

THE NATIONAL AURICULA AND PRIMULA SOCIETY

Northern Section



MEMBERS' HANDBOOK

Revised 2026

www.auriculas.org.uk

Introduction

This 2026 Member's Handbook has been produced to help members get the best out of the Society, by informing them how it works, what it has to offer and to indicate what help is available in growing and showing our plants.

As a "Florist" Society we exist primarily to encourage and extend the cultivation, development and exhibition of Auriculas and Primulas. We appreciate that many members may not wish to exhibit. With this in mind, we ensure that our members enjoy our beautiful plants and the company of like-minded people. Obviously there is a limit to the amount of information available in this small booklet but further help and advice can be found on our web site: www.auriculas.org.uk. If you can't find what you are looking for please contact us at admin@auriculas.org.uk

Historical Background

Auriculas have been grown and hybridised in this country for over 400 years, but it was only in 1873 that a permanent National Auricula Society was established to show “Florist” Auriculas. “Florist” defined as plants grown and shown to written standards, which for our Society, may be found in this Handbook. Although ‘National’, the Society was primarily Northern based and, when in 1876, a Southern Section was set up, we changed our name to ‘The National Auricula Society - Northern Section’. A Midland (now Midland & West) Section was also set up in 1900. Due to a growing interest in the wider Primula family within the Society, we changed our name to its present form as the National Auricula and Primula Society - Northern Section in 1948.

Although they are called Sections, each is a free standing Society and there is no overarching National organisation. We do, however, have a common interest, our organisations and standards for growing are very similar and a number of growers are members of more than one Section attending each other’s functions and shows.

Plants That We Grow

The difference between Auriculas and other Primulas is that Auriculas, in the main, are bred, grown and judged to written Standards. Primulas are judged for form and effect, there being many Primula species, cultivar and hybrid classes at our shows.

The currently recognised Florists’ Auriculas shown to written standards, are Show Auriculas, Alpine Auriculas, Double Auriculas and Striped Auriculas. In addition, there are Fancy Auriculas which do not conform to the general written Standards, and Border

Auriculas which are judged for effect.

The other Florist flower recognised within the Society, shown to a written standard, is the Gold Laced Polyanthus.

Show Rules, Standards and Guidelines

Shows are held in accordance with Society Show Rules, Standards and Guidelines, these being contained within this Handbook. Show Schedules are available on our website, with hard copies available at the shows for reference.

Northern Section Shows

The Society hosts three shows every year, during April and May, matching dates with our plants season, for our members to display their plants and compete for a number of awards and trophies.

Details of venues and dates are published on our website - www.auriculas.org.uk, please check show details as these may change due to unforeseen circumstances.

Help is available at all our shows to those who need it. The Show Secretary will guide you through the registration process and help you with completing the plant cards necessary for all entries.

Harrogate Spring Flower Show

In addition to our Society shows, we host a stand at the Harrogate Spring Flower Show to display the variety of plants grown by our members. This is an important show and attracts a lot of interest from visitors, and also for attracting new members. Again please

check our website for details as these dates change annually. Volunteers are required every year to set up and man the stand, anyone interested in helping, please contact the Secretary.

Society Website

The Society runs its own website, www.auriculas.org.uk containing all the information on shows and meetings etc. In addition there is a wealth of information on the growing and care of Auriculas and Primulas, together with regular up dates on Society news.

Social Media

We have social media accounts on:

Facebook – facebook.com/NAPS.Northern/,

Instagram – instagram.com/napsnorthern/

For further details contact our Social Media Manager on - social@auriculas.org.uk

Year Book

A Yearbook is produced and circulated free to all members each Autumn. This contains details of how to contact us, reports from the Committee, together with many articles written by fellow members and all the results from our Shows.

Spring Newsletter

Each Spring, a newsletter, 'Vernalis', is sent to all members giving notice of the programme for the year and other useful information.

Monthly Newsletter

Currently a monthly email newsletter is available, giving latest news, updates, general growing information and jobs to be done for the coming month. New members automatically receive this, existing members may request this from the Archivist – archivist@auriculas.org.uk.

Annual General Meeting

Each October we hold an Annual General Meeting, it is a time to bring up any matters that may be relevant; to raise or review, and approve or otherwise proposed changes, and appointment of Society officials.

It is also a good time to meet with friends, have a chat and a meal.

Details and an Agenda are distributed to all members prior to the meeting with details of the venue, date and time.

Plants Sales

Plants grown and sold by our members are normally available at our Annual General meeting and the three Society Shows.

