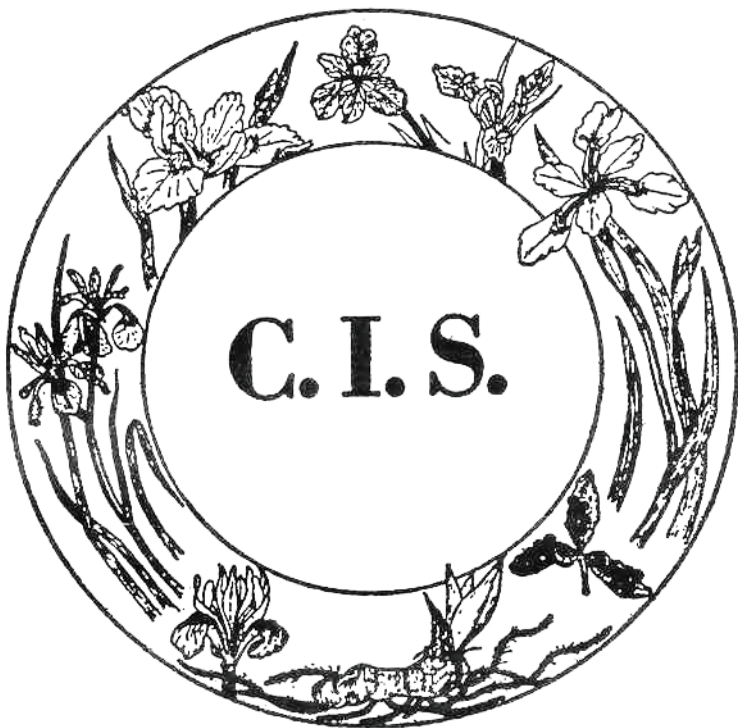

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Canadian Iris Society

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Past President's Report

by Ed Jowett



I am somewhat disappointed in the response to our meetings. For our Annual Meeting we only had two (2) people reply and three (3) others showed for the meeting. As a result of this we are holding an AGM meeting along with our board of directors meeting Sunday November 22, 2009 at 1:30 p.m. at Royal Botanical Gardens.

In order for this organization to continue we need people willing to give a hand. We also need feedback from members as to what they would like to see or have. Send your request to

any board member (and it will be discussed at a board meeting) or come to the annual meeting and bring it up. We have people now committed to articles for the newsletter every quarter. These people are to be congratulated for their time and effort given.

I have included the agenda here for the upcoming meeting:

AGM/Board Meeting Nov. 22, 2009 RBG Burlington

1. Call to order
2. Minutes from last AGM
3. Minutes from last board meeting
4. Treasurer's report
5. Committee year-end reports
 - Membership
 - Picnic
 - Shares
 - Show
6. New business
 - Future CIS





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Editor's Note:

As this is the last issue before Christmas. I would like to say "Merry Christmas and Happy New Year" to all our members and friends.

May the coming year bring you good health and great gardening.

Sincerely,

Ed Jowett

NEW AND NEWSWORTHY...

by Nancy Kennedy

For those who have caught “Iris Virus” (a term aptly coined by **Barry Blyth** at Tempo Two) the impending winter and season’s change brings with it the unhappy chore of putting the iris to bed once again until next year. Some of us are happy to have Iris Virus go dormant for a time, others just suffer through the soon-to-be-on-us cold and snowy weather until we see those first glimpses of little growing tips come to life once again. Unfortunately there is little to report of a newsworthy nature in this hemisphere currently. I am sure plans are progressing well for the AIS Convention in Victoria, B.C., under the Chair of **Ted Baker** out on Salt Spring Island, scheduled for early June 2011, and presently all of British Columbia no doubt is thick in the middle of the upcoming Olympic Winter Games—exciting times for our most westerly neighbours.

The iris world is now quiet, save for Down Under, where Barry Blyth is about to begin offering for sale yet another exquisite line of new introductions.

In his catalogue just received this past week, Barry makes mention of a good dozen years of below-average rainfall and drought in his part of Australia, Southern Victoria. He notes wet paddocks and bogged tractors are now a thing of the past, whereas here

for the past couple of years excess rainfall, flooding, and at the very least continually soggy ground has made for many a rotten iris. Did we have two consecutive days without rain this summer? Is this cause for concern when importing Australian iris? Perhaps. They like it down there (the iris, that is). It’s hard for them to adjust from a virtual desert to our (lately) somewhat rainy climate and some just don’t like living here. Borer and rot are not part of the Australian vocabulary, so to lose these precious plants would be a hard coin to swallow.

Regardless, they are exquisite and beautiful, and irresistible to this writer...

