



Iris Gleanings

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

Executive Board

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Co-Curator of Collections
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From the President

If you ever needed an excuse to grow different kinds of iris this Spring has certainly provided one.

The first official day of Spring was heralded in my garden by the cheerful yellow blooms of *Iris danfordiae*. Their cousins the *I. reticulatas*, not to be left behind, have been blooming ever since. The beauty of these little bulbous iris is their transient nature. Here today and gone tomorrow they beckon you out to explore the early garden. You can almost forget that it truly has been a long winter seeing

these little beauties. Popping up here and there.

Our April meeting is a "members favorites" show and tell format. Bring some of your iris possessions to show to members. Photographs, pictures, jewelry, trinkets, and trophies; come on, you know you've been collecting things for years. If you'd like to trade or donate items you certainly may but that is not required.

We'll also be sharing Spring growing tips and more.

May is planting time and if



you have excess plants in your garden please bring them to our May swap meet. Trading with your iris friends is a great way to expand your garden without breaking your budget.

Linda

Society News

It's hard to believe but it is almost time to return your travelling trophies from our show last year. If you were lucky enough to win a travelling trophy bring it back for the April show and tell meeting to share your triumph and maybe a growing secret or two with your fellow members. We will also accept trophies at the May meeting.

We are always looking for program ideas so if there is a topic of interest to you please let an officer know at the next meeting.

Back to Basics



Iris reticulata

Bearded versus beardless, what are they and are there really any differences in growing them?

Yes and no. The obvious difference is of course the beard or lack thereof.

That charming little caterpillar-like part that perches on the falls of bearded iris signifies that iris as a member of the bearded classes of iris. Bearded iris, no matter their size (which can be quite varied); share similar cultural preferences. Full sun, good air circulation, and an intolerance of “wet” feet. Bearded iris are by far the most commonly found iris grown in our area.

Beardless varieties on the other hand have quite varied cultural preferences.

Bulbous iris, from the tiny

reticulatas blooming now to the majestic Dutch iris favored by the florists, can be grown here. They require the same conditions as most bulbs, fertile and loose soil and the ability to store enough energy to bloom again the next year. Our clay soil and harsh winters tend to lead to decreased bloom over time; just plan to replace your bulbs every few years for an early spring show.

Siberian iris are prized by landscapers for their graceful grass-like foliage. Sibs as they’re called, can take more moisture and more shade than their bearded cousins. Look for hardy varieties at the Spring nursery. Transplant these varieties in the early Spring before the weather gets too hot for best re-

sults.

Spuria iris are the late bloomers in our area blooming after our bearded iris. Tall and stately it is not unusual to see varieties 4-5 feet tall with blooms similar to Dutch iris. They make very nice cut flowers with multiple blooms per stalk. They prefer conditions similar to their bearded cousins and may even go dormant in the late summer.

Louisiana and Japanese iris are the most water loving of the hybrid irises available some even growing in standing water. These iris often prefer a little higher acid content than their bearded cousins. They can be successfully grown in our area given an ideal location.

2014 Dykes Medal

‘Dividing Line’

Why Historics?...

I have a love of historic iris, their simple tailored beauty and often distinctive fragrance just mean Spring to me. I have varieties that my grandmother grew and others that remind me of dear friends.

There is some thing to be said for a variety that can

still be grown 50 or even several hundred years after it was first introduced. Can you say hardy and disease resistant?

A truly spectacular collection of historic iris is maintained by GOIS in our display garden at Mahoney State Park. Every year I am

blown away by the variety and form of those iris.

Visit it in May and don’t forget to take your camera, you too may find yourself bitten by the historic iris bug. And if you are we always need people to grow back-up stock for the garden.

Upcoming events

April 13, GOIS Program “Show and Tell” bring your iris items to show your iris “addiction”. Growing tips and a slide show will accompany the General Business Meeting

April 27th, Executive Board and Cabinet meeting. Farmhouse Café, 5:30 PM

May 11th, “Preparing to Show” a panel presentation on the nuances of preparing specimens for the show bench. Plant Swap. General Business meeting.

May 15th, 16th, & 17th, “Spring into Spring” at Lauritzen Gardens. GOIS show and special seminar at the gardens.

May 18th-23rd, AIS National Convention, Portland Oregon

June 8th, GOIS Annual Picnic, Hosted by the Otts, no business meeting

July 18th, Dig at Mahoney display garden. Rain date, July 19th.

July 20th, Iris prep for the sale, no business meeting

July 24th, Rhizome sale 11:00 AM—8:00 PM at St. Andrews Church.

August 31st, Executive Board and Cabinet meeting. Farmhouse Café, 5:30 PM

September 14th, “Clematis for the Garden” by Gary White. General Business meeting.

September 28th, Executive Board and Cabinet meeting. Farmhouse Café, 5:30 PM

October 12th, “Program from the National Convention in Portland” by Linda Wilkie. General Business meeting.

November 6-7, GOIS hosts the AIS Fall Board meeting in Omaha

November 9th, Thanksgiving Potluck. End of year review.



April Hospitality

Donna Sobczyk

Marilyn Hoover

Bob & Amy
Green

April 13th

In the Garden...

Now is time to:

- Treat for Iris borer if they have been a problem in the past. Read all insecticide labels carefully for application and disposal. Most that are effective for borers are also lethal towards our honeybees and other pollinators so use responsibly.
- Fertilize iris with a mild 5-5-5 or 10-10-10 fertilizer when the tulips bloom
- Keep rhizomes clear of mulch to avoid trapping moisture on the rhizomes which can lead to rot.
- Check your bloom against the descriptions that can be found on the American Iris Society wiki. If you find a cultivar that has been mislabeled take a photo or bring a bloomstalk to a meeting for help in identifying it.

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 2015 can be paid at the October and November meetings. Pay John Randall at a meeting or mail payment to John at:

22871 Kane Avenue
Glenwood, IA 51534



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.