the flowers do not look bleached-out, and it does not detract from the appearance of the stem.
- Flower size may vary from approx. 7.5 cm (3 in.) to more than 18 cm (7 in.).
- In double and semi-double forms, no two blooms are identical, which is considered normal, and not a fault. There are also some varieties which have unstable genes, and may produce both single and double flowers on the same plant, or even the same stem.
- Louisianas have a great diversity of flower form, and all forms are considered acceptable. For details of the most common forms, see the LA Garden Judging section.
- For definitions of double and semi-double form, see the LA Garden Judging section. In show bench judging, a flower which does not satisfy those definitions, and which only presents with an extra standard, fall or style arm should be penalized.

Stem / Stalk

- There is no correct sequence for flowers to open. The terminal bud does not have to be open, as some cultivars begin their flowering sequence at the bottom of the stem.
- Stalks can be straight, curved ('s' shape) or zig-zag. All are acceptable, but stalks which are twisted and excessively snaky should be penalized.
- Flowers should be distributed evenly over the top two-thirds of the stalk.

Condition and Grooming

- Crinkled foliage is not a fault, but a natural growth pattern in response to weather conditions.

Point judging should not be used routinely on the show bench, where efficient judging is required. However, a points system can be useful where entries in a class are of almost equal quality, where there is disagreement between judges, or in selection of the show champion. See the General Show Judging: Introduced Varieties section for the points system.

SHOW JUDGING OF SEEDLINGS

For guidelines and points system, see the General Show Judging: Seedlings section.

SPURIA IRISES

There are approximately twenty species which comprise the Series Spuriae of the Apogon subsection, ranging in height from 2.5 cm (1 in.) to 90 cm (36 in.).

Most of the spurias commonly grown in gardens are hybrids, with a height range of 90 cm (36 in.) to 160 cm (64 in.). Because of the diversity in climate of origin of the species (from subtropical to subarctic), there are no fixed rules regarding stalk height or many of the other characteristics of spurias. As relatively little hybridizing has so far been done with spurias, judging guidelines need to be flexible to allow for future progress. Judges should note that not one, but several visits to the trial garden are required for proper assessment of a spuria's performance.

GARDEN JUDGING

The criteria listed below should be read in conjunction with the Core Criteria for Garden Judging.

Plant

- Vigorous growth is essential. A spuria should be able to perform consistently in a range of different climatic conditions.
- Disease-resistance is one of the most important criteria in evaluating spurias, as they are very susceptible to virus (which appears as lighter streaks in foliage or darker, watery streaks in the flower).
- Foliage should be neat, and upright or slightly arching.

Stem / Stalk

- Branches should be long enough to hold each flower out of the leaf that covers the connection of the branch to the stalk.
- A spuria clump should be able to remain in bloom for at least 2 weeks.
- Stems should have 2-3 branches, and a minimum of 4 buds.
- Bud counts of 5-7 or more with at least 2 in the terminal socket are desirable.

Flower

- Due to the diversity of the background species, a range of flower sizes and forms are acceptable.
- If present, signals may be sharply defined, veined or appear slightly diffuse.
- The signal area should make a pleasing contribution to the flower's overall appearance and distinctiveness.
- Standards may be erect, semi-erect or flat, but should give a pleasing appearance.
- Standards with a spatulate shape are preferred to narrower blade-shaped ones.
- Falls may recurve slightly, but must not be curled or tucked under.
- Style arms can be held against the falls or separated from them, but should give a pleasing appearance.
- Ruffled flower forms and velvety textures are desirable.
- The claws (similar to the haft area in bearded irises), which determine the distance of the fall from the center of the flower, usually give the flower its best form when shortened rather than elongated.
- Substance should be sufficient to maintain the flower's form for at least 3 days.
- Substance is expected to be equivalent to that of other iris types.

Distinctiveness, Beauty and Garden Appeal

- Since spurias typically perform well when undisturbed for many years, it is important that the overall clump look attractive with good distribution of the flowers.

SHOW JUDGING

Both modern hybrids and species spurias may be seen on the show bench, sometimes in the same class. It is important that judges be familiar with the range of types available to enable easy recognition of their characteristics on the show bench. Some show schedules have separate classes for Australian-bred varieties, so judges must keep themselves informed of the newest Australian varieties.

The criteria listed below should be read in conjunction with the Core Criteria for Show Judging.

Flower

- Standards may be erect, semi-erect or flat.
- Style arms can be held against the falls or separated from them, but should give a pleasing appearance.

Stem / Stalk

See under Core Criteria for Show Judging.

Condition and Grooming

- Branches which have been repositioned to correct crowding of flowers are acceptable if there is no sign of damage, and both branches and flowers are still attached to the stem.



A typical Spuria stalk.

New developments in form. Flower on the left exhibits “flat” form. That on the right displays ruffling.

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SIBERIAN (SIBIRICA) IRISES

Siberian irises (often referred to as Sibirica irises in Australia) originate from Central Europe and Asia. They fall into two distinct groups: those with 28 chromosomes, which are classified as subseries Sibiricae, and those with 40 chromosomes, which are classified as subseries Chrysographes, and are sometimes known as Sino-Siberians. The Sibiricae subseries consists of three species: *I. sibirica*, *I. sanguinea*, and *I. typhifolia*, while the Chrysographes subseries contains eight: *I. bulleyana*, *I. clarkei*, *I. chrysographes*, *I. delavayi*, *I. dykesii*, *I. forestii*, *I. phragmitetorum* and *I. wilsonii*. Most of the hybrids commonly grown in gardens fall into the 28-chromosome Sibiricae group.

Siberian irises range in height from 18 cm (7 in.) to 120 cm (48 in.). As with Tall Bearded and Louisiana irises, there are both diploid and tetraploid forms of Siberian irises (in both subseries). The tetraploids generally have larger flowers with better substance than the diploids, and also display differences in stem height and foliage width.

GARDEN JUDGING

The criteria listed below should be read in conjunction with the Core Criteria for Garden Judging.

Plant

- Foliage should be upright or gracefully curved, and reasonably neat.
- Foliage width may vary from a few millimetres to 2 cm, while foliage colours range from light green to dark green and blue-green. Spiral twists in leaves are acceptable.
- Some varieties have foliage which collapses in late summer – this is a serious fault, but cannot be assessed during bloom season.
- Some varieties may form clumps with an outer ring of foliage around a hollow center. If this happens within the first two or three years after planting or to an extreme degree, it should be considered a fault, as it affects the appearance of the clump.

Stem / Stalk

Branching, strength and proportion

- Flowers should ideally be held close to the stem without crowding. Wide, candelabra-style branching may cause interference between stems.
- Branching varies considerably in siberians, and should be assessed in relation to the overall floriferousness of the clump. While more branches and higher bud counts are desirable, cultivars which are unbranched, or have low bud counts, but present a good succession of stalks can give equally effective display.
- Most siberian stems have at most 2 branches, plus a terminal, although a third branch can occur.
- Flower size should be in proportion to stem height, however small flowers on tall stems are acceptable if they give an attractive, graceful appearance.

