



Iris Gleanings

From the President

Join us!

GOIS meets on the second Monday of the month. (March, April, May, June, September, October, & November)

At

St. Andrew's Episcopal Church

925 S 84th Street
Omaha, NE

**Doors Open at 6:30 PM
Program begins at 7:00 PM**

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WOW! Winters in Nebraska are never dull. It seems like we've dodged storm after storm while our neighbors to all sides have gotten hammered. Polar vortexes and slushy streets have made for what seems like a very long winter and sadly one of the victims of our "on-line and linked in" society has been that harbinger of Spring the garden catalog. Nothing seems to chase away the winter doldrums like those full color, outrageously flamboyant, descriptive catalogs. Thankfully the latest edition of the AIS "Bulletin"

and HIPS "Roots" arrived just in time to lift my spirits. Now I can begin to believe in the promise of Spring again!

Your GOIS officers have a great year planned for you. We are calling this our year of "Getting Back to Basics" and hope to concentrate our programs and events on helpful hints and shared experiences. We have some exciting developments like our new meeting and show locations to share. With the renewed emphasis on preserving historic iris culti-



vars in the American Iris Society our display garden is receiving national recognition.

I'm looking forward to seeing you all and getting our gardening year off to a great start.

Linda

New Meeting Location!



Back to Basics



There is nothing like a little balmy weather to make a gardener’s head turn to thoughts of Spring and beautiful bloom but what if you don’t know where to begin?

Thankfully care of iris is relatively straightforward. They need good air circulation and plenty of sunshine to do well. Meet those needs and you are well on your way to a rainbow of bloom.

As the snow clears it will

be time to get out and clean your garden beds of debris and old foliage. This is where pests and fungal diseases overwinter. Dispose of this litter, don’t compost it to prevent re-infecting your beds.

Depending on your stance regarding pesticides and herbicides use you will need to apply those in mid-March. There is a very good article on herbicides and iris in the latest issue of the AIS Bulletin. If you

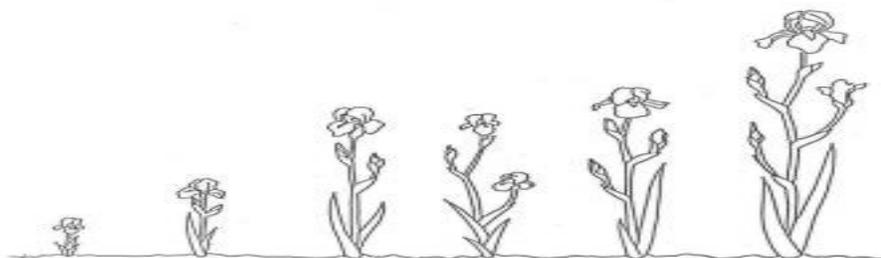
don’t receive it, there is a copy in the GOIS library available for you to borrow. There are organic alternatives to chemicals that can also be used.

Fertilizers should be spread about 6 weeks before bloom so early to mid-April for your Tall bearded and a bit earlier for your medians.

We’ll be discussing these topics during the March program so bring your questions to the meeting.

Trimmed in Velvet

2013 winner of the Caparne-Welch Medal for MDBs
(Paul Black)



Starting small - the early varieties

There is nothing that dispels a long mid-western winter like the sight of new life poking up in the garden.

First in our area will be the tiny bulbous *I reticulatas*. Expect to see signs of these dainty beauties the same time as the early crocus. Needle-like leaves will spear through the soil followed quickly by delicate

flowers in mid-March. Next will be the first of the bearded varieties, miniature dwarf bearded or MDBs. A delight in the spring garden you can expect these tiny champions in early to mid-April. At under 8 inches these are hardy little troopers, often blooming through light frosts and even some snow. Descended from

the tiny species, *Iris pumila*, today’s MDBs are exceptionally cold tolerant and make wonderful rock garden plantings. Try them at the fronts of borders or in miniature landscapes where their tiny size can be appreciated.

I know it’s really, truly Spring when tiny ‘Patsy Jo’ blooms in my garden.

Upcoming events

- **March 10;** Program, "Back to Basics: the Care and Culture of Iris in the Home Garden." General Business meeting to review events for upcoming year
- **March TBD;** Garden workday to clean beds at Mahoney State Park.
- **March 29-30;** Orchid Show at Lauritzen Gardens
- **March 29;** Arrange the Roses. Design class offered by Metropolitan Community College. See <http://omahagardenclubs.com/352.html> for more information.
- **April 14;** GOIS Program on Median Iris.
- **April 15;** Omaha Council of Garden Club's Spring Meeting. Great Plants for the Great Plains by Bob Henrickson is the program
- **May TBD;** GOIS Garden tours.
- **May 17-19;** Spring into Spring annual Sales and Exhibition event at Lauritzen Gardens. GOIS Show to be held at Lauritzen Gardens.
- **May 24-25;** Region 21 Spring Iris Tour hosted by Lincoln Iris Society
- **May TBD;** GOIS in the Garden. Members host an Open Garden event for the public
- **June 9;** GOIS Picnic. Bring a friend, a dish to share,
- **June 14;** Workday for the Sass Memorial Gardens at Mahoney State Park. Gather at the gardens at 8:30 AM to remove bloom stalks and deadhead peonies.
- **July 19** Dig at Sass Memorial Gardens for annual rhizome sale. Gather at the gardens at 8:00 AM
- **July 22;** Club rhizome prep
- **July 25-26;** Annual Rhizome Sale



March Hospitality
Officers

March 10th

In the March Garden

It's time to :

- Remove mulch from transplanted varieties to prevent rot.
- Remove debris, dead or diseased foliage from iris beds to prevent pests like iris borer .
- Put down pre-emergent, if applying, when the forsythia bloom.
- Treat plants with system insecticide for iris borer when TB foliage is 4-6 inches high if borers have been a problem.

*Stop and appreciate those beautiful dwarf varieties
and/or find some space for them in next year's garden design!*

Greater Omaha Iris Society

Greater Omaha Iris Society
15115 Grant Circle
Omaha, NE 68116

We're on the web:

www.greateromahairissociety.org

Stay Current and informed

GOIS Dues

- Single AIS Member \$3.00
- Single non-AIS Member \$10.00
- Family AIS Member \$5.00
- Family non-AIS Member \$15.00



Dues for 2014 are past due. Pay Janet Ott at a meeting or mail payment to Janet at:

PO Box 234
Ashland, NE 68003

And remember guests are always welcome at GOIS events. Bring a Friend!

American Iris Society Dues

- Single Annual \$25.00
- Dual Annual \$30.00
- Triennial Single \$60.00
- Triennial Dual \$75.00
- Single e-Member \$15.00

Visit www.irises.org to learn more about the AIS and its affiliates.