

The Greater Akron Aquarium Society

Horticultural Award Program Rules – revised November 2025

The Greater Akron Aquarium Society (G.A.A.S.) has adopted the following aquatic Horticultural Award Program (H.A.P.) to encourage members to keep and propagate a variety of aquatic plants and to share the knowledge they have gained. The program is open to all members in good standing, with the exception of corresponding members. You proceed at your own pace. Certificates will be awarded for each reproduction or flowering, plaques will be awarded for each award level completed.

Purpose:

1. To promote the keeping and propagation of aquarium, pond, and marginal plants.
2. To recognize outstanding achievement in the growing and propagating of these plants.
3. To gather information and knowledge of aquatic plants and their requirements, with the additional bonus of having a more beautiful aquarium or pond.
4. To identify new aquatic plant species and to determine conditions necessary for their care.
5. To make accounts of successful growing and propagation techniques available to club members.

The H.A.P. Committee

The committee shall consist of at least three members. The Chairperson shall be voted in by the membership and the remaining members shall be appointed by the Chairperson.

Function and authority of the H.A.P. Committee

The committee shall oversee and enforce the rules and regulations governing the H.A.P. and once a year review the rules and regulations for possible improvements. The Chairperson will be responsible for keeping proper records of all propagations, points, and present certificates and awards to qualified members. Members should keep a record for themselves also.

The H.A.P. Checkers

Any G.A.A.S. member in good standing can verify all plant propagations. If you have a plant that needs verification or a flowering, which can be done by photograph, it is your responsibility to contact the checker nearest you for verification. The rules and forms for member's personal record or to submit plant propagation (vegetative or sexual) or flowering can be obtained from the Chairperson at a monthly meeting or downloaded from the club's web site www.akronfishclub.com

Eligibility

All members in good standing, except corresponding members, are eligible for the program.

The Award Levels

The program is made up of six levels of achievement. The point levels are as follows:

1. Beginning Aquatic Horticulturist – 100 points
2. Advanced Aquatic Horticulturist – 150 points
3. Senior Aquatic Horticulturist – 200 points
4. Expert Aquatic Horticulturist – 250 points
5. Master Aquatic Horticulturist – 300 points
6. Grand Master Aquatic Horticulturist – 375 points

Horticulturist of the Year

The Horticultural Award Program year runs from December through November the number of propagations submitted per member over that period will determine the Horticulturist of the Year; an award in recognition of their achievement will be presented at the December meeting.

Registration

To register your plant for the H.A.P. you must either donate the propagation of the plant or after verification by a checker, donate \$1.00 as a registration fee at a regular meeting or auction.

Requirements

1. Plants reproduced must conform to the following definition of an aquatic plant: An aquatic plant is one, which in the wild or native state, can be found in the submerged state as a normal occurrence at some time during the course of any one complete season.
2. Plants are to be identified. (Unidentified species will be assigned a code number for recording purposes until correctly identified) The Encyclopedia of Water Plants by Jiri Strodola and Aquarium Plants by Christel Kasselmann will be used as the main references for identification of most plant species.
3. Verification and registration of a propagation is required for all classes of plants. All verifications must be made by an H.A.P. checker.
4. Classes A, B, C, D, & E only need to be verified once, class F - sexual reproduction must be verified three times, first for flowering, then for seed production, and sprouted plants that can be identified.
5. A written report is also required for class F to qualify for award certificate and points.

Types of Plant Reproduction:

Vegetative reproduction Classes A, B, &C - check list for ODNR banned species

Floating plants – doubling of the original amount

Bunch plants – doubling of the original amount, leaf count will be made on initial verification.

Reproduction by runner or rhizome – one healthy plant capable of surviving independently from the parent, while the parent plant is still alive and in good health.

Class D – Oddball and “Bog” plants – 10 points

All plants that are not designated class A, B, C, are oddball; “bog” plants, or are unidentified species and will be placed in class D. Only true unidentifiable plants (not color variations or hybrids) will be accepted.

Other

Class E – Flowering – Flowering will be considered the same as the propagation of the plant and points will be the same as the class in which the plant is designated. (I.e. Cabomba – 10 points, Echinodorus – 15 points, etc.) Verification can be actual or by photograph and must be done when the plant is in full bloom and attached to the member’s plant in their own aquarium or pond.

Class F – Sexual reproduction – Sexual reproduction means flowering, production of seeds, and reproduced plants must be from the member’s own plant, not from a supplier or horticulturist. Two verifications are required, first an actual or photographic verification must be done when the plant is in full flower, in seed production, and then verified again when young plants are old enough to be recognized as the same species as the parent plant.

Special note – Re – growth of seasonal plants does not count as new growth (i.e. Aponogeton sp.).

Centurion Award – A plaque will be awarded to a member when they receive credit for 100 horticultural submissions, in any combination of vegetative reproduction, sexual reproduction, or flowerings.

Plant Groupings and Point Allocations

Class A – 5 Points

1. Any *Azolla* sp.
2. Any *Ceratophyllum* sp.
3. Any *Ceratopterus* sp.
4. Any *Elodea* sp.
5. Any *Hygrophila* sp.
6. Any *Lemna* sp.
7. Any *Limnobium* sp.
8. Any *Riccia* sp.
9. Any *Salvinia* sp.
10. Any *Sagittaria* sp.
11. Any *Utricularia* sp.
12. Any *Vallisneria* sp
13. Any *Wolfia* sp.

Class C – 15 Points

1. Any *Anubias* sp.
2. Any *Aponogeton* sp.
3. Any *Bucephalandra* sp.
4. Any *Cryptocoryne* sp.
5. *Didiplis diandra*
6. Any *Echinodorus* sp.
7. Any *Eichhornia* sp.
8. Any *Isoetes* sp.
9. Any *Lagenandra* sp.
10. Any *Marsilea* sp.

Class B – 10 Points

1. Any *Acorus* sp.
2. Any *Alternanthera* sp.
3. Any *Bacopa* sp.
4. Any *Bolbitis* sp.
5. Any *Cabomba* sp.
6. Any *Cardamine* sp.
7. *Echinodorus tenellus*
8. Any *Eleocharis* sp. (hairgrass)
9. Any *Fontinalis* sp.
10. Any *Heteranthera* sp.
11. Any *Hydrocleys* sp.
12. Any *Hydrocotyle* sp.
13. Any *Iris* sp.
14. Any *Limnophila* sp.
15. Any *Lobelia* sp.
16. Any *Ludwigia* sp.
17. Any *Microsorum pteropus*
18. Any *Myriophyllum* sp. except banned species
19. Any *Najas* sp.
20. Any *Nuphar* sp.
21. Any *Nymphaea* sp.
22. Any *Nymphoides* sp.
23. Any *Pistia* sp.
24. Any *Potamogeton* sp. except *P. crispus*
25. Any *pogostemon* sp.
26. Any *Rotala* sp.
27. Any *Taxiphyllum* sp. or moss sp.