



IRIS AUSTIN

A Monthly Newsletter of the Iris Society of Austin



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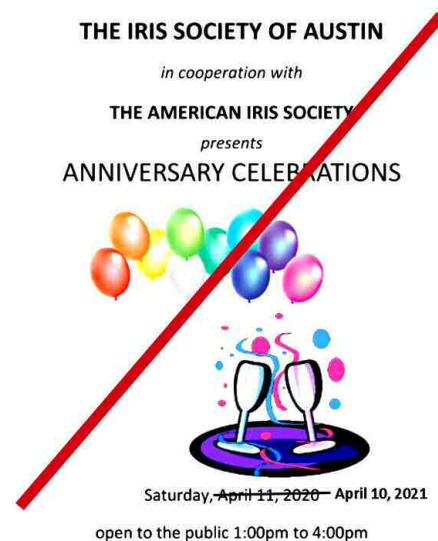
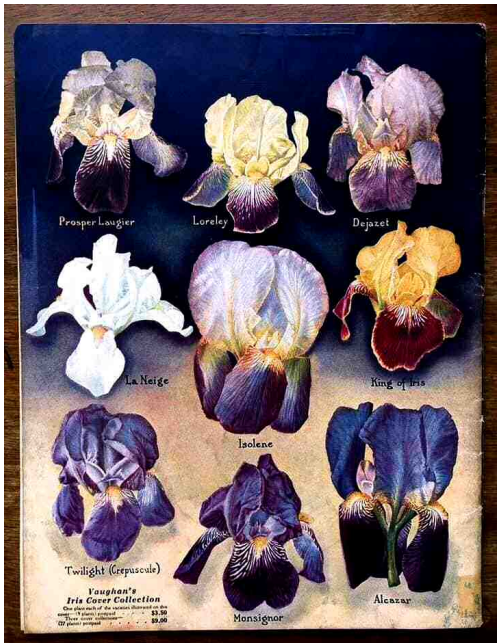
ISA Website: http://www.kenfuchs42.net/isa_index.html

Next Meeting:

??????

**“ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS” IRIS SHOW
CANCELED FOR 2021**

Once Upon a Time – 1930s Catalogs



The Iris Society of Austin has already canceled its show due to COVID-19, and shows from Africa and the United Kingdom have likewise been canceled. Our show schedule was prepared by Ken Fuchs and approved by Lois Rose in 2020. The title selected in 2019 for the schedule reflected the Taniguchi Japanese Garden's 50th year and the American Iris Society's first 100 years. The show was to be in April and Easter comes on the fourth. If another society holds a show later, some irises can be entered by those who will have blossoms. As of now Zilker Botanical Gardens Center and the auditorium are still closed. The Iris Society of Austin has not been able to meet since last March, when this pandemic came to Austin.

The A.I.S. anniversary has not been celebrated as of yet but will be a part of the New Mexico Convention in Las Cruces. The 2021 Convention has been postponed until 2022.

FEBRUARY'S FURY

Last month a few reblooming irises in new ground were standing 5 feet tall. The buds turned to flowers even after the first snow provided some moisture in this drought. Many tropicals like hibiscus remained in blossom. What surprises came our way!



'Edna Claunch' blooming January 9, 2021 in Kathy Pethram's garden

Then one snow storm after another came followed by an ice storm. Texas became a wintry wonderland that one had not seen in 73 years with 8 inches of snow and ice for at least 5 days. Doves that needed a rest stop flew to oak limbs protected by cedar or junipers with their evergreen foliage. Not only humans suffered but wildlife came together to survive the 5 to 27 degree temperatures with wind chill below zero.



Jim Landers' Louisiana irises and potted TBs after the ice storm February 12, 2021



Some of us were without electricity and water for days. Many of us had wrapped pipes and some plants before we filled any empty containers with water. In the middle of the storm we watched the wildlife drink snowfall and we too used snow while bottled water was trucked in from nearby states. As of the 23rd of this month water from the city no longer must be boiled before using it.

The irises are damaged. Even when some irises were near a burning home, they came back. Eventually these irises will return. Perhaps some of the black landscape will turn green.

The irises — bearded, Louisiana, Spuria, and Dutch — are mostly yellow or light green with the foliage hugging the ground. Those reblooming irises are flat on the ground. New increases are beginning to come around the rhizomes for some plants.

