

EXHIBITION JUDGING

REGISTERED/INTRODUCED CULTIVARS

Both species and interspecies hybrids may be registered under cultivar names, and such names can be found in The American Iris Society *Check Lists*. For species, a validly published binomial (for example, *I. setosa*, *I. tectorum*, *I. aphylla*, etc.) is considered the equivalent of a registered name. Lists of species binomials can be found in SIGNA's *Species Check List* and Brian Mathew's *The Iris*. Remember that SPEC and SPEC-X are new classes for judging garden awards. Many species were registered and introduced before these classes existed, and these older irises are just as acceptable as exhibition entries as those registered as SPEC or SPEC-X.

SHOW ENTRIES

All horticultural exhibits should be identified as fully as possible by giving either the registered cultivar name or the species binomial; plus the collector or geographical origin, if known; and any additional information, such as a commonly accepted varietal name or a clonal designation assigned by the collector. For example, *I. aphylla* H-17 (Hanselmayer) identifies the species, the assigned clonal designation, and the collector. "H-17" identifies a particular clone, just as a suffix such as "alba" or "nana" does.

Seedling entries should include seedling number, class (SPEC or SPEC-X) and the species binomial or cross description in order to enable the judge to evaluate the entries in the context of their species origin.

No exhibit should be disallowed because it has been flowered in a cold frame or coldhouse as opposed to the open garden. Species irises are often grown under controlled conditions outside their area of normal hardiness.

Many species are too small in scale to fit the containers used for tall bearded irises. The show committee should either provide several types of smaller containers (floral picks in styrofoam or Oasis work well) or specify that exhibitors provide their own containers of a suitable size.

SHOW SCHEDULE

Nowhere is a good show schedule more important than in providing for species and interspecies hybrids. The show committee will need some knowledge of the various types and should be familiar with what types have been exhibited in the past at each time of year and in what numbers. There can be one or more sections for species in the show schedule. If very few species are generally exhibited, then a single section titled "Species" is sufficient. Avoid lumping species in an "Other Irises" section. If you normally have numerous species entries, then two or more sections should be provided in the show schedule. There are several possible approaches to creating sections and subsections in an iris show. You may choose to create separate sections for pure species and interspecies hybrids. You may choose to create separate sections for bearded and beardless species. A semi-botanical approach works well. An alternative approach might provide sections for beardless water irises, dryland irises, woodland irises, etc. Or sections could be based on region of origin, such as American beardless, European bearded, Asian beardless, etc. In addition, if an unusually large number of entries appears at the show, it is the responsibility of the show chairman to create additional sections on the spot. For example, a show might have 15 entries that qualify for the "Beardless Species" section, but eight of the entries might be clones of *I. cristata*. In this case, it would be desirable to judge the cristatas as a separate section.

Grouping of entries within the classes in the exhibition hall should be alphabetically by species or interspecies hybrid (within any sections or subsections), and alphabetically by varietal designation or registered name within each species or

interspecies hybrid. If it is a cultivar show, each different clone of a species may be awarded a blue ribbon (if deserving). If there are several entries of one registered variety, then they should be judged together and only one blue ribbon awarded among them. If there are several entries identified with the same species binomial and clonal designation, e.g. *I. aphylla* H-17 (Hanselmayer), then they should be judged together and only one blue ribbon awarded among them. However, if two entries are titled simply *I. versicolor*, then they should be considered different clones and each may receive a blue ribbon if deserving (unless they are obviously the same clone).

SCALE OF POINTS

A rigidly defined point scale will not work for species entries because of the great variation among different species. The following guidelines may be useful in assigning relative value when evaluating the iris stalk and/or flower and the condition and grooming of the specimen.

CULTURAL PERFECTION OF FLOWER

and STALK (if any)	75
CONDITION and GROOMING	<u>25</u>
	100

Flower. Considered under flower are color, form and substance. Form can vary greatly according to the species origins of the exhibit under consideration. In some species the standards are nearly indistinguishable from the falls (*I. fulva*), and in others, nearly absent (*I. danfordiae*, *I. setosa*). In Junos, the style crests commonly have become so large and ornate as to achieve balance without standards. In others (*I. paradoxa*), the falls may be so much reduced as to appear as mere landing platforms for pollinators. Thus floral parts may be in quite different proportion from one species to another, i.e., some with all petals aligned in a single plane, some with erect and some with pendant petals. However, the design must conform, both

in color and shape, to the published species, clonal or cultivar description. Substance should also be typical of the species or cultivar. In some species, substance is typically thin and in others, it typically is quite tough.

Stalk. The stalks of species can be very different from those of modern hybrids. Do not penalize the stalk or branch habit of an exhibit which does not conform to what may be expected in an advanced generation cultivar; rather, compare it with the norm for its own type. Some species have extensive branching, while a single terminal flower is typical of others. Species may have asymmetrical branching, symmetrical branching, or no branching. As for the stalk, it is natural for some to be straight, some twisted, and some almost non-existent. This further points up the necessity for judges to know the characteristics of species grown in their area.

Condition and Grooming. Condition and grooming should be evaluated according to the extensive guidelines set forth for exhibition judging of tall bearded irises.

SEEDLINGS

The judge should be aware of recent introductions, as well as characteristics of collected species clones, in order to select seedlings which are distinct improvements over those already available. The judge should reward advances in flower color, form and substance, as well as improvements in branch habit and bud count. Seedling awards must reflect recognition of overall excellence, based upon the judge's personal knowledge.

Grooming should not be considered when judging seedlings. It is the flower and stalk which are under evaluation and not the skill of the exhibitor.