Gracing the front cover of the catalogue is *Honey Dripper*, one of the most exciting seedlings they have flowered from its parent, *Decadence*. This early to mid bloomer sports



Honey Dripper

an overall base colour of butterscotch honey with a touch of apricot. Over this base, the falls are cast in a heavy wash of burgundy from the hafts to just below the tangelo beards, where it moderates into a just a light cast at petal's edge. Flowers are horizontally flared, ruffled and of medium size.

For subtly beautiful colour, check out the sister to the above—*Candy Colours*. What a magical flower, and in a colour not often seen; the standards are coral/orange, not bright by any means but definitely “there”.

The falls of the same colour are overlaid with cinnamon/sienna, darkening them a notch, and then around the vibrant tango-orange beards is a violet blaze, forcing the eyes to stop and stare. Amazingly perfect form and grace! Softer but similar flowers can be found in *Apricot Already*, as well as *Sunset Plaza*, replete with the tiny blue blaze, and even softer tones are evident in *Comes The Dawn*, leaning somewhat into the pastel lemon/mango spectrum with a white blaze below tangerine beards. These guys are sibs of sorts too, indeed *Mango Daiquiri* is notable in all their pedigrees.

Adoree – Barry says “this has been a stunning iris from the morning we saw it open”. This I would love to have in my garden. Standards are lilac-mauve, shot up the midribs with rose. Falls are a smooth coffee/rose; wide, ruffled, fluted, and overlapping. A barely perceptible lighter flash emanates from the base of the brilliant tangelo beards. The colouring of the falls reminds one of *Mandarin Morning*, which is in fact in its family tree. A good grower with sweet perfume, this early to mid-bloomer has been introduced in conjunction with **Keith Keppel** in 2009.

Ancient Secrets is another hard to describe flower. Standards are buff-violet, deepening or shot up the midribs with a much brighter violet. Falls are a honey-brown with an apparent yellow cast, lightening inward toward the beards. Bold brown veins fan out from around the beards over a wash of ivory, melding back into the honey-brown. This plant puts out show stems, has loads of substance and is said to be a good grower. Different, very different.



Adoree



Ancient Secrets



Poster Girl

Everyone's gotta want a *Poster Girl*—she's pastel perfection. A blending of many pastels, the standards are a soft apricot beige, as are the falls, however encircling the exceptionally ruffled falls is a ¼" rim of a blended pinkish violet. A flower with so many desirable characteristics, from its caterpillar tango beards to the exotic frills and ruffling. A future winner here?

Remember *Wabash*? Some things can be improved on. *Merry Amigo* is a very modern and updated version of that old favorite. So striking in its contrast and an example of a true amoena, this tall, very early bloomer sports pure white standards

over richly-saturated red-violet falls with a precise 1/8" band of white encircling. A show quality stalk with three blooms out, all in perfect proportion, is pictured in the catalogue, highlighting the ruffling and bright white banding. This is stunning, a must-have for this writer's garden.

A most unusual iris is *Samarkand Road*. It needs to be seen to be understood. Standards are lemon yellow with a pinkish blush through the midrib, barely perceptible. The vivid fuzzy tangelo caterpillar beards creep out from a wash of cream overlaid by brown veining. The cream somehow mutates into a light chocolate brown washed by cream to give it a near pastel look, but not... Seeing is the key here. For the collector of the unusual, this one fits the bill.

Also for the collector, *Lording It*, is a bright, eye-popping colour combination with standards of creamy white blended all over with melted butter and falls of the deepest black burgundy. Setting the flower apart from any other is a large zonal starburst of lemon yellow overscored with deep burgundy veins—forming a Chevron pattern emanating from the bright gold beards. Tall at 40", a very classy creation, one of the very first to bloom, and perhaps even rebloom. What more could you want?



Lording It

Several beautiful burgundies have been introduced this year. *Buccaneer's Prize* is a dark, dark, dark rich burgundy, a little lighter above, hinting at some white veins on the hafts as shown in the picture. Excellent form, with *Decadence* in its parentage. *Hint Of Danger*, is

a ruffled deep red-burgundy bitone sporting wide, full flowers on excellent show stems. Plush, rich red-purple falls with bronze beards and a sweet perfume is part of the package of *Danger Money*, the standards here being a silken lilac flushed over the midribs in beige tones for a lightening effect—a very elegant and mysterious-looking flower. *Lord of Mayfair*, with standards of rose-tan over rose-burgundy falls, interestingly reverting to the colour of the standards by petal's edge. A lovely ruffled, fluted and perfumed piece of royalty for your garden.