Reasonably priced, often many not being commercially available, with half the sale price going to the seller and the remainder to Society funds.

Each plant should have two labels, one giving the variety and name of the plant, the other giving the selling price and initials of the seller.

Owing to high demand over the last few years, plants are now only available to paid up members and a strict limit is placed on the number of plants that can be purchased. Priority is given to

those engaged with the running of the show itself.

Seed Exchange

Each year, normally in December, seed produced by our members is offered for sale, to members only, via the website. Each packet of seed is reasonably priced, plus postage costs. All proceeds going to Society funds.

Donors should send their seed to the organiser by the end of November. Seed should be correctly identified, packed in paper envelopes (not plastic) and cleaned where possible.

Full details on the website together with information on how to produce seed.

Local Groups

Currently a number of local Groups have meetings throughout the year, to socialise and attend talks. Programmes and contacts for local groups may be found on the website.

Mentoring Scheme

It is often difficult obtaining the correct information on growing Auriculas and Primulas to a standard for showing. New members may request to be mentored by experienced growers, who will assist them with getting to grips on all aspects of growing plants and the Society as a whole. Interested? Contact admin@auriculas.org.uk .

Society Archive

The Society hold a collection of documents relating to the Society, including old Yearbooks, Meeting minutes etc. These can be

obtained on loan from our Archivist, contact archivist@auriculas.org.uk.

Constitution

The Society Constitution is now available on our website

Membership

Membership renewal fees are payable each year on **1st January** to our Treasurer, via Bank Transfer, Standing Order, Cheque or Paypal. Further details available on the website, or from the Treasurer – treasurer@auriculas.org.uk .

SHOW RULES FOR EXHIBITORS & JUDGES

It is important that these rules be followed by all exhibitors at the Society's shows and applied by the Judges.

1. Entry to all classes is free, but limited to members of the National Auricula & Primula Society (Northern Section).
2. An exhibitor may make any number of entries in each class.
3. All exhibits must have been the exhibitor's property for at least 3 months prior to the show.
4. A novice is one who has not won more than 10 first prizes at any NAPS Northern Section show. In the year a novice achieves their 10th first prize, the rule will take effect from the following year.
5. A novice may enter the open classes prior to winning 10 first prizes. Any wins in these classes count towards the

- limit of 10 first prizes.
6. Exhibits must be staged by the time stated on the show schedule and should not be removed before the end of the show without the secretary's permission.
 7. Exhibits should be staged in clean, round, clay or plastic pots or pans, terracotta or brown in colour. Sizes specified in the Show Schedules are determined by the internal diameter.
 8. Each plant must carry a card to show its class, name (where applicable) and the exhibitor's entry number. In addition a completed entry slip must be placed in front of each exhibit. Both card and entry slip are obtained from the registration desk.
 9. In multiple plant classes pots should be arranged from the front to the rear of the bench. Artificial means of raising any pot with respect to the others are not permitted.
 10. In the show classes for six plants and four plants, not less than two edge plants should be included.

SHOW STANDARDS

General Standards Applying to Florists Auriculas and Gold Laced Polyanthus

1. NAPS Northern Section expects judges to apply these standards at shows. They should not be influenced by their preferences for variety, colour, form or type but should look for adherence to the appropriate standard.
2. The plant as a whole should be compact and well balanced with crisp, healthy foliage, free from pests and preferably a single rosette of leaves of sufficient size to nicely cover the pot. The complete assembly of pot, foliage, stem and truss

should be in proportion.

3. Only one truss per plant will be judged, in Florist Auricula classes, others should be tied down or removed by the exhibitor. All pips must be thrum eyed.
4. The stem should be strong and tall enough to hold the truss well above the leaves. A neat stake may be employed to support the stem, except Gold Laced Polyanthus. The footstalks should be sufficiently strong to hold the pips in a firm array and of just such a length as to permit each pip to be displayed without overlapping.
5. All the pips in the truss should be fresh, of even size and character; the periphery of each should just meet that of its neighbour to form a compact whole. The required number of fully expanded pips per truss is schedule dependent as listed below.

Sections	Open Multi-plant	Novice Multi-plant	Open Singles	Novice Singles
Edged Shows	5	4	3	3
Self Shows	5	4	5	3
Alpines	5	4	5	4
Doubles	5	4	5	4
Striped	5	4	5	4

6. The leaves of Grey-Edged and White-Edged Auriculas, Selfs, Striped Auriculas and Double Auriculas may have farina present or may be plain. The leaves of Green Edged and Alpine Auriculas should be without farina.