Bud count, floriferousness and bloom sequence

- A siberian clump should be able to remain in bloom for more than two weeks, with 3-4 weeks possible in cooler climates.
- Repeat bloom, in which a second display of stems appears a few weeks after the first, is very desirable.
- Stems typically have 3-5 buds, but bud sockets with multiple buds are desirable. 2-3 buds per socket is most common, but some species may carry up to 5 or 6 buds in the terminal socket.
- Flowering sequence should be assessed, and varieties which consistently open the second flower in the terminal socket before the first has folded should be penalized accordingly.

Flower

Colour

- Flowers may be dappled, veined, dotted or completely clear. Colour patterns include lighter coloured rims on the falls, bitones, bicolours and blends.
- Some flowers may have contrasting white or yellow signals on the falls.

Form

- Siberian iris flowers come in many different forms and sizes. All are acceptable, provided they are graceful and symmetrical, with a clear outline, and a good balance between the different flower parts.

- Standards, falls and style arms may be vertical, horizontal or somewhere between the two. New forms include ones in which the standards have become falls, true doubles, and multi-petalled types. Multi-petalled types should be assessed carefully to ensure they meet the criteria of symmetry and clarity of form. With all flower types, the overall impact of the clump should be assessed from a distance as well as close-up.
- The appearance of the style arms can contribute significantly to or detract from the flower's overall appearance.
- Both ruffled and tailored flower forms are acceptable. Any features such as ruffles, feathering or lace must be in proportion to the flower, and not distort its clarity of outline.
- Falls should not appear pinched at the hafts or twisted.

Substance, texture and durability

- In many Siberians, the petals may be thin and flexible, yet maintain their form well, whereas more heavily-substantiated flowers may appear too stiff and lacking in grace.
- Flowers should remain attractive for 3 days in normal temperatures and some fading of colours is acceptable if it does not detract from the overall appearance of the clump.
- It is desirable that the stems drop flowers quickly once they have withered, as if they remain on the stem it can give an untidy appearance.

Distinctiveness, Beauty and Garden Appeal

- Flower sheaths which are red or purple can contribute to the plant's overall beauty and distinctiveness.
- The clump should be assessed both from a distance and from close-up as a good Siberian iris should be an asset to the garden, both in and out of bloom.

SHOW JUDGING

The criteria listed below should be read in conjunction with the Core Criteria for Show Judging.

Flower

- Flower size should be typical of the cultivar. Note that tetraploid varieties typically have larger flowers than the diploids do.
- Judges should be aware that in Siberian irises, the flower size and stem height may depend more on the climate in which they are grown than on the grower's cultural practices. Typically, the size of both flower and stem are significantly reduced in warmer areas.
- Siberian iris flowers come in a wide range of acceptable flower forms and sizes, including six-fall types, true doubles and multi-petalled varieties.
- There is not one flower form which is preferred above others, however judges should look for gracefulness, which may be lacking in flowers with narrow, hanging falls, or stiff, horizontal ones.
- Falls should not appear pinched at the hafts or twisted.
- Standards, falls and style arms may be vertical, horizontal or somewhere between the two.
- Some fading of colours is acceptable if it does not detract from the overall appearance of the stem.

Stem / Stalk

- Stems may be branched or unbranched.
- A minimum of 1 flower position with 2 buds is to be expected, but many varieties will have 2 branches, plus a terminal, with 2-3 buds per socket. Some species carry up to 5-6 buds in the terminal socket.

Condition and Grooming

See under Core Criteria for Show Judging.

JAPANESE IRISES

Japanese iris is the common name for hybrids of the species *Iris ensata*. The name *Iris kaempferi* was previously used as the botanical name for the group, however *Iris ensata* is now the official name. They are classified as series *Laevigatae* of the Apogon (beardless) irises. Note that Japanese irises should not be confused with *Iris japonica*, an entirely distinct species, which belongs to the *Evansia* group of irises.

Iris ensata grows wild not only throughout Japan, but also in Manchuria, Northern China, Korea and Siberia. In Japan, where it is known as hanashobu, *Iris ensata* has been hybridized for over five hundred years.

Iris ensata hybrids range in height from 25 cm (10 in.) for the miniature varieties to 150 cm or more (60 in.). However, most hybrids flower in the 65 – 120 cm (26 – 50 in.) height range. It should be noted that garden conditions influence the stem height, branching and bloom size of Japanese irises more than those of any other iris type.

Japanese irises have the most diversity of colour pattern of any iris, but colours have traditionally been limited to the white, pink, and blue – red-violet spectrum. However, through crosses with *I. pseudacorus*, yellow has been introduced to Japanese irises. Some new cultivars feature colour combinations such as peach petals with yellow style arms. The ‘Pseudata’ (*I. pseudacorus* and *I. ensata*) breeding lines have also introduced a new colour pattern. This consists of a dark halo around the signal, with short dark lines radiating out from it, resembling eyelashes. This dark halo can be particularly striking on paler-flowered cultivars.

Flexibility is recommended in judging Japanese irises, as no single flower form is to be preferred above others, and new developments are encouraged.

GARDEN JUDGING

The criteria listed below should be read in conjunction with the Core Criteria for Garden Judging.

Plant

- Vigour is the single most important trait for a Japanese iris, as vigour will determine the plant’s reliability in the garden and its overall floriferousness
- It is desirable for the plant to adapt well to different soils and climates.
- The leaves should be upright or gracefully arching, but must remain attractive in all growing seasons. Foliage which sprawls as the season progresses is considered a serious fault.
- Foliage may be blue-green or yellowish green. As Japanese irises go completely dormant in winter, only newly developed foliage is seen in spring.
- Note that the rhizomes of Japanese irises grow in a partly upright position.

Stem / Stalk

Branching, strength and proportion

- Flowers should be held above the level of the foliage, so that they are clearly visible.
- Stem height should be in proportion to the size of both flowers and plant. In miniature varieties, a flower diameter to stalk height ratio of 1 to 5 is considered desirable, however this ratio is not appropriate for the large varieties.
- Plants of the *ensata* species have variable branching, typically with two buds in the terminal socket, and one more on a branch, but some hybrids may have up to 3 branches in addition to the terminal, and 8 – 9 buds per stem. However, branches are desirable only if they do not crowd one another, and allow individual flowers to open freely.
- Stem strength should be sufficient to hold the flower in an upright position.

Bud count, floriferousness and bloom sequence

- Bud count must be judged in terms of the floriferousness of the whole clump, not on individual stalks.
- Some varieties (known as ‘continuing’ bloomers) produce successive stalks as the season progresses. Plants with low bud count and little or no branching should not be penalized if there is evidence of further bloom stalks emerging, as these will result in a sufficient display overall.
- Each stem should preferably have only one flower open at a time, however more than one is acceptable in varieties with multiple buds per stem.