One strikingly pretty and feminine flower is *Got Attitude*, a mid to late bloomer with icy white standards and a bit of blue veining up the midribs. Falls are a romantic mauve and beards are white, tipped orange. Simple in colour combination yet so exceptionally pretty. Indeed, the violet spectrum is amply represented here in this year's introductions with many a combination of white over violet, cream over violet, lemon and lavender combos.



Got Attitude



Carnival Capers

One stunning example pictured is *Carnival Capers*, another co-introduction with **Keith Keppel** this year, obviously bringing the best of these two hybridizers together (*Gypsy Lord* and *Decadence*) with creamy lemon ruffled and partly-open standards over equally-ruffled falls in blended shades of violet, edged in champagne.

Many virtual violet selves abound this year also. Of particular note, *Pagan Knight*, sports a flower “so ruffled that the ruffles are nearly lace”. This tall fellow stands some 42” and indeed its picture shows so much ruffling that “parts” are virtually indistinguishable. Mustard yellow beards sit on hafts of even deeper violet with dark brown working its way in there too. *Orienteer* could be called a fancy plicata. Heavy white sanding and veins emanate from the beards it seems and spray out all over the falls. One notes a tiny bit of whitewash creeping up the standards. A shorter (35”) mid to late season flower to grace the garden.

All in all, there are some 40 introductions coming out of Australia for their 2009-2010 year, far too many to cover in one short article. The website (www.tempotwo.com.au) will provide a pictorial display of some of the new introductions, but no descriptors, so for in-depth study one needs the catalogue. Hopefully a friend has one for borrowing.

Across Canada, our irises are sleeping now, awaiting as are we a season of snow and icy cold. Losses this year for many have been great and for some the show of bloom appalling. Hopefully next year we will see things turn around and everyone will have a truly spectacular display of flowers when the weather turns warm once again, perpetuating Iris Virus...



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Autumn 2009 Garden Diggings:

Look after your irises in the off-season

By Christopher Hollinshead

Look after your irises in the off-season. There are a couple of important items for iris specialist growers/gardeners to consider in the gardening off-season; possible cool weather damaging fungus infection and protective winter mulching.

Botrytis:

Be aware of possible fungus infection during the cool and wet autumn, winter and early spring. These are the conditions when the fungus *Botrytis convoluta* becomes active and evident. Sometimes it is referred to as winter kill and then just written off as inevitable. Botrytis seems to affect new plantings of iris rhizomes more often than established clumps, invading the rhizome through a division cut on the rhizome or other rhizome damage. It is very disappointing to find in the springtime that you have lost carefully chosen new iris acquisitions that were planted out the previous July or August. If you have ever had the unfortunate experience of an iris rhizome becoming well established and growing nicely into the late summer and autumn only to find it completely destroyed and covered with a gray-black powdery mould in the spring then you should read this with interest. On a couple of occasions in the past I had this experience, losing a high percentage of newly planted irises. You do not need accept this or just leave it to chance.

Botrytis convoluta is a cool weather pathogen, with active disease development occurring in the fall, winter and spring months. Fungus growth is checked in spring by rising soil temperatures and development of a suberization layer at the margin of the infected tissue. *Botrytis convoluta* remains inactive through the summer months. Apparently healthy rhizomes of iris cultivars may be infected with latent *Botrytis convoluta* infections during the summer that later become active during the autumn, winter, and spring seasons and thus resulting in a destroyed iris rhizome in the springtime.



Botrytis Symptoms:

Plant fails to grow in spring and a visual inspection reveals gray-black *Botrytis convoluta* fungus on iris rhizome and root system. This fungus is known to thrive in a wide range of temperatures and climates but becomes most evident during the cool weather periods in early spring. At that time it appears as a dry, corky rot sometimes leaving the rhizome nearly weightless. It is usually accompanied by a mass of gray-black sclerotia on the rhizome or in the root mass. In most cases, at this point the complete plant is lost. This is a very discouraging outcome for a new and possibly expensive iris variety and additionally more so with the associated loss of a complete growing season and bloom enjoyment for that plant.



Cross-section of iris rhizome showing infected area of *Botrytis convoluta*, note the presence of the gray-black botrytis fungus.

Occasionally, even though the main rhizome has been infected and destroyed, the small new rhizome increases will not be affected and they may be removed and replanted. Although better than losing the plant completely, this is again a discouraging setback as it will require at least another full growing season for the rescued small rhizome to reach bloom size maturity.

Control of Botrytis:

An effective chemical control for this problem, previously available for 30+ years, Benlate (benomyl) is no longer available as it was discontinued by manufacturer Dupont in 2001. Currently, the use of the systemic fungicide Bayleton (triadimefon) from Bayer is a recommendation for the effective preventative control and curative treatment of *Botrytis convoluta* on irises. Triadimefon is the active ingredient found in Bayleton.

