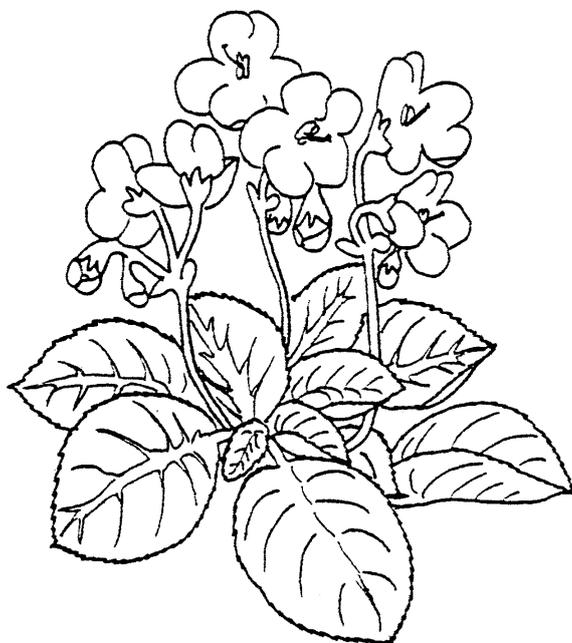


**GESNERIAD COUNCIL OF AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND**

**SAINTPAULIA**

**JUDGING LESSONS**



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# **GESNERIAD COUNCIL OF AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND**

## **SAINTPAULIA JUDGING LESSONS**

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**LIST OF SAINTPAULIA SPECIES – NAMES AND DESCRIPTIONS (included separately)**

\* \* \* \* \*

**NOTE:** The terms African violet and Saintpaulia in this publication are used synonymously

\* \* \* \* \*

# GESNERIAD COUNCIL OF AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND

## SAINTPAULIA JUDGING LESSONS

### LESSON 1 - INTRODUCTION

#### 1. ORIGINAL SPECIES COLLECTED:

Baron Walter von Saint Paul-Illaire collected live specimens of the plant in 1892 in two different locations in German East Africa, Tanganyika, now known as Tanzania.

He collected two species later named as *S. ionantha* and *S. confusa*. One (*S. ionantha*) was found about an hour from Tanga in wooded places in fissures of limestone rocks as well as in rich soil with plenty of vegetable matter, 15 to 45 metres above sea level. The other (*S. confusa*) was found in primeval forest of Numbara, also in shady positions, approximately 758 metres above sea level.

#### 2 BOTANICAL NAME:

Saintpaulia was named by German horticulturalist, Herman Wendland in 1893 to honour its collector. It was originally known as the Usambara Violet after the area in which it was found.

In 2009 the species were reclassified. See the *Accessions of Saintpaulia* list following these lessons.

#### 3. GENUS:

The Genus, Saintpaulia, is one of approximately 147 genera which make up the Gesneriaceae family, named in honour of Conrad Gesner, a noted 16th century scientist.

#### 4. SPECIES:

There are nine species, with many subspecies and varieties of Saintpaulia. A list can be found attached to these lessons. Botanically, Saintpaulia are classified as herbs.

#### 5. CHARACTERISTICS:

##### (a) BLOOMS:

**SHAPES:** Blooms may be stars with equal sized petals or violet shaped with three lower petals and two smaller top petals. There are also bell shaped flowers.

**COLOUR:** The blooms now come in many colours and different shades of colour.

**TYPES:** Blooms may be **single, double or semi-double** (more than five petals, but less than a full second row).

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### Other bloom types are:

- Edged** flowers have coloured edges to the petals; if the edge is white the bloom is called "Geneva".
- Fantasy** cultivars in which the basic colour is streaked, splashed, puffed or spotted with another colour or shade of the basic colour.
- Two-toned** blooms come in two tones of the one colour.
- Multi-coloured** blooms have two or more different colours in the one bloom.
- Thumb Print** blooms are white with a patch of a second colour on each petal.
- Chimeras** show a distinct broad stripe down the centre of each petal in a deeper or lighter shade in contrast to the basic colour. They only propagate true to description from a side shoot or flower stem.
- Fringed** blooms have heavily serrated or fringed outer petals. They can be any form or shape.

### (b) *LEAVES:*

#### **TYPES:**

**Plain/Tailored** oval, flat leaf, the most common type.

**Scalloped** leaf with slightly wavy or corrugated edge.

**Serrated** leaf edge toothed or notched like a saw.

**Quilted** leaf with raised portions between the veins.

**Ruffle/Wavy** leaf has waved edge and is not flat.

**Girl** named for a mutation of the hybrid 'Blue Boy' called Blue Girl. The leaf has a creamy white patch at the base of the leaf. (Note, it does not refer to a female leaf).

**Variegated** any leaf type which is not completely green. Different types of variegation are described as Tommie Lou, Mosaic or Crown.

**Spooned** naturally concave.

**Longifolia** (or Clackamus) leaves are long, narrow and pointed with distinct veins running the length of the leaf.

**Bustle** leaf has a "bustle type" bunching on the underside.

(c) **TETRAPLOID** Although they are rarely seen today, Amazon, Du Pont and Supreme

**CULTIVARS:** cultivars fall into this category. They result from the doubling of chromosomes and have large thick hairy foliage. They also have larger, but fewer blooms than normal standard cultivars.

(d) **SEED PODS:** Pods vary in shape and size depending on their ancestry. They may be fat and round, or long and pointed. There may be hundreds of tiny seeds in each pod, almost as fine as dust.

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## 6. KNOWLEDGE:

It is desirable to become acquainted with as many species and hybrids as possible.

Over the years, countless new cultivars have resulted from careful hybridising and it is essential to be able to recognise as many of the distinctive characteristics, growth habits and types of leaves and blooms of these plants as possible.

It is also desirable that a Judge be able to identify the symptoms of diseases, pest infestations, nutritional deficiencies or excesses, seasonal variations etc.

See Lesson 4 for further information.

\* \* \* \* \*

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## LESSON 2 - POINTING

To become familiar with the feeling of judging, one should study closely at every opportunity different species and hybrids of African violets and compare them. It would be impossible for any Judge to know or identify every Saintpaulia in existence. Judges should become familiar with as many cultivars as possible.

In Judging, one closely studies a plant, points it and eventually more knowledge of various plants' characteristics is learned and more information on the culture of plants is noted. Therefore a student of judging should try pointing as often as possible.

**POINTING:** Is a system which enables a Judge to compare one plant against another with equally good qualities and against other plants generally, **BUT** each plant is pointed on its own merits. Should two plants in the same class receive equal total number of points, then the Judge must reassess the same qualities of both plants to arrive at a majority of points for one plant.

### STANDARD SAINTPAULIAS:

#### SCALE OF POINTS:

<b>FORM AND SYMMETRY</b>	30 Points
<b>QUANTITY OF BLOOM</b> (Floriferousness)	30 Points
<b>CULTURAL CONDITION</b>	25 Points
<b>SIZE OF BLOOM</b>	10 Points
<b>COLOUR OF BLOOM</b>	5 Points
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100 Points</b>

A Standard show plant should be a single crown plant which the exhibitor has grown and groomed for showing. It must have been in his/ her possession for at least three months.

