

Presentation format: Oral

## **Orchid show judging and its challenges**

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Singapore hosts local and international orchid shows such as the Singapore Garden Festival, the World Orchid Conference in 2011, and the ongoing Asia Pacific Orchid Conference. The show judging is organised by the Orchid Society of South East Asia (OSSEA) where local and overseas judges are invited. The judging teams consist of at least five judges and two stewards. Exhibits are grouped into sections and classes based on species, genera, and hybrids for fair competition. There are two rounds of judging. In the first round, teams select the top three exhibits from each class. From these winners, three plants advance to the second round, where judges determine the Show Champion, Reserve Champion, and Best Specimen Plant. Challenges in show judging include inadequate time for inspection, misplacement of exhibits, staging and lighting issues, poorly prepared exhibits, suboptimal displays, a shortage of experienced judges, and potential lack of objectivity. To address these challenges, judges can preview exhibits two hours early. Employing experienced setup crews can resolve misplacement and staging issues. Suitable show sites with ample space and setup time can improve staging and lighting. Exhibitors should be provided with guidance on preparation and grooming of plants. OSSEA undertakes regular training of judges and encourages student-judge participation at orchid shows to alleviate the shortage of experienced judges. Maintaining objectivity is crucial during the second round of judging. By addressing these challenges, Singapore's orchid shows can continue to thrive as platforms for showcasing the beauty of orchids worldwide.

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