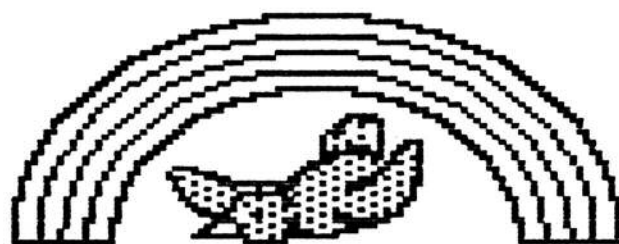


the Texas Rainbow NEWSFLYER



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L. Dragon

IRIS SOCIETY of AUSTIN OFFICERS :

President	Lorraine Dragon
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THE I S A IRIS SALE

The Iris Society of Austin will hold their annual **IRIS SALE** at the **AUSTIN AREA GARDEN CENTER (ZILKER PARK)** on **SEPTEMBER 10, 1988**. We will be selling **IRIS RHIZOMES** from 9am until 3pm (unless sold out earlier). We will have tall bearded iris rhizomes , named varieties as well as unknown varieties. We will have reblooming irises (that is irises that could bloom in the spring as well as one or more times during the year.) There will be a wide selection of colors. Our prices will range from \$.50 to \$4.00.

All members are requested to come on out and help sell - the time flies .

THE N B I S IRIS SALES

The New Braunfels Iris Society will hold their 2 annual **IRIS SALES**. The first sale will be **September 3, 1988** at the **WIMBERLEY FLEA MARKET (WIMBERLEY, TEXAS)**. We will be selling from 9am until 3pm (unless sold out earlier.) The second sale will be held during the **COMAL COUNTY FAIR** at the **FAIR GROUNDS in NEW BRAUNFELS , TEXAS**. We will start selling as soon as possible after the Fair opens and will sell until sold out. We will be selling bearded irises , both one-timers as well as reblooming irises. We will have a wide selection of varieties in all the colors of the rainbow as well as some colors that are not in the rainbow.

What Makes A Remontant Iris Rebloom ?

written by Robert Paul Hubley

printed in A. I. S. Bulletin , April 1967

The remontant iris plant (that is , the same rhizome and its bloomstalk) which blooms in the spring does not bloom again later in the year. To simplify the explanation of a complicated process , the remontant iris rhizome which blooms in the spring later produces a second offshoot in the same year (new rhizome and its bloomstalk) which , in turn blooms later in the year.

Regular Iris Growth Cycle :

Each rhizome produces a bloomstalk only once and then passes the task of producing flowers onto one or more of the new rhizomes it has put out ; with the old rhizome functioning as a food reservoir.

After blooming , and the flowers have faded , iris plants usually rest. When the plants emerge from this resting stage , the rhizomes put out new rhizome buds , and new roots begin to form.

Ideally the number of bloomstalk producing rhizomes should double each blooming period , branching out from the old leaf axils on each side of the rhizome.

With spring blooming irises , the new flower buds for the following spring are formed the previous summer or early fall at the base of the fans from which bloomstalks are to develop.

Remontant Iris Growth Cycle :

Remontant irises , on the other hand , produce two sets of buds for bloom at two different seasons in the same year. For example , fall flowering buds are formed after the spring bloom ; and spring flowering buds are formed after the previous fall bloom. It must be remembered , however , for an iris to bloom more than once in a year , it must have both the correct hereditary characteristics and the right environment.

Watering Remontant Irises :

Remontant irises will be encouraged to rebloom if watered from March through September. This continuous watering program is necessary so summer rebloomers and autumn rebloomers will have full opportunity to respond with the reblooming trait that is in their genetic makeup.

While summer watering will not make regular spring bloomers into rebloomers , you may be surprised with an additional summer or fall bloomstalk. On the other hand , you can delay the summer or fall reblooming season , if you so desire , by not watering for a month or so. Also, in many cases, if you treat a remontant like a regular spring bloomer , it will act like a regular spring bloomer and not bloom later in the year.

Fertilizing Remontant Irises :

In Southern California (where author lived. Ed.) , after a remontant iris has finished blooming , I cut off the stalks , pull off dead leaves and trim browned leaf tips. Then I apply a handful of complete organic fertilizer around each plant. Already new rhizomes and new fans are developing and these need to be built up for the next blooming season. In other parts of the U. S. , however , you may not want to fertilize in the fall so as not to encourage soft new growth just before the winter cold.

Dividing Remontant Irises :

Remontant irises need to be divided about every two years , keeping in mind that crowded plants do not rebloom so well. In most parts of the U. S. , plants are dug and divided in July and August in order that the plants will be fully established before cold winter weather sets in. (Since our cold weather seems to come later in the year - we probably could put this off a couple of months. Ed.)

This general dividing time also applies to remountants and to Southern California , with the following modifications :

- (a) Summer rebloomers should not be divided until after completion of summer bloom .
- (b) Fall and winter rebloomers should be divided earlier , as soon as possible after spring bloom .
- (c) divide when the young rhizomes are large enough to be cut off and replanted .

Summary :

In short , remountant irises rebloom because they put out consecutive sets of flower buds at different seasons of the year instead of just one set per year .