#### **FORM AND SYMMETRY - 30 Points:**

Good form and symmetry are important qualities that are considered by the exhibitor in selecting a show plant and by the Judge in making awards. A good show plant, when properly trained, will be symmetrical with the leaves radiating from the crown. However, some cultivars with fluted, wavy or elongated foliage do not completely cover the petioles. There should never be smaller leaves below the larger ones. Any extra growth at the base of the plant or in the axil below the point where bloom stalks emerge is considered a side shoot (a side shoot is a growth with four leaves or more). These should be removed regularly, otherwise the plant will not remain a single crown plant.

If a leaf is broken at any stage prior to benching a plant in a show, it should be removed and the plant groomed as well as possible if the exhibitor still wishes to enter it. At no time should a broken leaf be allowed to remain on a plant unless it has occurred after being benched and so is not the fault of the exhibitor. The plant would then still be eligible for an award, but a card of explanation, initialed by the Show Chairman, must accompany the plant.

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## **DEDUCTIONS UNDER FORM AND SYMMETRY:**

### ***IMPERFECT LEAF PATTERN AND SYMMETRY***

Twisted leaves may also cause a break in symmetry.

Deduct 5 points for a decided break caused by a missing or twisted leaf.

Deduct 1 or 2 points for each extra break.

Deduct a maximum of 10 points.

### ***VISIBLE PETIOLES ACCORDING TO CULTIVAR***

Deduct up to a maximum of 10 points.

### ***IMMATURE LEAVES***

Lowest row of leaves smaller than later growth.

Deduct 1 point per leaf.

### ***LACK OF PROPER DEVELOPMENT OF ROWS OF LEAVES***

A row of leaves which is less developed in accordance with the expected growth pattern should be penalized. This condition may be referred to as "arrested development".

Deduct up to a maximum of 10 points.

## **QUANTITY OF BLOOM - 30 Points:**

The amount of bloom on a well grown Saintpaulia depends not only on cultural conditions but also on the heredity of the plant.

The scale of points allows a total of 30 points for the quantity of bloom and this should be interpreted as only fresh, open blooms. They are not considered open until the pollen sacs are visible. In many doubles, pollen sacs are not normally visible. These flowers should be at the same stage of development to be considered.

The bloom stalks should be arranged evenly around the plant and lifted above the foliage.

A good standard show plant may have fifty or more blooms, whilst smaller plants have fewer.

Blooms that have fallen since entry do not count, nor should there be any deduction for them. Some double and semi-double cultivars display single, semi-double and double blooms at the same time. Each open bloom should be counted in determining the total number for bloom count.

## **DEDUCTIONS UNDER QUANTITY OF BLOOM:**

### ***LACK OF BLOOM***

Deduct a proportional amount for lack of blooms (compared to a plant with sufficient flowers).

### ***DISTRIBUTION OF BLOOM***

Deduct up to 10 points for an obvious gap in distribution of bloom, and blooms hidden under the foliage.

# GESNERIAD COUNCIL OF AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND

## **CULTURAL CONDITION - 25 Points:**

This is truly the mark of how carefully the exhibitor has grown the plant. There are many cultural factors which can mark leaves and sometimes, in spite of all precautions and from completely unknown causes, a leaf may become marked. It is futile to show any plant which has leaf markings that indicate the plant has suffered from some pest or disease or might have it at the time of entry. An alert scrutineer/steward will refuse to accept such a plant. Judges must refer obviously infected plants, to the Show Chairman.

A well grown plant has clean, fresh-looking leaves typical of the cultivar. Leaves which are too small for the cultivar indicate poor cultural practices. A row of small leaves part way down the plant indicates some interruption in the plant's growth. This can be caused by chemical injury, extreme hot or cold growing conditions or lack of potting mix fertility for a period of time, often due to the fact that the plant was not repotted at the proper time.

The carefully groomed plant has clean foliage. The more skilled exhibitors clean petioles and leaf axils so that the potting mix does not remain on them. They do not only do this at home, but also carry a soft brush with them to give their plant a last detailed grooming before it is entered. Stubs of leaves, faded blooms and spent bloom stalks are carefully removed. By using a pair of small scissors they can be clipped so that no stub remains. If only one bloom is left on a stalk, the bloom and stalk should be removed unless the bloom is unusually large. All stakes, markers and supports must be removed.

A plant with a long neck is not a well cared for plant. A neck is that portion of the plant stem or stalk between the potting mix level and the first row of leaf petioles. Correct potting is important. The plant should be centred in the pot high enough so that the petioles are not forced upwards by the rim, but not so high that the potting mix has to be mounded to cover a long neck. Potting mix should be level and finish about 6mm (1/4 inch) below pot rim. The size of the pot must be in proportion to the leaf spread of the plant. Droopy leaf stems do not indicate good growing conditions. Side shoots should be removed as soon as recognized, but developing bloom stalks allowed to remain.

## **DEDUCTIONS UNDER CULTURAL CONDITION;**

### ***POTTING***

The pot should be in a pristine condition. The plant should be centred in the pot.

The size of the pot must be in proportion to the leaf span of the plant. Points are deducted if plants are over potted or under potted, or if the lower leaves are not level with the top of the pot. The pot should be approximately 1/3rd of the size of the plant.

Deduct up to a maximum of 5 points.

### ***GROWTH***

Lopsided plants growing to one side, i.e. leaning towards the light source.

Foliage reaching up.

Leaves growing down.

Deduct up to 10 points.

### ***PLANT WITH A NECK***

Continued removal of lower leaves results in a bare stem or "neck".

Deduct up to 10 points.

## **GESNERIAD COUNCIL OF AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND**

### ***SUPPORTS OR STAKES***

Deduct 1 point per support or stake unless support is a flared-top pot then deduction could be more.

Pots should not be used if a flared edge supports the leaves.

### ***DIRT ON PLANTS, DIRTY POTS, FERTILISER SALTS, POOR FOLIAGE COLOUR,***

#### ***LACK OF FRESHNESS, LACK OF VARIEGATION***

Deduct up to a maximum of 10 points.

#### ***MARKED OR FADED LEAVES***

Deduct 1 point per mark with a maximum of 3 points per leaf.

Maximum of 10 points per plant.

#### ***BLOOM AND LEAF STUBS, FADED BLOOMS, SEED PODS***

Points are deducted for failure to remove these. Some cultivars, which have a very large bloom count often seem to self pollinate and these plants need to be checked carefully.

Masses of fresh blooms may conceal faded blooms and seed pods.

Deduct 1 point per fault.

#### ***SIDE SHOOTS***

Some cultivars have a strong tendency to produce side shoots and should be checked carefully and often.

Deduct up to 10 points.

### **SIZE OF BLOOM -10 Points:**

5 points for size of fully opened blooms according to cultivar.

5 points for uniformity of blooms overall.

Plants are grown in varying conditions. If blooms are smaller than usual, then something in the cultural conditions of the plant is at fault. Potting mix and the fertilising program need careful consideration.

### **DEDUCTIONS UNDER SIZE OF BLOOM:**

#### ***BLOOMS FAILING TO ACHIEVE EXPECTED SIZE ACCORDING TO CULTIVAR***

Deduct up to 5 points.