HORTICULTURE

Look for color, balance, growing habits, and hardiness in an iris. Then use a fertilizer to produce good flowers with substance. This can be done at Labor Day, Valentine's Day, and Mother's Day. Bearded irises love bone meal, but not nitrogen from another part of your garden if you grow a lawn. For smaller irises water them a little more and feed them.

Louisiana irises enjoy acid soil and water. They do not have to stand in water, but they must be kept damp. If you grow them in a fish pond, you may not have to use fertilizer at all. The fish will take care of this task.

Spurias need rose food after they emerge from dormancy. These tall irises will dry so that the foliage can be cut to the ground in the summer. Then the cool weather will bring rain and life to the rhizomes.

HOW TO DESTROY BACTERIAL SOFT ROT

Some of the rhizomes and bulbs have frozen, but they will come back later. If there is the smelly soft rot, you should know how to take care of the iris rhizome. Use a cleaner that you probably have in your kitchen — Comet! It has a bactericidal agent that acts through its hypochlorite content that kills the rot that can continue to affect other expensive rhizomes. The foliage is usually limp over the rhizome and the base of the fan. It smells like rotten eggs. This bacteria is present in the soil and enters the iris during weeding or cultivation when you hit a rhizome so that snails and other insects can enter. Dig the



rhizome, scrape away the infected tissue, and place the rhizome outdoors in a sunny location for a few hours. Another way to try to save the rhizome is to soak it in bleach, the solution being 8 to 10 parts water to 1 part bleach. Then rinse the bleach solution off and plant the rhizome in a new location.

TRIED AND TRUE IRISES GROWN IN CENTRAL TEXAS

The Iris Society of Austin has usually had a speaker and owner of an iris business to list those irises that grow quite well in Central Texas. Some of those include the following:

- 'Absolute Treasure' by Tasco 2006
- 'Celebration Song' from Schreiner 1993
- 'Conjuration' by Byers 1988
- 'Daughter of Stars' by D. Spoon

- 'Dusky Challenger' by Schreiner 1986
- 'Florentine Silk' by Keppel 2005
- 'Lady Friend' by Ghio 1980
- 'Thornbird' by Monty Byers 1989



'Dusky Challenger' - Schreiner 1986



'Florentine Silk' - Keppel 2004



'Lady Friend' - Ghio 1980



'Thornbird' - Byers 1988

- 'Rustler' by Keppel 1988
- 'Judy Nunn' by Fred Kerr 2010



'Absolute Treasure' - Tasco 2006



'Celebration Song' - Schreiner 1993



'Rustler' - Keppel 1987



'Judy Nunn' - Kerr 2009



'Conjuration' - Byers 1988



'Daughter of Stars' - Don Spoon 2000

Tom Burseen has a great variety that bloom year after year.

Howie Dash from New Mexico has many that arrive and bloom the first year.

Irises from Michael Sutton or the Suttons last for years.

'Bottle Rocket' is a 2009 reblooming bearded iris by Michael Sutton that won the Dykes Medal in 2019. This beautiful iris blooms in early mid-season with orange buff, flushed pink at the midribs and bright orange halo on its standards. The falls are ruby red with orange and greyed orange in a border and lighter around the orange beards.



'Bottle Rocket' - M. Sutton 2009

'Montmartre' by Keith Keppel is a 2008 luminata with greyed purple standards with straw yellow edges and falls that are red purple with a narrow oyster rim. The beards are chrome yellow with white at the end. It has great growing habits that a show winner needs.



'Montmartre' - Keppel 2007

MEDIAN IRIS SOCIETY

When the Median Iris Society meets in Oklahoma City for their convention, attendees will bring their own cars to visit the gardens to keep themselves safer from COVID. This convention will be a trek. The price will remain the same. Instead of buses there is money to be spent on the extra display rooms in the hotel. The Median Convention has been named "Rerun in Twenty-One" – 2020 Visions in 2021. The date is

Thursday, April 22 through Saturday, April 24. The website is <http://www.medianiris.com>.



'Madame President' (MTB)



'Consummation' (MTB)



'Go For Bold' (BB)



'Bozrah' (AB)



'Prairie Thunder' (AB)



'Delirium' (IB)