Flower

Colour

- Japanese iris flowers often lighten in colour as they age. This fading is acceptable provided that the colour remains clear and attractive.
- New and different colours are desirable, regardless of the source (e.g. interspecies crosses, chromosome mutation, etc.). Advances towards true blue, red and pink are considered especially desirable.
- Colour patterns include selfs, blends, bicolours, veining, marbled, sanded, etc. All are desirable, provided that they give a harmonious appearance. In lined patterns, sharp outlines are preferred, with branching of the lines considered desirable, but not essential.
- Signals vary in size and may be sharp or diffuse. They should be assessed according to whether they add to or detract from the flower's appearance.
- The flower's colour and pattern should have sufficient intensity or contrast to stand out well in a garden, but should also look attractive in a mixed planting.

Form

- There are currently three types of Japanese iris flowers: (1) Single, or three-fall types, (2) Double or six-fall types and (3) Multi-petalled types (9-petal, 12-petal, etc.). All three types are considered equally desirable, but must be well-proportioned, and attractive.
- The flower size may vary from 8 – 30 cm (3 – 12 in.), but it must be in proportion to the plant.
- Many Japanese iris flowers naturally increase in size as they age – this is completely acceptable, but it should be noted that it can sometimes change the proportions of the flower, e.g. gaps between falls may increase as the haft area lengthens.
- Flowers should have the expected number of parts, in multiples of three, however this rule is not strictly applied to the style arms of doubles, or the inner petals and petaloids of multiple petal types. Some multi-petalled varieties may have only 6 sets of flower parts, but with additional tufts of petaloids, rather than 9 or 12 sets of parts.
- In double varieties, the three falls of the inner row are typically smaller than those of the outer row. This is not considered a serious fault unless the flower looks ill-proportioned; however a variety which meets the ideal of having all 6 falls the same size should be rewarded.
- Standards may be large or small. They may be upright, held at an angle, or converted into falls, but they must be consistent. In double varieties, the three inner petals may be partly upright on the first day; however they should be in the correct position by day two. Remaining upright on day one is not considered a fault unless it detracts from the overall appearance of the clump.
- Falls may be horizontally flared, or may arch downwards. Single flowers should have falls with wide hafts, preferably touching or overlapping. Double flowers should have a solid-looking form, with no noticeable gaps in the flower's centre.
- Any factors which limit the area of colour display, such as narrow or recurved falls, should be penalized.
- In double varieties, a flared compact form with round, overlapping falls is considered most desirable.
- Style arms may be upright, arching or converted to petals. Anthers may have a normal appearance, have petal-like extensions or be converted to petals.
- Falls may be tailored, fluted or ruffled.

Substance, texture and durability

- Japanese iris flowers are typically less durable than those of other iris types, but should be able to remain attractive for at least 2 days in normal weather conditions, three days in cooler climates. In assessing durability of blooms, it is helpful to compare the variety being judged against other Japanese irises in the same garden when possible. Durability is primarily determined by the plant's genes, however many environmental factors contribute, and high temperatures may halve the flower's life.

Distinctiveness, Beauty and Garden Appeal

- Varieties which extend the bloom season are considered especially desirable. This includes those which bloom earlier or later than most varieties, and most importantly, those which bloom for a long period of time.

SHOW JUDGING

Japanese irises bloom from very late spring to early summer, so are likely to be seen only at a very late spring show; however we will consider show judging criteria here. It is preferable for Japanese irises to be staged either on the floor or on lower tables, so that they can be viewed easily without significant trimming of the stems.

In Japanese irises, the garden conditions greatly influence the stem height, branching and flower size. It is desirable for the judge to be familiar with the most commonly available Japanese varieties, so that he / she can better determine which of the differences in size between exhibits are due to genetic differences, and which to cultural practices.

The criteria listed below should be read in conjunction with the Core Criteria for Show Judging.

Flower

- Some fading of colour with age is acceptable, provided that the colour remains clear and attractive.
- The flower size may vary from 8 – 30 cm (3 – 12 in.), but it should be typical of the cultivar, and in proportion to the size of the stem.
- Undersized flowers indicate poor culture.
- Japanese iris flowers often do not last as long as those of other iris types. However, they should be able to remain attractive for at least 2 days, except in unusually warm conditions.
- Please see Form in the Japanese: Garden Judging section for all other criteria.

Stem / Stalk

- Traditionally, it is considered undesirable for a Japanese iris to have more than 1 flower open at a time, however more than 1 should not be penalized, provided that the flowers are clearly displayed, and the grace and balance of the stalk is not adversely affected.
- Where there is only 1 flower open, it should be in the terminal socket, and held in an upright position.
- The stem may be branched or unbranched.

Condition and Grooming

See under Core Criteria for Show Judging.

CLASS: EVANSIA (CRESTED) IRISES

The Evansia irises are also commonly known as crested irises, as they have a raised petaloid crest in the upper central part of each fall. The crest may be serrated or fringed.

Crested irises fall into two groups, the hardy temperate species, which are dormant in winter, and the tender evergreen subtropical species. Their foliage is typically arching in habit, with flat leaves which are usually broad. Flower colour ranges from white through blue to dark lavender and orchid-pink.

The hardy temperate species are low-growing, with *I. gracilipes* the tallest, flowering on 30 cm (12 in.) stems. *I. tenuis* and *I. cristata* are smaller, with *I. lacustris* the most miniature of all, with flowering stems only 5 – 7 cm high. This group has flowers which are large in proportion to the plant, e.g. *I. cristata* has flowers 5 cm across on 12 cm stems. *I. tenuis* produces 1 - 2 branches, with a total of 2 - 3 flowers per stem, and *I. gracilipes* is well branched, with flowers produced in sprays.

The evergreen subtropical species range in height from 25 cm to over 2 metres. There are two different series within this group, Series Tectores and Series Japonicae. Series Tectores contains two species: *I. milesii*, which goes dormant in winter and *I. tectorum*. Both produce branched flower stems, although the branching of *I. tectorum* is poor. It produces 3 - 4 flowers in sequence at the tips of the branches.

Most species of the Series Japonicae typically produce flowers in well-branched sprays. *I. japonica* often has 30 flowers per stem, with 5 – 6 blooms open at a time, and may remain in bloom for up to 5 weeks. Some forms of *I. japonica* have variegated foliage. *I. wattii* produces up to 50 flowers per stem and blooms for 8 – 10 weeks or more. Some species of the Series Japonicae, such as *I. wattii*, have a ‘bamboo-like’ growth habit, with clusters of foliage attached to the stem instead of at ground level.

There are a number of Evansia hybrids available. Some, such as ‘Bourne Graceful’ are hybrids within a series, others are hybrids between different types of Evansias (e.g. ‘Queens Grace’ is bred from (*I. wattii* x *I. tectorum*)). There have also been several hybrids (most notably ‘Paltec’) produced from crosses between *I. tectorum* and bearded irises.

GARDEN JUDGING

The criteria listed below should be read in conjunction with the Core Criteria for Garden Judging.