#### ***UNIFORMITY IN SIZE OF BLOOM***

If blooms are not uniform in size.

Deduct up to 5 points.

## **GESNERIAD COUNCIL OF AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND**

### **COLOUR OF BLOOM - 5 Points:**

Colours should be clear and the accepted colour described by the originator of that cultivar. Temperature, potting mix, fertilising, light and water are important factors for colour. Judges must familiarise themselves with colour changes due to cultural factors.

### **DEDUCTIONS UNDER COLOUR OF BLOOM:**

#### ***INCORRECT BLOOM COLOUR***

#### ***BLOOMS LACKING EDGE, FANTASY OR PROPER AMOUNT OF MULTI-COLOUR***

Deduct up to 5 points.

# GESNERIAD COUNCIL OF AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND

## MINIATURE AND SEMI-MINIATURE SAINTPAULIAS:

The same Scale of Points and deductions as for Standard Saintpaulia is used. The difference in pointing is that these plants must conform to the standards set down for them in regard to size of plant. Plants, as presented, may be measured by using a ring of the appropriate diameter. Oversized plants should be eliminated from consideration.

A good show Miniature or Semi-miniature may have thirty or more blooms.

**MINIATURES:** Allow a leaf span of 15cm (6") or under.  
Blooms and leaves should be proportionately smaller than those of Standard plants.

**SEMI-MINIATURES:** Allow a leaf span of 20cm (8") or under.  
Blooms and leaves may be larger than those of Miniatures, but smaller than those of Standard plants.

## **SCALE OF POINTS:**

<b>FORM AND SYMMETRY</b>	30 Points
<b>QUANTITY OF BLOOM</b> (Floriferousness)	30 Points
<b>CULTURAL CONDITION</b>	25 Points
<b>SIZE OF BLOOM</b>	10 Points
<b>COLOUR OF BLOOM</b>	5 Points
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100 Points</b>

# GESNERIAD COUNCIL OF AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND

## SAINTPAULIA TRAILERS:

### **STANDARD, SEMI-MINIATURE and MINIATURE TRAILERS:**

The Scale of Points differs from the Standard Saintpaulia scale because emphasis is on **FORM** and **CULTURE**, rather than on symmetry. The Scale of Points is as follows:-

#### **SCALE OF POINTS:**

<b>FORM AND SYMMETRY</b>	25 Points
<b>QUANTITY OF BLOOM</b>	30 Points
<b>CULTURAL CONDITION</b>	30 Points
<b>SIZE OF BLOOM</b>	10 Points
<b>COLOUR OF BLOOM</b>	5 Points
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100 Points</b>

To be entered in a show as a trailer, the plant must have been described by the hybridiser as a trailer. A standard plant that has developed side shoots is not a trailer.

Trailers produce bloom in clusters which should be evenly distributed around the plant. The amount of bloom varies according to size of the plant. Larger plants should have more bloom. Trailers should be pruned to produce well-balanced plants to fill the containers and produce trailing branches. There must be at least three trailing branches coming from one main stem. Pinching out centres in the early stages produces more branching.

Trailers should be compact. There should be no bare stems or bare areas of potting mix showing. Dead or faded blooms should be removed, also old or damaged leaves, leaf stubs or old flower stems. Leaves lacking uniformity of size or ones which extend out of line with the rest of the plant should also be removed.

Trailers require good strong light and more frequent fertilising to maintain compact growth. The usual Saintpaulia potting mix may be used. There is no limit to the size of these plants, but there should be uniformity of leaf size.

1. The standard sized trailers have large leaves and blooms.
2. Semi-miniature trailers have much smaller leaves and blooms than the standard sized trailers, but they are heavy bloomers.
3. Miniature trailers are judged the same as semi-miniature and standard trailers. They have smaller leaves, but, like the semi-miniature trailers, are heavy bloomers.

#### **DEDUCTIONS UNDER FORM AND SYMMETRY:**

##### ***ELONGATED PETIOLES***

Long petioles extending leaves beyond line of the plant – deduct up to 10 points.

##### ***LACK OF UNIFORMITY OF LEAF SIZE***

Deduct up to 10 points

##### ***LOPSIDED GROWTH***

Deduct up to a maximum of 10 points.

##### ***BARE STEMS***

Deduct up to 10 points

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## **DEDUCTIONS UNDER QUANTITY OF BLOOM:**

### ***LACK OF BLOOM***

Deduct a proportional amount for lack of blooms (compared to a plant with sufficient flowers).

### ***DISTRIBUTION OF BLOOM***

Deduct up to 10 points if bloom is not evenly distributed around the plant.

## **DEDUCTIONS UNDER CULTURAL CONDITION:**

### ***MARKED OR FADED LEAVES***

Deduct up to 10 points - 1 point for each fault (max 3 per leaf).

### ***BLOOM OR LEAF STUBS, FADED BLOOMS, SEED PODS, SUPPORTS OR STAKES***

Deduct 1 point for each fault.

### ***DIRT ON PLANTS, DIRTY POTS, POOR FOLIAGE COLOUR, LACK OF FRESHNESS, LACK OF VARIEGATION***

Deduct up to a maximum of 10 points.

### ***INCORRECT POTTING***

Deduct up to a maximum of 5 points for over potting, under potting or off centre. The size of the pot should be in proportion to the size of the plant.

## **DEDUCTIONS UNDER SIZE OF BLOOM:**

### ***SIZE OF BLOOM***

Deduct up to 5 points if open blooms fail to achieve expected size according to cultivar.

### ***UNIFORMITY OF SIZE OF BLOOM***

Deduct up to 5 points if blooms are not uniform in size.

## **DEDUCTIONS UNDER COLOUR OF BLOOM:**

### ***INCORRECT BLOOM COLOUR BLOOMS LACKING EDGE, FANTASY OR PROPER AMOUNT OF MULTICOLOUR***

Deduct up to 5 points.

# GESNERIAD COUNCIL OF AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND

## SAINTPAULIA SEEDLINGS:

### **DEFINITION OF A SEEDLING:**

A seedling is a new cultivar grown from seed and not previously shown. It can be shown and judged once only as a seedling regardless of age. Only the original plant is a seedling - any plants propagated from it become cultivars.

### **SCALE OF POINTS:**

<b>GROWTH HABIT</b>	35 Points
<b>DISTINCTIVENESS OF BLOOM</b>	20 Points
<b>QUANTITY OF BLOOM</b>	20 Points
<b>STRENGTH OF BLOOM STALK</b>	15 Points
<b>SIZE OF BLOOM</b>	10 Points
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100 Points</b>

A seedling should be definitely superior to an already existing cultivar in one or more characteristics.

The plant should have good form, symmetry and leaf colour, petioles should be neither too long or too short.

Blooms should be distinctive in size, shape and texture with good colour that does not fade easily. There should be a maximum amount of bloom with many blooms and buds on a stem. The bloom stalks should not be overly long, but should be sturdy enough to support the blooms well above the foliage.