Edged Show Auriculas

The pip should be round and flat with the outline of a solid disc. The individual petals should be of an even size, smooth, free of notches, of good substance and overlap sufficiently to give the desired circular appearance. The four bands should be of equal weight, no one dominating or receding. The size of the pips should be neither too large nor small, 32mm being the optimum.

The tube should be round, about one-fourth the diameter of the pip. It should be round, smooth-edged, golden or rich yellow in colour, of a waxy substance and well up the plane of the pip. In the case of blue bodied Edged Shows, the tube may be a lighter colour.

The anthers should be fresh and bold, golden or rich yellow colour, evenly set around and about level with the tube. They should curve inwards to meet over and obscure the lower tube.

The pistil should not be visible among or above the anthers otherwise the plant will be disqualified.

The paste should be circular with clear-cut edges, the outer edge about half of the pip's diameter. The paste should be brilliant white, smooth, dense and free from blemishes and cracks.

The body (also called the ground colour) should be solid and circular where it meets the paste. Its outer edge should extend no more than three-fourths of the pip's diameter. It should feather finely into the edge but not extend to the pip's periphery. It should be bright, rich and velvety, unshaded and free from meal.

Body colours other than black are not excluded from any of the classes for edged auriculas. The same criteria for judging black ground-coloured plants should be observed i.e. they should be bright, unshaded, of the correct proportion and free from meal. Nondescript dull colours are not encouraged, however scarlets and blues are to be welcomed.

The edge may be green, grey or white according to the class. If

green-edged it should be of an even shade, bright and free from meal. Grey-edged flowers should have an even covering of meal overlying the petal edge, not so thick as to mask completely the underlying green, thereby creating the grey effect. In white-edged flowers the covering of meal should completely mask the green of the petal. In both grey and white edges the meal should be white, bright, refined and free from blemishes. The edge should not extend through the body and touch the paste.

Self Show Auriculas

The pip should be round and flat. The individual petals should be of even size, smooth, free of notches, of good substance and overlap sufficiently to give the desired circular appearance. The pip should be somewhat smaller than the edged types, 29mm being the optimum.

The tube should be smaller than in the edged type, about one-sixth the pip's diameter and be well-filled with anthers. It should be round, smooth-edged, golden or rich yellow in colour, of a waxy substance and well up to the plane of the pip. In the case of blue Selves the tube may be a lighter colour.

The anthers should be fresh and bold, golden or rich yellow colour and evenly set around and about level with the tube. They should curve inwards to meet over and obscure the lower tube.

The pistil should not be visible among or above the anthers otherwise the plant will be disqualified.

The paste should be circular with clear-cut edges, the outer edge about half of the pip's diameter. The paste should be brilliant white, smooth, dense and free from blemishes and cracks.

The petals should be an even colour, unshaded, bright, clear and smooth with a velvety texture, free from veins and blemishes.

Alpine Auriculas

The pip should be round and flat. The individual petals should be of an even size, with a smooth periphery, free from notches, of good substance and overlap sufficiently to give the desired circular appearance. Shading evenly from a deeper hue where it joins the eye to a lighter tone at the periphery. The pip should neither be too large nor too small, the optimum being about 29mm. All parts of the pip and foliage should be free from farina.

The tube should be round, about one-sixth the diameter of the pip, well up to the surface of the pip, of the same colour as the eye and well filled with anthers.

The anthers should be fresh and bold, golden or rich or yellow colour and evenly set around and about level with the tube. They should curve inwards to meet over and obscure the lower tube.

The pistil should not be visible among or above the anthers otherwise the plant will be disqualified.

The eye

Gold-Centre Alpines - should be bright golden yellow, of a uniform shade, smooth and free from blemishes. The outer edge should be circular, sharply defined and extend to about one half the pip's diameter.

Light-Centre Alpines - should be white or pale cream, of a uniform shade, smooth and free from blemishes. The outer edge should be circular, sharply defined and extend to just over half the pip's diameter.

Intermediate colour of the eye between Gold and Light Centres (i.e. so-called custard-centre) is not desirable.

Double Auriculas

The truss should not be congested. Each pip should be clearly displayed and not deformed as a result of overcrowding or overlapping. The pips should be at the same time of development and of similar size. The layout of colour on all pips must be uniform. The stem should carry the truss above the leaves and create a balanced appearance.

The pip may be a double form of any type of auricula i.e. no one type of doubled alpine, self, edged or border has preference. The doubling may be of any character no particular petal formation or degree of doubling is preferred to another. The individual pips should be circular in outline and have sufficient additional petals to cover and obscure the tube. Pips with open centres where the central tube is not covered by petals, i.e. giving the effect of a hole in the centre of the flower, will be disqualified. The optimum pip size should be about 29mm.