Plant

- Foliage colour may be yellowish-green when grown in full sun or darker green in shade.
- Hybrids with subtropical heritage may have aerial rhizomes or may have increases appear some distance away from the main plant, as extensions of stolons creeping along the ground.
- Hybrids with *I. cristata* heritage should produce 3 – 4 increases per rhizome per year.
- Evansias generally have good disease-resistance, but can be susceptible to fungal diseases where drainage is poor. If several similar plants are being grown in the same conditions, and one seems more susceptible to fungus than the others, then it should be penalized, however any fungal problems are usually considered the result of poor garden conditions rather than the plant’s breeding.

Stem / Stalk

- Bud count and branching should be assessed according to what would be expected from the plant’s species heritage, with varieties which have improved branching or bud count rewarded accordingly.
- It is acceptable for taller-growing varieties to require staking when in flower.

Flower

- Due to the diversity of the background species, a range of flower sizes and forms are acceptable.

Distinctiveness, Beauty and Garden Appeal

- Both stem colour and foliage colour can add significantly to a variety’s distinctiveness, e.g. ‘Bourne Graceful’ is recognizable by its black stems and purple leaf-base.

SHOW JUDGING

Evansias usually bloom too early to be entered in spring shows, however in late seasons they may be seen on the show bench. It is preferable for the smaller temperate species, such as *I. cristata* to be entered in an appropriately-sized vase rather than the usual show bottles. Where plants are entered in pots, these should also be in proportion to the size of the plant.

The criteria listed below should be read in conjunction with the Core Criteria for Show Judging.

- Flower size and proportion of flower to stem should be typical of the species or hybrid entered.
- Stem length and branching should be typical of the species or hybrid entered. In particular, multi-branched types should not have had branches removed.
- Species which typically have foliage on the stem should be displayed with foliage intact, rather than trimmed.
- Species such as *I. tectorum* which typically open flowers in sequence should not be penalized for having only 1 bloom open, however multiple open blooms are expected on species such as *I. japonica*.
- Foliage is typically arching in habit, rather than upright like other iris types.

CLASS: BULBOUS IRISES

Bulbous irises fall into three categories: Reticulatas, Xiphiums (incl. Dutch irises) and Junos (Scorpios). Bulbous irises are not currently grown in Australian trial gardens, so only guidelines for show judging are given here. In the USA, bulbous irises are not eligible for top show awards, however in Australia no such restriction exists.

Bulbous iris hybrids are the only irises whose official registration is not processed by the American Iris Society. Instead, their registration is handled by the Royal General Bulbgrowers' Society in Holland. Therefore, there is no easy access to registration records, making it difficult for the judge to determine whether show exhibits have been correctly identified. Entries which are obviously misnamed should be disqualified, however it should be noted with regards to Dutch irises that nurseries often sell misnamed plants. As Keith Keppel states in 'The World of Irises'¹, "There are few, if any, bulb crops in which the percentage of misnamed stock is so high." Therefore judges need to exercise caution in declaring entries to be misnamed, as some varieties may have been widely distributed under false names.

Reticulatas

As reticulatas are some of the earliest flowers to bloom in spring, these are unlikely to be seen on the show bench.

Junos

There are approx. 60 species of Juno irises, which range in height from 5 cm to 90 cm. Their appearance is quite distinct from that of other iris types, bearing more resemblance to a dwarf sweetcorn plant. The smallest species, such as *I. persica*, have stemless flowers, and few leaves. Taller species, such as *I. magnifica*, produce stems with leaves all the way up, and flowers produced singly in the upper leaf axils, and sometimes in the terminal. Juno flowers typically have small, insignificant standards, which may be held out at right angles, deflexed, or even appear as bristle-like appendages between the falls. Style arms, however, are large and showy.

Bloom size varies according to plant size, with the best-known Juno, *I. bucharica*, bearing flowers 5 cm across. The number of buds per stem ranges from 2 for the shorter growing species up to 7 or 8 for the taller species.

Junos could potentially be seen at an early spring show, however they are not commonly grown.

Xiphiums

The Xiphium group of irises contains approx. 7 main species, and many hybrids. The hybrids fall into 3 groups: Dutch, Spanish and English.

The English irises, which are descended from *I. latifolium*, bloom well after the tall bearded, so are unlikely to be seen on the show bench.

Spanish irises are descended mainly from *I. xiphium*, and are typically smaller and bloom about two weeks later than the Dutch irises.

Dutch irises have been bred from crosses between forms of *I. xiphium* and *I. filifolia*, *I. fontanesii* and *I. tingitana*, among others.

Dutch and Spanish irises have flowers up to 13 cm in diameter, and stems typically range in height from 45 cm to 90cm or more. It is becoming increasingly difficult to distinguish between Dutch and Spanish irises, as there are many intergrading hybrids, so they should generally be entered in the same class on the show bench.

SHOW JUDGING – Dutch and Spanish Irises

The criteria listed below should be read in conjunction with the Core Criteria for Show Judging.

Stem / Stalk

- Stems typically have no branching, with a total of two buds at the top of the stem.
- If branching is present, it should not cause crowding or interference between flowers.
- Foliage should appear healthy, and free of disease. Dutch and Spanish irises are particularly susceptible to viruses. Virus markings often appear as yellowing streaks or distortion of flowers and foliage, and may also weaken the stem.
- Each stem should have only one flower open, except where there is appropriate branching.

Flower

- The flower should be held in a vertical position, rather than at an angle.
- Flower colours may be bright or muted, clear or blended, but there should be no flecks of colour, as this would indicate virus infection. Exhibits with significant flecking should be disqualified.
- The falls should be equally spaced, and of the same size and shape. Likewise the style arms, and most importantly, the standards.

¹ Keith Keppel. "Bulbous Irises: The Xiphiums" In *The World of Irises*. Warburton, Bee and Melba Hamblen, eds. (Wichita, Kansas: American Iris Society, 1978), 279.

- Where a second bud is developing, it should not cause crowding or interfere with the open flower's form or vertical placement on the stem.

Condition and Grooming

See under Core Criteria for Show Judging.

CLASS: SPECIES IRISES, INTERSPECIES HYBRIDS

Judging species irises or interspecies hybrids is very different to judging other irises. When judging other classes, a judge is evaluating hybrids which may be many generations away from the original species heritage. In each generation, seedlings have been selected which satisfy the criteria important at that time, and thus features such as flower substance, form and branching have been further developed with each generation. By contrast, when judging true species, you are evaluating the raw product of nature. Judging guidelines from other classes should be set aside, as should preconceptions regarding form, substance, branching, bud count, colour, etc.

Judging interspecies hybrids presents a unique challenge as you may be evaluating irises of a type which has not previously existed. Hybridizers should be rewarded for innovation, however the plant's garden merit is of prime importance.

Judges should familiarize themselves with the species irises grown in their area (if possible, by growing the species in their own gardens). This will better enable them to judge the species exhibits on the show bench, and also to evaluate the characteristics of new interspecies hybrids, both in shows and in the trial garden.

The first step in evaluating a species or Spec-X entry (in both garden and show bench judging) is to determine whether the iris has been entered into the correct class.

Essentially, SPEC is the class for named selections of a single species, whereas SPEC-X is the class for interspecies crosses. A cultivar is considered to be an interspecies hybrid if one parent is an iris species, and the other parent does not belong to that species. Further hybrids from interspecies crosses are also included in SPEC-X.