### **GUIDE TO POINTING:**

#### **GROWTH HABIT - 35 Points:**

In judging a seedling, consider these points:

- Perfection in growth habit and leaf pattern,
- Colour of foliage,
- Length of petioles

### **DEDUCTIONS UNDER GROWTH HABIT:**

#### ***IF GROWTH IS NOT SYMMETRICAL***

Deduct up to 10 points.

#### ***IF PETIOLES ARE LEGGY***

(longer than will make plant compact)

Deduct up to 10 points.

#### ***IF PLANT IS TOO COMPACT***

(bud stalks unable to develop properly)

Deduct up to 10 points.

#### ***LACK OF GOOD FOLIAGE COLOUR***

Deduct up to 10 points.

## **GESNERIAD COUNCIL OF AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND**

### **DISTINCTIVENESS OF BLOOM - 20 Points:**

The bloom of new seedlings should be different from, and an improvement over already existing cultivars.

This is not always the case. It is possible that the value of the seedling under observation lies in the foliage and so is an improvement over other plants with similar blooms.

Deduct points if the bloom is not unusually different from some already being grown.

### **QUANTITY OF BLOOM - 20 Points:**

Unless the seedling being observed shows that it is a prolific bloomer, it is not better, nor as good, as many already on the market. All open flowers, buds and bud stems, (even those just forming), should be considered. This indicates potential bloom production.

Deduct Points for:

- Insufficient blooms per stem.

- Insufficient number of bloom stems.

### **STRENGTH OF BLOOM STALK - 15 Points:**

The outstanding seedling has bloom stalks that are sturdy enough to hold a large quantity of bloom well above the foliage.

Deduct appropriately if the bloom stems are too long, too short or weak.

### **SIZE OF BLOOM - 10 Points:**

The judge should look for blooms of a size appropriate to the type of plant - standard, miniature or semi-miniature or trailer. Blooms should be uniform in size. Small flowers can be offset by a high bloom count.

Deduct points accordingly.

# GESNERIAD COUNCIL OF AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND

## SAINTPAULIA SPECIES:

**NOTE:** Names of *Saintpaulia* species used in this lesson are taken from the *Accessions of Saintpaulia* list published in 2009 by the African Violet Society of America. Official abbreviations are shown in brackets. Each species has its description as published by the African Violet Society of America (A.V.S.A.).

African violet species are the ancestors of all cultivars. However, their growth habits vary considerably and they are usually shown in a special class for species. Because of these variations, the species cannot be judged in exactly the same manner as the hybrid African violets.

Judges should try to become familiar with the growth and flowering habits of as many of the species as possible.

## SCALE OF POINTS:

<b>SYMMETRY OR FORM</b> (according to species)	20 Points
<b>CULTURAL CONDITION</b>	35 Points
<b>QUANTITY OF BLOOM</b> (according to species)	30 Points
<b>SIZE OF BLOOM</b> (according to species)	10 Points
<b>COLOUR OF BLOOM</b> (according to species)	5 Points
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100 Points</b>

## SYMMETRY OR FORM - 20 Points:

African violet species should not be forced to grow in the symmetrical fashion of the hybrid cultivars. Some *Saintpaulia* species tend to have a single crown, e.g.:

*Saintpaulia ionantha* 5b. subspecies *grotei* cl. *difficilis* - (*S.* 5b. cl. *difficilis*)

*Saintpaulia ionantha* 5c. subspecies *ionantha* 1. variety *ionantha* cl. *tongwensis* - (*S.* 5cl. cl. *tongwensis*)

*Saintpaulia ionantha* 5g. subspecies *pendula* cl. *Intermedia* - (*S.* 5g. cl. *intermedia*)

*Saintpaulia ionantha* 5h. subspecies *velutina* cl. *Velutina* - (*S.* 5h. cl. *velutina*)

Others are naturally multi-crowned, e.g.:

*Saintpaulia nitida* - (*S.* 7. *nitida*)

*Saintpaulia rupicola* - (*S.* 8. *rupicola*)

Others are trailers or creepers, e.g.:

*Saintpaulia ionantha* 5b subspecies *grotei* - (*S.* 5b. cl. *grotei*)

*Saintpaulia ionantha* 5b. subspecies *grotei* cl. *Magungensis* - (*S.* 5b. cl. *magungensis*)

*Saintpaulia ionantha* 5g. subspecies *pendula* - (*S.* 5g. cl. *pendula*)

*Saintpaulia brevopilosa* (*S.* 6. *brevopilosa*) and *Saintpaulia shumensis* (*S.* 3. cl. *schumensis*) are small growers whilst *Saintpaulia ionantha* 5a. subspecies *grandifolia* will grow very large. Removal of side shoots and tip-pruning need not be practised on African violet species.

Species should not be multi-planted.

## **GESNERIAD COUNCIL OF AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND**

Although symmetry is not important for African violet species, well grown plants will exhibit good form. Points should be deducted, as for hybrid cultivars, for lack of proper development of rows of leaves, immature leaves not removed and visible petioles (i.e. undue legginess due to poor growing conditions) according to species.

However, it should be remembered that some cultivars are naturally very open growers and they should not be penalised for this characteristic.

### **DEDUCTIONS UNDER SYMMETRY OR FORM:**

#### ***IMMATURE LEAVES***

Deduct 1 point per leaf

#### ***VISIBLE PETIOLES (ACCORDING TO GROWTH HABIT)***

Deduct up to a maximum of 10 points for undue legginess due to poor culture.

#### ***LACK OF PROPER DEVELOPMENT OF A ROW OF LEAVE***

Deduct up to a maximum of 10 points for an undeveloped row of leaves.

### **CULTURAL CONDITION - 35 Points:**

While the forms of the species differ considerably, good cultural condition should be expected.

A show plant should be carefully groomed removing stubs of leaves and peduncles as well as faded and spent blooms.

Foliage should have a clean fresh looking appearance typical of the species. The pot must be clean and in proportion to the size of the plant. Although the plant should be centred in the pot, some species have a tendency to grow towards the side of the pot, no matter how carefully they are grown. A well grown plant, even if an open growing species, should not have a long neck due to the removal of old leaves.

### **DEDUCTIONS UNDER CULTURAL CONDITION:**

#### ***MARKED OR FADED LEAVES***

1 point per mark to a maximum of 3 points per leaf.

Maximum of 10 Points

#### ***NECK***

Maximum of 10 points

#### ***DIRT ON PLANT, POT, LACK OF FRESHNESS***

Maximum of 10 points

#### ***BLOOM OR LEAF STUBS, FADED AND DAMAGED BLOOMS, SEED PODS***

1 point each

Maximum of 10

#### ***INCORRECT POTTING***

Up to 5 points

#### ***STAKES LEFT IN POT***

1 point each

# GESNERIAD COUNCIL OF AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND

## **QUANTITY OF BLOOM - 30 Points:**

All species blooms are single. The number of blooms differs considerably according to the species. Some Saintpaulia species, such as *Saintpaulia ionantha* 5a. subspecies *grandifolia*, *Saintpaulia ionantha* 5b. subspecies *grotei* cl. *Magungensis* and *Saintpaulia ionantha* 5c. subspecies *ionantha* 1. variety *ionantha* cl. *Tongwensis* are free bloomers, whilst others such as *S. confusa* and *S. goetzeana* are shy bloomers. Some tend to hide their blooms under the foliage.