The petals may be striped or variegated, shaded or self coloured, but should be clear and bright. The colour is secondary to form. The petals should be smooth-edged without notches; their conformation should be neat and regular and effectively fill the pip. Where meal is present it must not be smeared, but crisp and bright. Variegation includes any combination of colours, striping or flecking.

Striped Auriculas

The pip should be round and flat. The individual petals should be of even size, of good substance and should overlap sufficiently to give the desired circular appearance. The pip should be neither too large nor too small, the optimum being about 29mm.

The tube width should be about one-sixth the diameter of the pip, round, smooth-edged, golden or rich yellow in colour, of a waxy

substance and well up to the plane of the pip. In the case of blue striping the tube may be of a lighter colour.

The anthers should be fresh and bold, golden or a rich yellow colour and evenly set around and about level with the tube. They should curve inwards to meet over and obscure the lower tube.

The pistil should not be visible among or above the anthers otherwise the plant will be disqualified.

The paste should be circular with clear-cut edges, the outer edge about half of the pip's diameter. The paste should be brilliant white, smooth, dense and free from blemishes and cracks.

The petals should be evenly striped. The majority of the stripes should be full-length i.e. extend from the edge of the paste to the periphery of the petal. The stripes should not coalesce to form an edge or a ground as in the edged auricula. The stripes may be of a colour or farina but farinaceous stripes should be different in underlying tissue colour from the rest of the pip.

Gold-Laced Polyanthus (Single Truss Classes)

The flower must not be pin-eyed.

The truss should have a minimum of five fully expanded pips and will be judged on the uniformity of all the pips in the truss. Only one truss will be judged on each plant, any others should be removed or neatly tied down.

The pip as a whole should be round, flat and approximately 20mm in diameter.

The petals should have an indenture in the centre of its periphery, giving it a heart shaped appearance. The indenture must not reach to the eye or centre of the pip and should be about the same depth as those between the petals.

The tube should be round and in the centre of each pip, approximately 3mm in diameter and well filled out with anthers. The tube may or may not have a raised rim.

The eye or centre should be round and about half the diameter of the pip, rich gold or bright yellow in colour and clean cut to the edge of the ground. The divisions between the petals should not intrude into the eye.

The ground or body colour should be solid, free from shading and have a velvet-like appearance, to give the flower a brilliant and attractive look.

The lacing should be the same colour as the centre, clean, crisp, narrow, even and without breaks. It should run around the edge, down the middle of each petal, to the eye or centre.

The stem should be long enough to hold the truss well above the foliage and the footstalks long enough to allow the individual pips to be displayed evenly without crowding. Staking is not allowed.

Foliage should be clean and free from pests with thick dark leaves of vigorous healthy growth, nicely covering the pot.

GENERAL GUIDELINES APPLYING TO BORDER AND FANCY AURICULAS

Show Standards listed above do not apply to Border and Fancy Auriculas, the following guidelines should however be followed.

Border Auriculas

The foliage should be clean and fresh and in proportion to the number of flowers. Leaves with or without farina are both acceptable.

The flower stems should be strong and rigid and capable of holding the trusses above the leaves, the footstalks should be capable of supporting the individual flowers and displaying them to their best advantage. No form of staking or support of either trusses or flower stems is permitted.

The truss should have the majority of pips fully expanded. A minimum of 3 trusses is required in open classes, 1 truss in novice .

The pips for the purpose of judging eyed both pin and thrum eyed flowers are of equal merit.

The petals may be smooth edged, wavy, frilled or flat and with or without farina on the eye. Whilst the presence of scent is desirable the absence of the same is not deemed to be a fault.

Overall presentation the exhibit should be clean and fresh and whilst there is no limit on pot size it should be commensurate with the plant that is being shown. The overall effect should be of a plant that has sufficient vigour to grow outdoors and has a clump forming habit. Multiple planting of a single variety in one pot in order to create an impression of a large plant is not permitted.

Fancy Auricula

Fancy Auriculas are Auriculas that do not comply fully with the criteria of any of the above accepted classes. However the Standards above should be applied as closely as possible

GENERAL GUIDELINES APPLYING TO PRIMULAS

There are no established judging standards for Primulas; nor can there be due to the huge diversity of types that exist. Primulas are to be judged for overall effect. Difficulty of cultivation may be considered by judges where plants are otherwise of equal merit. The following guidelines are to assist judges and exhibitors make informed decisions that reflects the skill in producing an exhibit that may be worthy of the highest award.