There are three ways in which a plant may fit the precise definitions of the SPEC (species) class:

- (i) it was collected in the wild as a seed, seedling or division.
- (ii) it has been grown from seeds of a plant of type (i) which is now grown in cultivation (the flower may have been either hand pollinated or open pollinated, but there must be no chance the cross was contaminated by pollen from another species).
- (iii) the plant has come from mutations of (i) or (ii).

The judge should be aware of which iris species cross easily with others (e.g. Oncos and Bearded, Pacific Coast Natives and the 40-chromosome Siberians). It is of particular importance to keep a lookout for any characteristics the cultivar may display which deviate from what is normal for that species, and may therefore indicate that the cultivar is the result of an interspecies cross, rather than a single species.

GARDEN JUDGING

Some criteria to consider:

Plant

Some species irises and interspecies hybrids have very specific cultural requirements. Judges should be aware that if those conditions are not able to be provided in the trial garden, then the plant may appear less vigorous. Time is needed for proper evaluation of the cultural qualities of a species, or interspecies hybrid, as this cannot be assessed adequately in one garden visit or one season. However, plants which adapt well to a range of growing conditions should be rewarded for doing so.

The plant should give an overall appearance of vigour and good health. It should increase well, as slow growth can lead to a risk of bloom out. Plants which display good resistance to diseases and insects, etc. should be rewarded, while those with obvious susceptibility to diseases which affect the vigour of the plant should be penalized.

A cultivar should not be penalized for rambling growth habits, if similar to those of its parent species, however those which form good, compact clumps should be rewarded as they are of greater value to gardeners.

Interspecies hybrids should not be penalized for being sterile, as while this may be frustrating to hybridizers, it does not affect the plant's garden value.

The foliage should be evaluated according to how well it holds up over time. Some plants may collapse in a heap after bloom, and those which naturally go dormant should not be penalized. However, those which remain green should be judged on their foliage, as the plant should appear attractive both in and out of bloom.

Stem / Stalk

When evaluating criteria such as bud count, branching and stem proportion, each interspecies hybrid must be judged in comparison to its parent plants. (Likewise each species clone should be compared to other clones of that species.) The typical characteristics of each parent should be kept in mind as the baseline for comparison, e.g. A hybrid whose parent species typically blooms down in the foliage should not be penalized for doing so, but if the hybrid flowers above the foliage, then this advancement should be rewarded.

Balance and proportion are difficult criteria to judge in species or near-species. Familiarity with as wide a range of irises as possible is helpful here, as if you are only used to seeing one type of iris, then other types may appear out of proportion. Also, the balance and proportion of the stem must be judged in relation to the overall appearance of the clump. A tall stem which bears a single small flower may appear out of proportion when seen on its own, but if the clump displays many flowers open at a time, it may give an attractive overall effect.

The plant's floriferousness is determined not only by the number of buds per stem, but also by the number of stems per plant. The longevity of each bloom can also contribute to an overall appearance of floriferousness.

Some species typically display only one flower open at a time, whereas others have many flowers open simultaneously. Expected total length of bloom for the plant should be assessed according to what would be typical of the parent species. Varieties which bloom for an extended period of time should be rewarded, as should those which display repeat / sequential bloom or rebloom. Hybrids which bloom earlier or later than normal are also to be commended, as they extend the season of bloom of that species.

Flower

Colour

Flower colour and pattern are judged according to what is visually pleasing. Features such as beards, signals, crests and style arms all contribute to the overall effect of the flower, and with these, there are no set rules for what is considered most attractive. What enhances one flower may detract from another.

Form

A wide range of forms may be seen in species and SPEC-X hybrids. All may be considered acceptable, provided that the form gives a pleasing appearance for that particular species, e.g. tucked falls are attractive on some species, but not on others. The natural shape of the wild species' flowers should be taken as a guide. New forms can be considered desirable if they are visually pleasing. This includes double or multi-petalled forms, however flowers which have too many parts to open fully should be penalized. Extra parts should occur in multiples of three.

Substance, texture and durability.

Substance and durability can be a difficult area to judge for species or near-species hybrids. While stiffer petals usually increase the durability of the flower, they may be too stiff to be attractive if delicacy is a feature of that particular species. Therefore, the judge must use his / her discretion in this area.

Distinctiveness, Beauty and Garden Appeal

When assessing distinctiveness and garden appeal of a species or interspecies hybrid, there are many factors to be considered. Characteristics such as foliage shape, colour and durability, or the appearance of seed pods may play a greater role in the overall appearance of the plant than they do for other types such as tall bearded. An iris grown primarily for its foliage should not have to produce showy flowers to be considered worthy of awards. The judge should use the typical characteristics of the parent species as their starting point, and consider their best qualities and possible improvements.

There is a wide range of leaf widths and thicknesses among species irises. Some have upright foliage, whereas others have an arching growth habit. Foliage colour and finish is also important, and bright green foliage may be as attractive as grey-green or dark green. Purple- or red-based foliage may also be attractive. Variegated foliage can contribute significantly to garden appeal, but all the leaves should be variegated, not just some. The variegation may also occur for only part of the year – if so, the judge must assess whether it is a significant enough factor to be rewarded.

The size of both flower and plant is less important than the overall garden impact. A tiny species grown in massed clumps may have just as great a garden effect as a giant. The plant's garden appeal should be judged both at a distance and up close.

In judging irises of all types, we should strive to encourage diversity. This is true in this class above all others, as we should seek to retain the natural diversity of the species irises, while encouraging innovation. Interspecies crosses have the potential to lead irises in entirely new directions, and we need to be open to those possibilities.

SHOW JUDGING

Show entries of species irises should be identified by either an accepted species binomial (e.g. *I. setosa*, *I. cristata*, etc.) or by a registered cultivar name. Interspecies hybrids should be entered under their registered cultivar name. Lists of species binomials can be found in the Species Check List published by SIGNA (Species Iris Group of North America) and in 'The Iris' by Brian Mathew. Where possible, any additional identifying information, such as the name of the collector, geographical information or a commonly accepted varietal name (e.g. *alba*) should also be given.

Seedling entries should be identified by seedling number, class (SPEC or SPEC-X) and the species binomial or hybrid's parentage. At shows where it is felt that the seedling number may serve to identify the hybridizer, it may be concealed during judging, but the seedling's parentage should still be displayed.

It is recommended that exhibits which are too small to fit typical show bottles should be staged in appropriately sized containers.

Some criteria to be considered:

Flower

There is a huge diversity of form amongst species irises. Some species have standards and falls that are very different in size, while others have standards and falls that are almost indistinguishable. In Junos, the style arms have become so large that they provide balance to the falls in the absence of standards.

There is also great variation in the way that the floral parts are presented, e.g. in some species, both standards and falls are flat (flared), while other species have upright standards and / or pendent falls. Substance also varies significantly between species, as some have flowers with thin substance while the blooms of others are quite tough.

Each exhibit should display the form, colour and substance typical of that species, clone or cultivar.