Points for quantity of bloom should be allocated according to the particular species and shy bloomers should not be penalised for having less bloom than the more prolific bloomers.

## **SIZE OF BLOOM -10 Points:**

### **DEDUCTIONS UNDER SIZE OF BLOOM:**

#### ***LACK OF UNIFORMITY***

Deduct up to 5 points

#### ***INCORRECT SIZE***

Deduct up to 5 points

## **COLOUR OF BLOOM - 5 Points:**

Colour of bloom should be true for the species.

### **DEDUCTIONS UNDER COLOUR OF BLOOM:**

If colour is not clear and correct

Deduct up to 5 points

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**LESSON 3 – PRACTICAL POINTING**

**SUGGESTIONS FOR INSTRUCTOR:**

1. Provide one plant per person to be studied and judged.
2. A discussion should follow for the reasons and cause of each fault found on each plant.

**PRACTICAL TEST:**

The following “faults” may be observed during pointing. Make a note of each in your notebook if you find any. Watch for others listed in Lesson 2 under “Guide to Pointing”.

- “Necky” crown
- Lopsided plants growing to one side, i.e. leaning towards the light source. Foliage reaching up, leaves growing down
- Gaps between leaves and/or uneven gaps
- Curved petioles
- Dust, particles of potting mix or fertilisers, etc.
- Small first leaves left on
- Hidden blooms (under leaves) (lack of grooming)
- Unevenness of leaves through the plant
- Uneven colour of leaves
- Salts visible on potting mix, crown and/or pot
- Broken stems
- Dying blooms or leaves
- Foreign growth (grass, weeds, fungus in potting mix)
- Fungi infestation
- Side shoots
- Seed pods
- Bloom or leaf stubs
- Support or stakes
- Blooms uneven in size
- Blooms lacking edge, fantasy or multi-colour
- Uneven distribution of blooms
- Dirty pot
- Uneven or lack of variegation
- A trailer with fewer than three crowns
- Inappropriate pot size
- Off-centre potting

\* \* \* \* \*

# GESNERIAD COUNCIL OF AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND

## LESSON 4 - GENERAL KNOWLEDGE

1. **KNOWLEDGE** of plant life generally is useful to gain knowledge of African violet culture, i.e. position of plant with regard to light and warmth, potting mix with the correct pH and porosity, quantity of moisture, etc.

Definitions of some botanical terms relating to Saintpaulia are:

**VARIETY:** A variety is a naturally occurring form of a species.

**HYBRID:** A hybrid is any product of a cross between two plants somehow different.

**CULTIVAR:** A cultivar refers to a plant originating in cultivation. It may be a hybrid or mutation.

2. **ENVIRONMENT:** plays an important part in African violet culture. The plants do not thrive in extreme heat or cold areas. They should be situated where there is good air circulation, good light, a dust free atmosphere and where there will be no contact with plants or flowers brought in from the outside garden which could carry pests or disease.

Attention to the following will show up in the condition of a plant:-

- (a) Cleanliness
- (b) Correct feeding and nutrition
- (c) Sufficient humidity
- (d) Correct temperature
- (e) Correct watering
- (f) Sufficient light
- (g) Correct pot size
- (h) Suitable potting medium
- (i) Space to grow
- (j) Correct use of sprays (and other pesticides) if and when needed

If the foregoing good practices are not followed the plant could suffer. Plants are often known to grow and bloom indefinitely with seemingly no care or attention, but these are often multi-crowned, badly in need of repotting and often infested with pests and/or soil-borne diseases.

Let us take each factor separately:-

- (a) **CLEANLINESS:**

The plant's leaves should be kept clean. Dust will prevent the 'pores' from breathing and they must also be able to absorb moisture as well as air. Dust will also detract from a clean, shining, healthy appearance. Spraying or washing with warm clean water does not harm the leaves, as long as the plant is not placed in the sun or in draughts while wet. A soft brush may be used to gently brush away dust, brushing in the one direction

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towards the tip, by supporting the larger leaves with the palm of the hand. Not all leaves will be shining. Heavier, hairy types respond to gentle brushing, but always have a dull finish. Pots, labels and saucers should also be kept clean.

### (b) **FEEDING and NUTRITION:**

Though some potting mixes contain enough fertiliser to last for the first few weeks, it will become necessary to start a fertilising programme once this has been absorbed. The mix should always be at least slightly damp before applying fertiliser to avoid burning the plant's roots. Plants may also be "foliar fed" by misting over the leaves with a fertiliser suitable for the purpose, made up to a considerably weaker strength with hot water.

Plants are only able to absorb fertiliser when conditions of light, temperature and pH are right for them and they are growing actively. Plants should be fed less often in periods of slow growth that occur during periods of extreme hot or cold weather.

Overfeeding may show up as burnt plant centres and leaf edges, distorted leaves, blasted buds and burnt fine roots. This eventually could kill a plant if the plant is not repotted or the potting mix thoroughly drenched with clear water.

Lack of nutrition shows up in lack of colour, lack of bloom, slow growth and a dull overall appearance in the plant.

A suitable fertiliser is comprised of nitrogen, phosphorous, and potassium (N P K) plus minerals.

**NITROGEN** provides the element for growth, leaf and stem strength and good leaf colour.

**PHOSPHOROUS** is for roots - to promote bloom and seed, deepens colour in blooms and brings out redness in leaves.

**POTASSIUM** aids the plant in warding off disease, creates good, clear appearance in blooms, and balances the above two elements for growth.

**CHARCOAL** is useful not only to sweeten the potting mix when used in very fine pieces, but also as drainage material. The roots adhere to the charcoal to obtain the ammonia created in the potting mix and absorbed by the charcoal.

**MINERALS** added to fertilisers assist in many ways to increase and improve growth. (These are referred to as "trace elements" on labels on fertiliser bottles).

### (c) **HUMIDITY:**

Humidity is moisture retained in the atmosphere and is not to be confused with excessive watering which can cause problems. (Too much moisture in the potting mix can create suitable conditions for the development of "Crown Rot" - a fungus disease.) Artificially created humidity depends on the atmosphere of the area in which the plant grows. Coastal areas normally have humidity sufficient for African violets without using artificial means. 60% humidity is a recommended average percentage for African

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violets. Larger blooms can be obtained from correct humidity as well as holding them for longer periods on the plant. Lack of humidity causes "bud drop".

A humid atmosphere may be obtained by standing pots on damp sand, trays or saucers of clean pebbles with water among them. The plant should be supported above the water, not standing in it. Misting the plant once or twice a day with warm water during periods when the air is dry will be beneficial.

Low humidity can cause bud blast, smaller flowers, growth not as sturdy and fertiliser burn.

Excessive humidity can cause soft growth, fragile flowers, and fungal problems.

### **(d) TEMPERATURE:**

As a guide only, around 23 degrees Celsius is an ideal temperature for African violets with a drop in night temperature to around 18 degrees Celsius.