Editor's Note :

I think that this is a very good article about REMOUNTANT (Reblooming) IRISES . Although the author did not mention separate beds ; I do think it points out the need for separate bed(s) for remountant irises , as the extra water and fertilizer would probably do more harm than good for regular (spring) blooming irises .

Dig This SOIL !

taken from article published in a past A I S bulletin.

What do we know about soil? We know it is terribly important to all of us ; as important as the water we drink and the air we breathe. It gives us the food that is fuel for our bodies and the ornamental plants that are the food for our souls.

More Here Than Meets The Eye

People who understand physics and chemistry tell us that the word soil is applied to the loose upper layer of the land surface of the Earth , which is composed for the most part of disintegrated rock mixed with different amounts of decayed organic matter - such as the remains of dead plants and animals. The rocks have decomposed as a result of countless ages of weathering , through such influences as exposure to rain , wind , and alternate freezing and thawing. The depth of the soil varies from zero (in places where the rock itself forms the surface) to many feet in regions where soil has been carried and piled up by the action of water and wind.

Dig down and you will find that the soil is divided into definite layers , one above the other , with different colors and textures. For instance , often a foot of sandy soil overlies several feet of clay soil. The upper layer , called topsoil , is , as a rule , darker in color than the lower layers because of its higher content of decaying vegetable and animal matter. In this upper layer , life in such forms as bacteria , fungi , insects and other small organisms is most abundant.

The layer below the topsoil is the subsoil. It is harder to dig when dry , and often is stickier when wet , owing to its higher clay content , much of which has been washed out of the topsoil. The subsoil often has a brighter color , due to the red oxides of iron and other elements that have washed down. Below these two layers , which make up the true soil , lies the mineral matter that may be solid bedrock or may be loose and porous to great depths.

SOIL IS NOT A DIRTY WORD

The soil serves three purposes in the life of a plant. It forms an anchorage for the roots so that the plant is held firmly in position. It supplies the water used by the plant and it affords certain elements necessary to the plant's growth and well - being.

The bulk of most soils consists of small particles of rock (up to 90% of the weight of most good soils). This is the component which furnishes the anchorage for the roots. Minerals are slowly dissolved from the surfaces of these rock particles and are absorbed by the plant.

(more in next issue)

HAVE YOU SEED ?

So you saved some iris seed and now you do not know what to do with them?

Many kinds of seeds need a period of coolness (cold) before they will sprout. Bearded iris seeds need a few weeks of near freezing temperatures if they are to germinate well.

Some people put the seeds on damp paper towels , then wrap the seeded towels in foil or plastic wrap. And store the resulting packets in the refrigerator for several months.

Jim Allen gave us some T.B. iris seeds that were in soil filled aluminum pot pie pans. He told us to water the soil and then place the pans in our freezer until we were ready to plant them .(which would be several months). Then we simply removed the frozen soil/seeds from the little pans and placed them in soil filled pots. We sunk the pots into a flower bed and watched the seeds sprout.

Another person recommended planting the seeds in cans (any kind - ones with plastic lids are best) and sitting the cans outdoors. If we do not have a cold winter - say with about 8 weeks of near freezing temperatures this may not work. But say that we are expecting to have a "hard" winter , then you might try this method . Regular garden soil will probably do for the bearded iris seeds. If the soil is vey sandy , you will need to add peat moss or compost. If the soil is heavy clay , add some compost and sand. Put some small rocks or pieces of broken clay pots in the bottom of the can to keep the soil from falling out of the drainage holes that you should punch in the bottom of each can. Fill each can 3/4 full with soil. Put seeds on top of soil (the seeds can be quite close together) cover the seeds with 1/2 inch or so with soil and press down. Water well . Put label on the can so that you will know what you planted in the can and you are all set to put the can outside.

Here is where the cans with plastic lids come in handy. You can write your "label" on the outside of the plastic lid with a "magic marker" , snap on the lid . You will not need to water for a long time. If you do not have the plastic lids , you will need to cover the cans with something - a board , etc.

Bearded iris seeds germinate best when temperatures are around 45 degrees in the spring. So after a period of cold weather , uncover your cans and watch closely when the temperatures get into the forties. Don't let the cans of soil/seeds go bone dry , the seeds need the dampness in order to sprout.

After the seeds sprout , treat them as you would any little seedlings. Let them grow to a nice size (similar to a blade of St. Augustine grass) then carefully remove them from their "can homes" and either put each in its own small pot or plant in a prepared flower bed , water occasionally.

The philosopher who said "*A work well done never needs doing over,*" evidently never pulled weeds in the garden.

SEPTEMBER MEETINGS:

The September meeting for the **IRIS SOCIETY OF AUSTIN** will be held September 13 , 1988 at 7:30pm in the **Austin Area Garden Center (Zilker Park)**. The meeting will feature a slide program "How to plant bearded irises".

The **NEW BRAUNFELS IRIS SOCIETY** will meet September 20,1988 at 7:30pm in the **First Federal Savings and Loan Office (New Braunfels)**. The meeting will feature a slide program of **IRISES** grown by Lorraine and Roy Dragon.