Stem / Stalk

The stem and branching should also be typical of the type of iris being presented. Many species irises naturally have little or no branching, while others have stems with multiple branches. Therefore, each stem must be evaluated against what would be the best performance possible for that particular species or hybrid, rather than being compared to other iris types. Branching, when present, may be symmetrical or asymmetrical, depending on the species.

The typical characteristics of each species must also be your guide when considering the stem itself, which may be straight, zig-zag, twisted or almost non-existent, depending on the plant's heritage.

Condition and Grooming

Condition and grooming should be evaluated according to the principles of show judging of all iris types. However, when there is close competition for awards within the species class, judges may wish to consider the degree of horticultural skill required to grow a particular species or cultivar, as some are more demanding of the gardener than others.

Seedlings

Seedlings should be judged as per the guidelines for judging seedlings of all iris types.

CLASS: IRIDACEAE

The Iridaceae family, to which the genus *Iris* belongs, is a large and very diverse one. According to recent estimates¹, there are more than 2 000 species of Iridaceae, and at least 66 genera. Members of the family are found on every continent and subcontinent on earth. Those belonging to the genus *Iris* are all native to the Northern Hemisphere, while more than half of the other Iridaceae species are native to the Southern Hemisphere.

All members of the Iridaceae family grow from rhizomes, bulbs or corms, and most have a period of dormancy.

GENERA IN THE FAMILY IRIDACEAE

The list of genera which appears below is based on the Iridaceae checklist on the website of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew².

Please note: Where a name appears in italics, it is no longer the accepted name for that genera, (although it may still be sold under that name). The currently accepted name is given after the equal sign. Those names which are given in bold are known to be grown in Australia³. However, an asterisk (*) after the name means that it may not be available commercially.

Acidanthera = **Gladiolus**

Ainea

Alophia (*Alophia lahue* = **Herbertia lahue**)

Anaclanthe = *Antholyza** = **Babiana**

Anapalina *

Anomalesia = **Gladiolus**

Anomalostylus = **Trimezia**

Anomatheca (*Anomatheca laxa* = **Freesia laxa**,

Anomatheca viridis = **Freesia viridis**)

Antholyza * = **Babiana**

Aristea

Babiana

Barnardiella = **Moraea herrei**

Beatonia = **Tigridia**

Belamcanda (*Belamcanda chinensis* = **Iris domestica**)

Bobartia

Calydorea

Cardenanthus

Cardiostigma = **Calydorea**

Catila = **Calydorea**

Chamelum = **Olsynium**

Chasmanthe

Chasmatocallis = **Lapeirousia**

Chlamydstylus = *Nemastylis*

Cipura

Cleanthe = **Aristea**

Cobana

Crociris = **Crocus**

Crocsmia

Crocus

Cryptobasis = **Iris**

Curtonus = **Crocsmia**

Cypella

Devia

Dichone = **Ixia**

Dierama

Dietes

Diplarrhena = **Diplarrhena**

Diplarrhena

Dortania = **Gladiolus**

Duthiastrum

Duthiella = *Duthiastrum*

Eleutherine *

Engysiphon = **Geissorhiza**

Ennealophus

Eurynotia

Eustylis (most *Eustylis* have now been placed in the *Alophia* genus)

Exohebe = *Tritoniopsis*

Ferraria

Fosteria

Freesia

Galaxia (most *Galaxias* have now been placed in the **Moraea** genus)

Geissorhiza

Gelasine

Geosiris

X Gladantha = **Gladiolus**

Gladiolus

Gynandiris (*Gynandiris simulans* = **Moraea simulans**,

Gynandiris sisyrinchium = **Moraea sisyrinchium**)

¹ Goldblatt, Peter and John C. Manning. *The Iris Family: Natural History and Classification*. (Portland, Oregon and London: Timber Press, 2008) 9.

² Barker, C. *World Checklist of Iridaceae*. The Board of Trustees of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew. 2009. Published on the Internet; <http://data.kew.org/cgi-bin/vpfg1992/genlist.pl?IRIDACEAE> Accessed April – September, 2009.

³ Information regarding availability has been compiled from:

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Personal communication with Garry Reid.

Hebea (some *Hebeas* have been renamed as **Gladiolus**,

others as *Tritoniopsis*)

Helixyra = **Gynandriris** = **Moraea**

Herbertia

Hermodactylus (*Hermodactylus tuberosus* = **Iris tuberosa**)

Hesperantha

Hesperoxiphion *

Hewardia = **Isophysis**

Hexaglottis *

Homeria = **Moraea**

Homoglossum = **Gladiolus**

Hydrotaenia = **Tigridia**

Iridodictyum = **Iris**

Iris

Isophysis

Itysa = **Calydorea**

Ixia

Juno = **Iris**

Junopsis = **Iris**

Keitia = **Eleutherine** *

Kelissa

Kentrosiphon = **Gladiolus**

Klattia

Lapeirousia

Larentia

Lethia

Libertia

Marica = **Neomarica**

Mastigostyla

Melasphaerula

Micranthus

Montbretia = **Tritonia**

Montbretiopsis = **Tritonia**

Moraea

Nemastylis

Neomarica

Nivenia *

Oenostachys = **Gladiolus**

Olsynium

Ona = **Olsynium**

Onira

Orthrosanthus

Pardanthopsis (*Pardanthopsis dichotoma* = **Iris dichotoma**)*

Patersonia

Petamenes = **Gladiolus**

Phaiophleps = **Olsynium** (*Phaiophleps nigricans* = *Sisyrinchium striatum* = **Olsynium nigricans**)

Phalocallis * = **Cypella**

Pillansia

Pseudotrimezia

Radinosophon *

Rheome

Rigidella *

Roggeveldia

Romulea

Salpingostylis = **Calydorea**

Savannosophon

Schizostylis (*Schizostylis coccinea* = **Hesperantha coccinea**)

Sessilanthera

Sessilistigma *

Siphonostylis = **Iris**

Sisyrinchium

Solenomelus *

Sparaxis

Sphenostigma

Streptanthera = **Sparaxis**

Sympa

Symphyostemon = **Olsynium**

Synnotia = **Sparaxis**

Syringodea

Tanaosolen = *Tritoniopsis*

Tapeinia *

Thereianthus

Tigridia

Trichonema = **Romulea**

Trifurcia = **Herbertia**

Trimezia

Tritonia

Tritoniopsis

Tucma = *Ennealophus*

Watsonia

Witsenia

Xiphium = **Iris**

Zygella = **Cypella**

Zygotritonia

Note that in addition to the genera listed above, the Iridaceae family also includes fertile hybrids from crosses between *Pardanthopsis* and *Belamcanda*. Samuel Norris in Kentucky, USA has named some as *X Pardancanda norrisii*¹, but these are not known to be available in Australia.

SHOW JUDGING

Some members of the Iridaceae family are much more widely grown than others. However, given the number of different genera within the family, there may be great variation among entries in an Iridaceae class on the show bench. The most easily recognizable characteristic of all Iridaceae is that the flowers have their parts in threes.