When the temperature falls much below 12 degrees Celsius the plant's growth slows, outside leaves may start to droop and curl around the pot, and generally lose its lustre. There will be fewer blooms, but they will be larger and longer lasting, enhanced in colour with clearer edges and fantasy. Thumbprints may lose colour. A sudden drop in temperature may cause blooms to fall. Variegation will be more evident in cool weather.

The plant should be protected from direct cold due to close proximity to windows in winter. Light plastic may be used to surround plant shelves at night or the plants themselves may be covered with newspaper or light plastic to be removed each morning. If any form of heating is used it will be especially important to provide extra humidity in the area.

If temperatures are over 28 degrees Celsius for any length of time, plants will dry out quickly unless they are wick-watered or on some other self-watering system. In very hot weather, blooms on some cultivars will be smaller and fewer and, though in some cases many buds are produced, they may fail to mature. There will probably be plants with tight centres and instances of bud blast. Blooms may lose edging or fantasy and thumbprints may carry more colour than in cool weather. Blooms may show light coloured streaks. Variegated plants may show less variegation.

Lights may need to be turned off for a time during the hottest part of the day, and, if there is a need, plants should be protected from the sun's rays by a curtain, screen or shade cloth.

### **(e) WATERING:**

Plants should be kept evenly moist.

When the potting mix becomes dry to the touch, plants may be watered from the top beneath the leaves. The water should be at least room temperature. More than ten degrees difference between room temperature and the temperature of the water may cause damage to the plant's roots and may show as shock marks on the leaves. Enough water should be given at each watering so that some runs from the drainage holes.

Bottom watering is another alternative. Plants can be placed in trays or saucers

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containing water until sufficient has been taken up, after which the excess is discarded. Plants should not be left standing in water for any length of time as root rot could easily result.

Wick-watering is a time saving method of keeping plants watered and capillary matting has been found to be convenient for many growers. Weak strength fertiliser should be added to the water whichever watering method is used. Leach plants with tepid water to remove excess fertiliser salts when necessary.

Texas watering involves putting aggregate, e.g. perlite, in the base of the pot and standing the potted plant in fertilised water no higher than the top of the aggregate. For more information on Texas potting see *GROWING TO SHOW* by Pauline Bartholomew.

Overwatering, under watering and especially erratic watering can lead to many problems. In cold conditions avoid overwatering.

Plants can droop due to under watering OR overwatering. Check the weight of the pot; if it is light the plant needs water. If it's heavy, check for crown rot. A plant kept too wet can lead to crown rot.

### (f) **LIGHT:**

Light is one of the most important factors for producing plant growth. The amount required depends on the cultivar, and this can only be discovered through study of the individual plant. Artificial lighting is preferable to natural light, as it is controlled and dependable.

Some cultivars take longer to bloom than others. Some cultivars require more light and others less light to perform well. A guide with regard to duration (not intensity) of light to be used is 10 to 12 hours per day. Plants should have 8 hours of darkness in every 24 hours. Natural light can be supplemented with artificial light.

***INSUFFICIENT LIGHT*** causes lack of bloom and pale leaves with elongated petioles and long flower stems. Plant growth will lean towards light.

***EXCESSIVE LIGHT*** may cause leaf scorching and bleaching, shorter petioles, bunching of new leaves in centre and outer leaves to turn down around the edge of the pot.

***ARTIFICIAL LIGHTS*** if using artificial light, the distance from the light to the plant's foliage varies from 25cm to 30cm (10 to 12 inches) and plants with lighter foliage from 30cm to 38cm (12 to 15 inches). Variegated foliage should be placed on the lowest shelf in summer where it is cooler.

Unless plants are centred under artificial lights they still need to be turned occasionally to maintain a flat rosette-shaped plant. Plants at the edges of benches or shelves will lean towards the light unless they are turned. The leaves of some plants may spoon under lights.

A separate study can be made of the types of lamps available and which type is most suitable for the individual grower to use.

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### (g) POTS:

Plants should be repotted into the next size pot at regular intervals, depending on the speed of their growth.

African violets prefer shallow or squat pots, and for the average grower a pot with a span of 100 mm (4 inches) would be sufficiently large. However, when growing for Show purposes, wider, larger bowls are often used.

The type of pot, other than size, to use is a personal choice. Several types are on the market, but basically they fall into a few categories such as:-

**CLAY** which is porous, thus allowing water to evaporate quickly and the roots to be aerated. The porosity also allows the salts to leach out. They dry out quickly, are more difficult to clean to reuse and must be well soaked before using so that they do not absorb all moisture from the potting mix when the plant is first potted.

**PLASTIC** allows the potting mix moisture to be retained. Care must be taken that plants are not over-watered. They are easy to clean for reuse.

**CERAMICS** are non-porous, and care should be taken not to over-water.

**SELF-WATERING POTS** are obtainable in different shapes and sizes, but care must be taken that the structure's capillary action is functioning properly. These are very useful for busy people or vacationers. They are very good for propagating.

**WICK-WATERING CONTAINERS** are obtainable, and some are attractive as ornamental pots. Make sure there is a good-sized reservoir with the pot, otherwise its usefulness is limited. Again, the capillary action must be checked. Any pot requires drainage holes, and pots may require drainage material, preferably charcoal.

**OVER-POTTING** does **not** increase growth. If anything, plants will look unattractive, take longer to bloom and may even die because of excessive moisture retained in the mix.

**UNDER-POTTING** may not provide sufficient support for the plant, the plant will look top heavy and there may not be sufficient mix for the root ball.

Plants grow best when they are repotted regularly at 6 to 12 monthly intervals.

### (h) POTTING MIX:

There are almost as many recipes for potting mix as there are for food. The most important factors in potting mix for African violets are correct pH, good drainage, lightness and porosity. The most successful types of mix are based on peat moss, perlite and vermiculite. Other materials which may be used are compost, sand, leaf mould, cow manure, diatomite, charcoal, leca stones and coir. Some ingredients need pasteurising before use.

**POROSITY** means the potting mix should be sufficiently porous to allow for absorption by the plant's roots of the quantity of water given, and to allow for good

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evaporation and drainage. Heavy potting mix which holds water could rot the roots and crown. Fine hair roots require an "open" potting mix.

***pH BALANCE*** is a scale of measurement of alkalinity and acidity. A reading of 7 is neutral, lower is acid and higher is alkaline. African violets are generally thought to thrive best at 6.5 to 6.8, as do many other plants. Too high or low a pH inhibits the ability of the plants to use the nutrients in the potting mix.

***QUANTITY OF POTTING MIX*** the amount of potting mix to be used, of course, depends on the size of the pot which should be measured against the size of the plant and its root system. Too much potting mix may cause the same problems as too heavy a mix, i.e. too much water for the plant's roots to absorb. Large plants in small pots will look unbalanced, the goodness in the potting mix will be used up and the plant will begin to look undernourished. The outside leaves will be pale and the centre leaves will show signs of bunching. Moving the plant to a slightly larger pot will rectify this and the plant will begin to grow out again.

**(i) SPACE:**

Sufficient space should be allowed between plants to develop an extension of leaves for good symmetry. Adequate space allows for good ventilation and lessens the chance of spreading disease and pests. Crowding plants could damage leaves and also force them to twist out of position.