The plant should be fresh, grown true to type and not overfed resulting in a blowsy specimen.

The pips should be fully open and well furnished with flowers as opposed to sporting a plethora of unopened buds. Pin-eyed flowers are perfectly acceptable, however muddy colours and ragged blooms will lose points.

Presentation - pots should be clean and the plant free from pests and insects. Dead or dying pips and damaged leaves should have been removed. A well balanced plant showing that attention has been paid to regular turning of the pot to give even growth is desirable.

Difficulty of cultivation is taken into account particularly when two plants appear to be of equal merit when all of the above criteria have been met. This is particularly important given the fact that many of the hybrids are extremely floriferous and the species are often dainty with far fewer flowers.

Pot or pan sizing shall be in accordance with those specified in the schedule classes. Where pot sizes are not specified the complete

assembly of pot, foliage, stem and truss should be in proportion. Where two or more pans are called for, distinct species, forms or hybrids are required.

Primroses & Polyanthus

The plant should be in a clean terracotta coloured pot of a dimension appropriate to the size of the plant and in line with any scheduled size requirement.

Foliage should be fresh, unblemished and pest free.

The pips should be fresh, unblemished and equally spaced giving the whole plant a pleasing profile to the eye.

Check that the plant meets the schedule requirements. Some plants produce both acaulis (without a stem) and polyanthus types of stem and will be disqualified.

Double Primroses

The pips should be clearly displayed and not deformed as a result of overcrowding or overlapping. They should be at the same time of development and of similar size. The individual pips should be circular in outline and have sufficient additional petals to cover and obscure the tube. Pips with open centres will be disqualified.

The same guidelines apply to the following Species:

Primula vulgaris, *veris*, *elatior*, *acaulis*, *juliae*, *malacoides*, *obconica* and *sinensis*.

AWARDS

Judges should avoid awarding “Equal” 1st, 2nd, or 3rd awards.

Judges may award fourth and fifth prizes, but these will carry no points value.

Premier medals may be awarded, where scheduled, at the judges’ discretion. Any plant considered for this award must also have been judged to be the best in its section. Premier medals become the property of the winner.

Awards may be withheld where exhibits are deemed to be deficient in merit. Exhibits not conforming to schedule, or where attempts at deception have been made will be disqualified. The judge’s decision is final.

Cups and trophies are awarded to Society members only, at the discretion of the Committee. They remain the property of the Society, but may be held by winners until the following show when they must be returned clean and in good condition. Engraving of trophies may be done at the Society’s expense. Trophies will only be awarded to exhibits placed 1st in their class. The committee reserves the right to exclude any exhibit and also to include extra classes not covered by the schedule, but these will not be considered for any award.

Points at both the Primula Show and the Auricula Show are awarded according to the number of pots/pans as shown in table below.

Number of pots or pans	1st	2nd	3rd
6	18	12	6
4	12	8	4
3	9	6	3
2	6	4	2
1	3	2	1

Premier Medal = 5 points

Best in Show = 4 points

Best in Section = 3 points

HINTS & TIPS FOR EXHIBITORS

1. Prepare your plants in the days before the show, ensure they are well-watered, remove any dead leaves and stake where necessary.
2. Ensure the plants are in clean, round, clay or plastic pots or pans, terracotta or brown in colour.
3. Read the schedule and show standards to decide in which classes you intend to exhibit.
4. Check the show schedule to make sure your pot is within the size limit for the class, size is determined by the internal diameter.
5. Pack your plants carefully and likewise transport them to the show. Try to arrive in good time.
6. Obtain an exhibitor's number and exhibitor's cards from the secretary.
7. Find a place to prepare your plants for benching.
8. Remove any cotton wool you may have inserted between the footstalks.
9. Carefully remove any pips that are faded, damaged or not fully open. Check the rules to ensure you have left the correct number of pips. Brush any bits of compost from the foliage and give the pot a final wipe.
10. Write the plant name and your exhibitor's number on the exhibitor card and, using the card holder provided, label each pot. Also complete the judging slip with the class number, your exhibitor's number and the plant names.
11. Place your exhibits on the bench, in the event of overcrowding contact the Show Superintendent, do not move or remove exhibits yourself.
12. Make sure you put your plant in the correct class. In multi-plant classes exhibits should be staged from front to back

of the bench.

13. Do ask other exhibitors for advice and guidance they will be only too pleased to help.
14. If you are unsure in which class to exhibit your plant, ask the Show Superintendent.
15. At the end of the show be sure to take home all your own plants and hopefully prize cards.

Good Luck.