¹ Stebbings, Geoff. *The Gardener's Guide to Growing Irises*. (Portland, Oregon: Timber Press, and Devon: David & Charles Publishers, 1997) 109.

Other typical family characteristics include:

- The ovary is joined to the base of the flower, whereas in many other species (e.g. poppies) it is above the flower. (Isophysis is the one Iridaceae genus in which the ovary is above the flower).
- Foliage is typically vertical, and sword-shaped, with flat leaves that enfold each other. Both sides of the leaves are of identical appearance (with the exception of Moraea).
- The petals and sepals (standards and falls) are usually of similar appearance.

Show entries should be identified by an accepted species binomial (e.g. *Neomarica caerulea*) or cultivar name where possible, however if only the genus is known (e.g. *Freesia*), then that is acceptable. It should be noted that many of the members of the Iridaceae family have been renamed multiple times, so that synonyms are common, and outnumber the 'authentic' names by 10 to 1.

When judging such a diverse class, where you may not be familiar with the characteristics of some of the species entered, the best option is to rely on basic flower judging principles, such as assessment of freshness, symmetry, balance / proportion and condition and presentation.

Note that many Iridaceae will have their oldest flowers in the lower positions on the stem. Types which normally have multiple flower heads should have all or most flowers present (e.g. no obvious trimming or gaps).

When judging the freshness of entries, it is important to be aware that some Iridaceae have very short-lived flowers, lasting less than a day (e.g. *Moraea sisyrinchium* and *Iris dichotoma*). The typical flower forms may also be quite different to those expected from Iris entries, e.g. some Iridaceae have twisted petals, giving them a propeller-like appearance (most notably *Cypella*). As in all judging, a good knowledge of the species or cultivars most commonly grown in your area would be beneficial.

For general judging guidelines, see Core Criteria for Show Judging.

TRIAL GARDEN AWARDS SYSTEMS

Each region of the Iris Society of Australia (ISA) has its own trial garden, where hybridizers can send seedlings for independent evaluation by judges. In the trial garden setting, seedlings are labelled only with a trial garden numbering system, so that judges can evaluate the irises purely on their merits, free of personal bias (conscious or otherwise) concerning the hybridizer.

These regional trial gardens have a sequential 3-tier award system, High Commendation (HC), Honourable Mention (HM), and the Award of Merit (AM). Irises which win an HM need to be registered to be eligible for an Award of Merit. Irises which win an AM, or achieve the highest points for that class of irises in their regional trial garden become eligible for entry to the Dykes Medal Test Gardens.

The special trial garden awards in each region are:

NSW Region: the Gordon Loveridge Medal for the highest points awarded to a beardless iris and the Alan Johnson Medal for the highest points awarded to a bearded iris.

Victorian Region: The Merton Calvert Award for the cultivar scoring the highest points, and the Norman Caldwell Award for the cultivar considered to be the best garden iris.

South Australian Region: The Cole Memorial Award for the cultivar scoring the highest points.

Western Australian Region: The John Betts Medal for the cultivar scoring the highest points.

Australian Dykes Medal

In 1987, the Iris Societies of Australia and New Zealand, in consultation with the British Iris Society instituted an Australasian Dykes Medal, which in 1995, was replaced by separate Dykes Medals for Australia and New Zealand.

The competition for the Australian Dykes Medal involves 8 dedicated test gardens across the country, with each eligible cultivar entered into all gardens simultaneously. This enables new varieties' performance in a range of different growing conditions to be assessed by a number of experienced iris judges. Cultivars in the Dykes Medal test gardens are grown under their registered name (registration is a condition of entry).

The cultivar receiving the highest average score in the test gardens is awarded the Australian Dykes Medal. Since the Australian Dykes Medal gardens feature both bearded and beardless irises, the Iris Society of Australia (ISA) Medal is awarded annually for the top-scoring iris of a different type to that which has received the Dykes Medal, e.g. if the Dykes Medal winner is a bearded cultivar, then the highest-scoring beardless cultivar receives the ISA Medal, and vice versa.

The Australian Dykes Medal is awarded annually by the British Iris Society, whose founder, William Rickatson Dykes, it is named after. Dykes Medals are also awarded annually in the United Kingdom, North America and New Zealand.

REGISTRATION AND INTRODUCTION

The process of naming a new seedling and making it commercially available is known as registration and introduction. If a hybridizer has produced a new variety, which he / she feels is an improvement on, or different to the many thousands of irises already available, then it must be officially registered before it can be offered for sale.

Once the hybridizer has chosen a name that is not already registered, they then need to apply to the registrar to have that name registered, along with a description of the flower, the plant, and its parentage.

Worldwide registrations for all classes of irises except bulbous types are processed by the American Iris Society Registrar. However, in Australia, hybridizers should contact the Australian registrar, whose role is to act as intermediary between Australian iris hybridizers and the American Iris Society Registrar.

Once the cultivar is registered, if it is offered for sale to the public, then this is referred to as introduction, and formally fixes the registered name to that cultivar.

GLOSSARY

Amoena: (pronounced uh-mean-uh) An iris flower with white or nearly white standards and falls of any other colour, (e.g. a yellow amoena has white standards and yellow falls).

Anther: The pollen-bearing tip of the stamen. The anther is held on a long stalk (filament) under the style arm, and close against it.

Apogon: This term refers to rhizomatous iris with no beard or crest; beardless iris.

Aril: 1. A small white collar, which is found on the seeds of oncocyclus and regelia irises. It is also found on the seeds of some other iris types, e.g. *Iris nepalensis*. 2. A species iris or interspecies hybrid belonging to the oncocyclus or regelia groups. The term refers to hybrids between the two groups, as well as to those within a single group.

Arilbred (AB): A hybrid between an aril iris and a eupogon (or true bearded) iris. Arilbred irises usually combine characteristics of both parents, and have a form that is similar to tall bearded irises. Hybrids which have less than one quarter aril ancestry (or less than one full set of aril chromosomes) are not considered to fit the arilbred classification.

Australian Dykes Medal: The medal awarded annually to the breeder of the iris scoring the highest points in the Australian Dykes Medal test gardens, regardless of type. The medal is awarded at the discretion of the British Iris Society. See also ISA Medal and Dykes Medal.

Axil: The angle formed between a leaf or branch and the stem to which it is attached.

Beard: The bushy strip of hairs on the upper part of the falls of bearded irises. They also occur on the standards of some aril irises.

Bicolour: Any iris flower that has one colour in its standards and another (usually darker) colour in its falls.

Bitone: Iris flowers that have standards and falls of the same colour, but in contrasting (lighter and darker) shades of that same colour. The standards are usually the lighter of the two shades.

Blend: A colour pattern where a mixture of two or more colours occurs in the same parts of the flower.

Bloom out: An iris is said to bloom out when the mature rhizome dies, following flowering, without producing any increases.

Bract: A leaf on the flowering stem inside which a branch or bloom develops.

Branch: A lateral offshoot from the main flower stem.

Broken colour: A “broken colour” flower is a flower of one colour which displays irregular patches of one or more other colours.