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### (j) PESTS AND DISEASES:

Unfortunately it is sometimes necessary to use sprays. At the first signs of trouble, steps should be taken to remedy the situation. Some people firmly believe that prevention is better than cure. To begin with, the potting mix should be pasteurised and afterwards, care should be taken not to reintroduce soil-borne pests by careless handling, particularly after working outside in the garden. Pests (insects or fungi) may be brought in on leaves or in the potting mix of "new" plants. Until there is some degree of certainty that the plants are clean, they should not come into contact with an established collection. Hands and utensils should always be thoroughly cleaned. It is a good idea when working with plants to use a bench or table covered with several sheets of newspaper so that any suspect plant, together with its potting mix, may be wrapped up and discarded. Any pots which are to be reused should be thoroughly washed and sterilised.

**POWDERY MILDEW** When hot days are followed by cool nights, it is wise to look for signs of powdery mildew. This shows up as a powdery white film on leaves, flower stems and bloom, and is often noticed on the darkest blooms first.

Various powdery mildew controls are available.

**THRIPS** Marked flowers, chewed pollen sacs and spilt pollen are symptoms of a thrips infestation. Flowers become papery and don't develop or open.

Thrips may be controlled with an appropriate insecticide at 3 to 5 day intervals depending on temperature. A timed release pyrethrum spray may be successful. Thrips are very difficult to eradicate.

**MITES** are serious pests of African violets. It is important to recognise the symptoms so that action can be quickly taken. The first signs may be cupping and bunching of plant centres or the new leaves may have a limp, grey, hairy look about them. Blooms may also show signs - streaking, distortion, and thickening bloom stems.

Infested plants are best discarded. Surrounding plants should be sprayed with a miticide. If one or two plants seem to be affected, move them away from the rest of the plants and spray all plants in the area. Follow up spraying is necessary to ensure that all newly hatched mites are destroyed.

**SOIL MEALY BUGS** are more insidious and are often not discovered until seen floating in the water of a wick-watered plant or in the saucer under the pot. Plants heavily infested with soil mealy bugs are best discarded. A treated crown or leaf cutting is the best way to preserve the plant.

**FOLIAR MEALY BUGS** These are easy to detect and they should be promptly dealt with. If they are allowed to multiply, the plant reaches the stage where it cannot be successfully treated.

There are a number of controls for mealy bugs. Prevention is preferable to cure.

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*INSECTICIDES* come in two forms:

1. Contact sprays, when sprayed onto the leaves, kill insects on contact.
2. Systemic sprays enter the plant's sap stream and kill insects when they chew leaves or suck plant juices. The systemics, which can also be watered into the potting mix, are effective over a longer period.

All insecticides and fungicides should be treated as dangerous and great care should be taken to prevent skin contact and inhalation of fumes. Knowledge of the different pests and fungi which attack African violets and the symptoms they leave is important. This enables a judge to suggest to the Steward or Show Chairman that a plant with an infestation be removed to protect the other plants. In any case, a Judge would not consider such a plant.

If it becomes necessary to handle a "sick" plant, the hands should be washed thoroughly before going on to other plants. Special attention should be paid to the fingernails.

### 3. **HYBRIDISING and SEEDLINGS**

Cross-pollinating or hybridising has produced better show plants, but has also created confusion by the similarity in hundreds of cultivars being on the market today which are without distinction. Hybridisers pick out of their seedlings the best plants and name them and those names should always be on labels with these special plants and their offspring.

#### (k) **SEEDLINGS:**

The grower, in selecting a seedling to be exhibited in a show, should consider these qualities:

Whether the plant is well formed with petioles neither too long, which makes for legginess, nor too short, which makes a plant which is too compact.

Whether it will keep good symmetry with a minimum amount of care.

Whether it has good leaf colour.

Whether it propagates easily and can be depended upon to come true.

Blooms should be of sufficient number, distinctively different, long lasting with strong peduncles.

Further information can be obtained from publications in *RECOMMENDED READING*.

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# GESNERIAD COUNCIL OF AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND

## LESSON 5 - COMPETITIONS, SHOWS AND SCHEDULES

Whether a competition is held once a month on a small scale within the Society or on a large scale annually within a Show, it is a source of learning, for displaying quality plants, to inspire and challenge other members, as well as stimulating interest for the public to cultivate the hobby. Therefore, each new group forming should be encouraged to hold an exhibition or display as soon as possible. An Annual Show may not be feasible the first year of a group's activities, but should be considered as early as possible. A Show Committee should be appointed by the Society at an early stage once the decision has been made to hold a show

We know from experience that "doubters" who "can't grow those difficult plants", once seeing so many exquisite plants on the competition tables, will have second thoughts and perhaps have "one more go" and eventually join a society or group. Each group should invite non-members to ask for advice. This courtesy could bring in these non-members at a later date, asking to be enrolled.

It is often the results of a Judge's decision which will bring the attention of members and the public to what a quality plant really is. The "Champion" or "Best in Show", the "Runner-up" and those that earn a first, second or third placing demonstrate this. The public is not always aware of what a quality plant is; a plant with many flowers does not necessarily indicate a good plant - it may have many leaves damaged or it may have a neck, be over- or under-potted, or may even be lopsided in the pot. When they compare a Judge's decision on the plants there, they will realise the difference. If not, they may ask a knowledgeable member to point out the difference.

The competition tables should be attractively set out with ample space for exhibiting the specimen plants and to allow the Judges to view each plant easily. There should be ample space for the public to move about so that they are not too close to the plants to cause damage.

Artistic arrangements and classes for other Gesneriads may also be competitive. There should be enough breakdowns of classes to enable members to easily enter their plants in the correct classes.

If the Show has a theme, a special display or exhibit should explain what that theme is. This should be repeated, if possible, in different areas throughout the Showroom.

Other exhibits may include various methods of propagating, general culture, potting mixes and their ingredients, methods of lighting, diseases and pests, books and magazines, etc.

The public is interested in obtaining different cultivars other than those that are obtainable in local shops, so it is in the interest of the group to include an area to sell plants. This must be carefully arranged to allow ease of choosing, viewing and selling. A well planned sales table can make a financial success of a show, regardless of size.

The **SCHEDULE** is the Law of the Show. It also varies from group to group in its layout. A Schedule should include as much information as possible to assist the exhibitor. The Schedule should be given to members in plenty of time for them to have any queries clarified by the Show Committee. The Schedule could have a separate sheet giving the

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## CONDITIONS OF ENTRY.

The Conditions of Entry could then include the Show Theme, time entries open and close, entry fee, ownership time of exhibit, identification of ownership and other relevant information such as name of group, the times the Show is open to the public, etc. A list of prizes and awards should also be included. The normal time for an entrant to have a plant in his/her possession before exhibiting is three months.

This is understood, of course, to be on an honour system.

Each Schedule should include a paragraph to the effect that the Judge's decision is final, in order to protect the group from any adverse comment or argument.

The Show Committee will find invaluable the *MASTER VARIETY LIST/S*, the *CATALOGUE OF AUSTRALIAN AND NEW ZEALAND CULTIVARS - SAINTPAULIA AND OTHER GESNERIADS* and other official information found in the A.V.S.A. magazines.

