

AUSTRALASIAN NATIVE ORCHID SOCIETY INC. NATIONAL REGISTRAR'S REPORT FOR ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 6 SEPTEMBER 2025

Awards

From the beginning of August 2024 to the end of August 2025, the ANOS judging panel has granted 36 awards. There have been fifteen Awards of Cultural Commendation, nine Highly Commended Certificates, seven Awards of Merit, three Awards of Distinction, and two First Class Certificates. Sixteen awards were issued by the NSW panel, eighteen by the Northern Regional Panel, and two by the Victorian panel.

The awards were granted to a wide range of species and hybrids. Species awarded included *Cymbidium canaliculatum* (2 plants), *Dendrobium speciosum* (2 plants), *Dendrobium bigibbum* var. *bigibbum*, *Dendrobium tetragonum*, *Dendrobium tangerinum*, and *Dendrobium schoeninum* and *Dendrobium bracteosum*, and also the less commonly encountered *Coelogyne bracteosa* [Syn. *Dendrochilum longifolium*], *Oberonia titania* [Syn. *Oberonia crateriformis*] and *Bulbophyllum phalaenopsis*, to challenge the judges. Of the hybrids awarded, only four of the plants awarded were pure *Dendrocoryne* dendrobiums; three were hot/cold hybrids mixing section *Dendrocoryne* and section *Phalaenathe* genes, one was a pure section *Spatulata* hybrid, five plants were *Dendrobium* section *Rhizobium* hybrids, and one was a *Dendrobium* section *Calypstrochilus* hybrid. There were two *Sarcochilus* hybrids and one *Aeridinae* intergeneric.

Fourteen of the awards were granted at Spring Shows in August 2025 and have not yet been processed but the regional registrars and their helpers have been very efficient this season and have already submitted the paperwork and award images, and, in many cases, payment of the award fees. Details and photographs of the awarded plants will be available for viewing on the web site soon.

The Regional Panels

- The **NSW Regional panel** is led by Registrar Gerry Smee with a panel of 21 judges, two of whom are currently on leave. The NSW panel has a schedule of 17 shows throughout the year and Gerry aims to have five judges at each show but this can be difficult when multiple shows may need to be judged on the same night or weekend. The remote judging option has provided a solution when necessary. The panel meets three times a year and the meetings include training sessions.
- The **Victorian Regional Judging Panel**, under Regional Registrar Richard Johnson, currently has 17 full judges. It recently lost David Henshall who passed away following a long illness.

The panel meets four times a year for formalised training and judging engagements include ANOS shows at Geelong and in Tasmania during the *Sarcochilus* season in November.

- The **Northern Regional Panel** based in Brisbane is led by Regional Registrar Pam Porteous. The panel is low on judges at present, with only six full judges living in Brisbane. The others are based in northern and central Queensland and northern NSW. For this reason it is difficult to get a full panel of five judges together when a plant is to be looked at for an award. Pam reports that the panel has used the remote judging system for several awards under the previous registrar, Graham Corbin, and one this year. Data has shown that there is a very close correlation

between the pointing of the judges who are present in person and those judging remotely, certainly within the range as for a judging where all judges are present in person. Experience has shown that it is vital to circulate detailed information about the plants being assessed, covering all judging criteria, and that it is important to provide a range of photos and, where possible, a video showing the plant from all directions.

Despite the low numbers, the Northern Regional panel conducts meeting judging at ANOS (Qld) Kabi Group Inc. and ANOS Beenleigh meetings each month. The Kabi Group meeting are more local to members and the panel has four regular judges who are rostered to judge each month (February to December). The panel provides two judges and two trainees each month. ANOS Beenleigh meetings are more difficult to provide for as only three members of the panel are able to judge there.

Despite its restricted number, the panel will still have judged 6 shows and 2 mini-shows this year. Getting to the shows requires considerable travelling but the judges who attend are happy to do this to gain additional judging experience and to provide the judging service to ANOS societies.

Electronic Judging Course

The Northern Regional Panel's training course is nearing completion. A few changes were made to the syllabus to reflect changes seen in plants being benched, such as the increase in *Dendrobium* section *Rhizobium* and in *Aeridinae*. Judges wrote the various sessions, and each session included an Evaluation paper which trainees were asked to complete and return to the author of the session for feedback. The evaluations included pointing up exercises. Trainees have completed modules 1-5 and will shortly receive module 6 which does not have an exam. It is hoped that all the current trainees will have completed the course work and exams, and also their research projects, by the end of the year. The trainees get practical training at meetings and shows. At each Kabi meeting, the trainees select placegetters and their assessments are compared with those of the judges and discussed. The trainees also have the opportunity to point up plants being assessed for awards. The results of these practical activities have been promising and the trainees' enthusiasm encouraging.

Preparation of the training course papers and exams and conduct of the course has been very time-consuming for the judges who have done the work, but valuable lessons have been learnt and it is proposed that the course will form the basis for a model which can be used nationally under the control of a training officer. The current five trainees have progressed through the course together but it is intended that the course be offered in a form which can be undertaken by individuals at their own rates rather than as a group. This is something that needs to be considered further in consultation with the other regions after the current course has been completed.

Recognition of the Contribution of Long-Standing Judges

Members of the Judging panel are important members of ANOS who make a significant and ongoing contribution to the Society and to the native orchid community in many ways beyond their visible role judging at meetings and shows. Judging at shows often requires travelling long distances, sometimes with very early starts and late arrival home, and at their own expense. Becoming an ANOS judge requires successfully completing an exacting course to a high standard, and completing a research project. Once appointed, judges cannot rest on their laurels; it is necessary for them to maintain their skill levels and increase their knowledge, keeping up to date with research and breeding trends, and assisting with the

training of new judges, writing articles, and being available to provide advice to growers and show marshals.

The first judging course was conducted in 1978 and the first of those candidates attained full judge status in 1981. Since then, several other judging courses have been conducted in New South Wales, and also in Queensland and, more recently, Victoria, and judging panel numbers were increased by the addition of the successful candidates from those courses. However, time has taken its toll and many of the judges from that first course and also from subsequent courses have passed away, and others have left the panel due to ill health or resignation for other reasons, without having received formal recognition and thanks for their contribution.

In 2024 the Judging Sub-Committee approved a proposal to recognise long-standing members of the judging panel who had served the panel and ANOS and the native orchid growing community for a period of at least 20 years. In late 2024 Certificates of Appreciation were issued and, where possible, presented in person, to the longest-serving active judges: Michael Harrison (43 years), Norm Stockton (43 years), Ian Slade (42 years), Gerry Walsh (36 years), Irene Chalmers (31 years), John Roberts (30 years), David James (29 years), Ray Clement (28 years), Les Nesbitt (28 years), Erik Lielkajis (27 years), Trevor Porteous (24 years), Len James (24 years), Gwen Scrace (24 years), and Gerry Smee (22 years). It is proposed that the process continue as other judges reach 20 years' service.

Roslyn Capell
National Registrar of Judges
4 September 2025