Bud count: The number of bud places on a stem, or total number of flowers that a stem will produce.

Crest: The raised ridge found on the hafts of the falls of evansia iris flowers.

Cultivar: A cultivated variety of a plant. It usually refers to a man-made hybrid.

Deflexed: Bent sharply downwards and outwards.

Diploid: A plant with two sets of chromosomes. The wild forms of most plants are diploid. See also Tetraploid.

Dykes Medal: The highest award an iris can receive. The Dykes Medal is an annual award given in the United Kingdom, North America, Australia, and New Zealand. The Dykes Medal for each country is awarded by the British Iris Society, and is named after William Rickatson Dykes, founder of the British Iris Society. See also Australian Dykes Medal.

Eupogon: Any bearded iris which is not an aril or arilbred iris.

Falls: The three lower parts or sepals of an iris flower. These are the outer parts of the flower when in bud, and may flare horizontally, hang vertically, or be in a position between the two (semi-flaring), when the flower is open.

Fan: The cluster of leaves attached to a single rhizome (in irises, these typically form a fan shape).

Fancy: An extreme plicata-type colour pattern that exhibits a riotous mixture of colours.

Floriferousness: A cultivar’s ability to produce flowers freely, i.e. to produce many buds per stem and/or many stems per clump.

Flounce: A large, wide, petaloid extension of the beard, often fan-shaped or folded into a canoe shape.

Form: The shape of a flower.

Glaciata: A recessive colour pattern which occurs in plicata breeding. Glaciata irises occur in white, yellow, orange or pink shades, with no plicata markings. As glaciatas carry no anthocyanin (blue, purple or rose) pigments whatsoever, they display a glowing clear colour. Formerly referred to as ‘ice-whites’, ‘lemon ices’, etc.

Haft: The part of the standards and falls closest to the centre of the flower. This term is most commonly used to refer to the upper part of the falls, adjacent to the beard or signal.

Historic: An iris introduced at least thirty (30) years ago.

Horn: A short extension of the beard, which may be pointed and hairless.

Increase: The new rhizomes that a mature rhizome produces in a season.

Iridaceae: The plant family to which the genus *Iris* belongs.

ISA Medal: The Iris Society of Australia (ISA) Medal is awarded each year for the top-scoring iris of a different type to that which has received the Australian Dykes Medal, e.g. if a Tall Bearded iris wins the Dykes Medal, the ISA Medal is awarded for the top-scoring beardless iris in the DM test gardens, and vice versa.

Luminata: A colour pattern which occurs as a wash of blue, purple, lavender, etc. over a background of white, yellow, orange or pink. The wash tends to be paler or missing from the veins, and absent from the edges of both standards and falls. Both the beard and a clearly defined area around it have no blue/purple colouration. Style arms also have little or no blue/purple colouration. The luminata pattern may be thought of as being almost the reverse of the plicata pattern, and is genetically related to it.

Luminata-plicata: Luminata-plicata is the term given to flowers where both the luminata colour pattern and the plicata one occur simultaneously. In most cases the resulting flower is totally, but unevenly, patterned or marked.

Midrib: The central part of a standard or fall.

Neglecta: An iris which has light blue standards and darker blue or purple falls. May also be classified as a blue bitone.

Novelty: An iris which displays an unusual feature of flower or foliage, e.g. flat flower shape, broken colour blooms or variegated foliage.

Oncocyclus: One of the two main groups of aril species. Often abbreviated as “onco”.

Ovary: The female part at the base of the iris flower, which contains the ovules (potential seeds) and which develops after fertilization into the seed pod.

Perianth: In iris flowers, the collective term for the standards and falls.

Perianth tube: The tube at the base of the iris flower, which connects the standards and falls to the ovary. Also known as the perigone tube.

Petals: The standards of an iris flower.

Plicata: A colour pattern which occurs in many variations, but is commonly seen as dotting and/or stitching around the edges of the falls and/or standards. The dotting or stitching occurs in shades of blue, purple, lavender, etc. contrasting with a background colour of white, yellow, orange or pink. There may also be dots or stripes along the veins. Plicatas always have markings on the hafts of the falls, and alongside the beards.

Pogon: A bearded iris.

Regelia: One of the two main groups of aril species. In most regions, the regelias are stronger garden subjects than the oncocyclus species.

Reblooming Iris (RE): An iris which blooms more than once in the same growing season (e.g. in spring and again before the following spring). Rebloom which occurs immediately after spring bloom is known as ‘repeat’ bloom.

Reflexed: Reflexed falls are those which bend abruptly downward and inward.

Reverse amoena: A bearded iris flower with coloured standards, and falls which are white or nearly white.

Reverse bicolour: A bicolour flower where the standards are a different, darker colour to the falls.

Reverse bitone: This term is sometimes used to refer to bitone flowers where the standards are a darker shade than the falls.

Self: 1. A flower with standards and falls of the same colour. 2. In hybridizing, self-pollination (the placing of a flower’s pollen on its own stigmas).

Sepals: The falls of an iris flower.

Signal: 1. A marking, usually in yellow, white or orange on the falls of beardless irises, located where the beard is found in bearded irises. 2. An area of contrasting (usually darker) colour at the end of the beard on the falls of many arils and arilbreds.

Socket: The area supporting the flower buds.

Space-Age Iris (SA): Bearded irises which have appendages known as horns, spoons or flounces at the end of the beard.

Spathe: A small leaf enclosing a bud or group of buds. Irises often have inner and outer spathes. Spathes may be green and fleshy or dry and papery.

Species: A naturally occurring, visually distinct plant which is not a hybrid.

Spoon: An elongated petaloid extension of the beard, which widens near the end into a spoon shape.

Stamen: The male part of the flower. It comprises the pollen-bearing anther, and the thin stalk (filament) which supports it.

Standards: The three upper petals of an iris flower. These are usually broad and erect, and are the inner petals of the flower when in bud.

Stigma: The pollen-receiving part of the flower’s female organs. The stigmatic lip sits at the top of the style arm.

Stolon: A slender, elongated horizontal stem which creeps along the ground as an extension from an iris rhizome, and produces new plants.

Style arms: The three slender petal-like structures situated in the heart of an iris flower. They are located between the standards and above the falls.

Substance: The inner tissue structure of the flower, which determines its longevity, and maintains its form and colour.

Terminal: The terminal bud is the bud situated at the highest flowering place on the stem.

Tetraploid: A plant with four sets of chromosomes. See also Diploid.

Texture: A flower’s surface characteristic, e.g. silky, velvety, leathery, tough, smooth, etc. Texture influences colour impact as it reflects or absorbs light.

Variiegata: An iris which has yellow standards and falls of red, brown or purple. The name is derived from the tall-bearded species *Iris variegata* which has yellow standards and falls with variable reddish-brown veining.

Variety: (1) A cultivated plant with an identifying common name (i.e. a cultivar). (2) Botanically, a group of individuals within a species which are sufficiently distinct to merit a Latin varietal name.

Vigour: An iris plant’s capacity for survival or strong healthy growth and rate of increase.

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