Competitions are normally broken down to allow growers at certain levels to compete with one another, so there will be an "**OPEN**" section for all growers, usually those with more experience, an "**INTERMEDIATE**" section for those more advanced than the beginners or novice and finally, to give the first triers a chance, there is a "**NOVICE**" section. Within these sections there are "**CLASSES**". Classes can be according to colours of plants, or according to whether plants are singles or doubles, or in larger Shows, both colour and kind.

Each class winner and runner-up may receive a **FIRST PRIZE** and **SECOND PRIZE** or **RIBBONS**. Some groups confer **THIRD** placings as well. If plants in a class are not up to the standard for that division, judges may award places at their discretion. **HIGHLY COMMENDED** is a useful honour to bestow on a particularly good plant which doesn't receive a First, Second or Third placing. The Judge is normally told how many and what type of awards are made, but if a Judge wishes a special recognition be made of a plant, this may be done.

A guide for Open is a minimum of 90 points for first, 80 for second and 70 for third. Intermediate is 85, 75 and 65. Novice is 80, 70 and 60.

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# GESNERIAD COUNCIL OF AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND

## LESSON 6 - JUDGES

### CRITERIA FOR A SAINTPAULIA JUDGE:

1. Must be an active member of his/her African Violet-Gesneriad Group.
2. Must have been a regular and successful exhibitor over the last three years in shows run by the Groups affiliated with the Gesneriad Council and progressed to the Open Division through the steps (Novice and Intermediate [where applicable]) according to the criteria set down by individual Groups.
3. Must be growing a minimum of fifty different African violets including standards, miniatures, trailers and species. After 12 years a Judge may request that this number be reduced to thirty.
4. Know how to use the Scale of Points and what constitutes a show plant.
5. Have passed the Judges' exams in accordance with the Gesneriad Council requirements.

### QUALIFICATIONS OF A JUDGE:

#### **KNOWLEDGE:**

Knowledge is the first requisite of a Judge - to have first hand knowledge of many cultivars, how environmental factors affect plants, to recognise plants to be in the correct classes and conform to the Schedule. It is necessary to use one's judgement and discretion which should reflect experience from study and practice. Study and practice should never end; knowledge must be kept up to date.

#### **EXPERIENCE:**

Experience is very important. Growing old cultivars, new cultivars and species assists the Judge in gaining knowledge needed to identify plants and characteristics.

#### **FAIRNESS:**

Fairness and impartiality in decision making is necessary in all respects. Personal preferences must **NOT** be allowed to influence any decisions. Decisions should be based on rules and regulations contained in the Schedule. Rigid and thorough scrutiny is essential to reach an impersonal decision on the merits of a plant.

#### **COURAGE:**

Courage is necessary in judging. Judges must be able to decide on the number of points based on the Scale of Points which should be allotted. They should have the courage to disregard or refuse to point a plant considered to be unworthy. They should be willing to give valid explanations for decisions. Technicalities should not be overlooked, but should not be overdone.

#### **TACT AND KINDNESS:**

Tact and kindness are important. Judges should give reasons for opinions in a constructive manner. They can suggest changes or improvements if asked. They should be kind and helpful in all their remarks. New groups in their first attempt at holding a show may have problems. Constructive comments would, no doubt, be most appreciated.

**GOLDEN RULE:    TREAT THE PLANTS AS YOU WOULD TREAT YOUR OWN.**

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## **DUTIES OF A JUDGE:**

1. Answer invitations promptly.
2. Be on time.
3. Study the Schedule and Rules and understand them. If there are queries, do not leave it till the last minute to get clarification.
4. Co-operate with the Management of the Show, judging plants according to the Gesneriad Council's Scales of Points.
- 5 Explain decisions if asked.
- 6 Thank Clerks and Stewards for their assistance.

## **RIGHTS OF A JUDGE:**

1. To receive a copy of the Schedule and Rules in advance.
2. Privacy and quiet while judging.
3. To refuse to award ribbons to plants not reaching the required standard.
4. To suggest changes to prevent disqualifications.
5. Reimbursement of expenses for travel, and accommodation if necessary.

## **HELPFUL HINTS:**

Judges should **not** enter the Show Room prior to the time of judging.

A judge should be accompanied by a Steward. Any comment the Judge may wish to make about a plant may be written out by the Steward to save time.

Upon entering a show, the Judge must ascertain the general quality of the show before beginning to judge as the general quality will vary from show to show.

Judges may not disqualify a plant, but if for any reason it is not eligible, the Judge may eliminate that plant from consideration or may draw to the attention of the Steward or Show Chairman why the plant cannot be considered. A check should be made to see that all entries are in their correct classes. If a plant is in the wrong class and if judging has not commenced, the Show Chairman may place it in the correct class. It is the exhibitor's responsibility to make sure their plants have been entered correctly.

A Judge is permitted to pick up a plant with both hands and turn it to study it from all angles. This must be done with great care so that no leaf is damaged.

**A JUDGE IS NOT PERMITTED TO USE A PENCIL OR FINGERS TO LIFT UP FOLIAGE.**

A Judge should not let a personal preference for a cultivar, a colour or the shape of a plant or bloom influence a judgment.

**A JUDGE MUST BE IMPARTIAL.**

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It is recommended that when faced with a table full of plants, the Judge makes an overall mental assessment of the quality of the plants. In this way a certain number of plants can be eliminated from judging which are not up to standard, therefore saving some time. If there is an accumulative points competition to be held at the same time, this is usually done by allotting a certain number of points for first, second and third placings and totaling the scores to decide the winner. The Judge will have been informed if such a competition is in the Schedule.

Judging should be completed within the time allowed, taking within this time as long as necessary to carefully evaluate each entry and judge the winners.

Although the Gesneriad Council of Australia and New Zealand has set standards, it is advisable for a student Judge to read any material available on judging. It is recommended that the Council standards are used by all member groups.

### ADVICE FOR JUDGES

1. Experience should be gained by judging at monthly meeting competitions under the guidance of a qualified Judge.
2. Provide your own notebook or pointing sheet (unless your host Group provides what you are accustomed to) or, obtain a copy of the one used by your host Group in advance for study, as well as their Schedule.
3. Before approaching the competition tables, make sure all persons other than the steward attending you are away from the tables. As far as possible, only persons involved in the management of the show are allowed in the hall during judging.
4. A Judge may not exhibit in a class he/she is judging.
5. Decisions should be based on the Show Schedule, Conditions of Entry and the Gesneriad Council's appropriate Scale of Points.
6. Before starting judging any one plant, take time to survey all plants in that Class on the table. Then start to judge the individual plants.
7. Eliminate from judging, or ask the Show Chairman to remove from the table, any plant you believe is infested or unworthy of exhibiting. A Judge should be able to identify pests and diseases by their symptoms.
8. If a Judge believes a plant is incorrectly named, ask the Show Chairman to check the *A.V.S.A. MASTER VARIETY LIST/S, CATALOGUE OF AUSTRALIAN AND NEW ZEALAND CULTIVARS - SAINTPAULIA AND OTHER GESNERIADS* and other official information found in the A.V.S.A. magazines.

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