Control of iris leaf spot is an additional side benefit associated with the use of this product. As usual please follow all instructions provided with the product.

Product in a granular form is available and easy to apply. Look for product that contains the active ingredient triadimefon, one of these is the Bayer Advanced product, Fungus Control for Lawns.

How it works: Bayleton is a triazole fungicide with systemic action that works from within the plant, so there is no risk of the fungicide being diluted or washed off. This systemic activity makes Bayleton an effective preventive and curative fungicide. Use Bayleton as part of a preventive fungicide program. Bayleton activity may extend for as long as 60 days, depending on environmental conditions. (with data and information from Bayer Environmental Science)

(Note: above product mentioned may not be readily available in all areas due to local regulations)

Mulching:

A soil mulch for cold climates can be helpful to protect your irises over the winter season. Mulching with soil can help prevent the rhizome damaging freezing/thawing cycles that can initiate problems of disease and rot. Important: Only cold climate areas should mulch. All of Canada and the northerly USA states would be considered to be in the category of a cold climate. Mulching in warmer climates (some of the more southerly USA states) is not needed and could promote other issues such as bacterial soft rot.

During the coldest months of the winter, it is a good idea to mulch your bearded irises with some means of protection against the severe cold weather and prevent heaving of the rhizomes. As the rhizome itself heaves above the soil line, the top of it can alternately freeze and thaw over and over during the early spring weather with typical warm days and freezing nights. This sometimes produces rhizome damage and may allow a higher incidence of subsequent rot and or botrytis infections.

A late season soil mulch could consist of 5-7 cm (3 inches) soil, loosely thrown over the rhizomes in very late fall and removing it again before the first warm days of spring. Pine needles or straw will work well but do not mulch with any material that will pack down when wet and hold moisture on the tops of the rhizomes. Use porous material that will admit air and is non water-retentive. Keep in mind that depending on exactly where you live in Canada or USA, the winters may not be as early or as severe, so set your schedule accordingly. In Ontario, for example, we mulch from late November to mid-March.

Just as with the iris borer, remain vigilant in your garden during the so-called off seasons. Then reap the rewards of enjoying those superb irises performing at their best in your garden. Happy garden digging.

C.H.



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Yellow Flag is Easy – Maybe Too Easy?

by Harold Crawford

In scouting for information on growing iris in countries other than Canada and the United States, I became aware of the problems posed by the *Yellow Flag* (Yellow Iris) *I. pseudacorus* in many areas of the world. If I were a farmer I think I would have known about this—particularly if I had wetlands and if I were raising cattle.

As someone interested in iris you probably admire the *Yellow Flag* as I do, either in your garden or in wetlands as you drive through the countryside. It is common not only in Ontario but can be found throughout much of Canada. This plant or one of its forms sometimes shows up on the show table. I can recall being particularly impressed by a double form of the *Yellow Flag* exhibited at a C.I.S. show in Burlington several years ago.



I. pseudacorus (Yellow Flag)

The *Yellow Flag* is native to Europe, western Asia and northwest Africa. **Molly Price** in her classic *“The Iris Book”* writes fondly of it, making note that Solomon’s “lilies of the field” are thought by some to refer to *I. pseudacorus*. She suggests it as a possible water iris for a large reflecting pool and says that, although a water plant, it succeeds well as a garden plant. I can relate to this, once growing it in a rather dry clay soil with a gravelly base. She thought well enough of it to grow it in her garden for its attractive flower and used it as a “charming” flower in arrangements. She cautions though that in order to keep it under control she would yank out a number of the large, tough rhizomes immediately after flowering. *“The World of Irises”* says that it is the most robust and ▶

aggressive of all irises, is naturalized throughout the temperate world, and that it is the only water garden iris with yellow flowers. In the chapter on "*The Lesser Known Irises for Gardens*" **B.L. Davidson** writes that the flowers vary from the typical sulfur yellow in var. *bastardii* to deeper yellow forms such as *Golden Queen* and a paler variety called *Primrose Monarch*. Also mentioned is a double-flowered "curiosity" *Flore Plena*, and a white-striped foliage plant for spring accent, which becomes green later in the season. (If, in fact, you check the Royal Horticultural Society website you will find 14 forms of *I. pseudacorus* listed, including *Gigantea* which grows to at least 8 feet in height.) She warns that the species has enormous rhizomes, like elongated yams, and says that the seed stalks should be removed after flowering, because the species has escaped from gardens in all parts of the temperate world, and is spread mainly by floating seeds. It can of course spread by rhizomes too.

As any iris breeder of species knows, this plant has more wide cross hybrids than any species of iris. One of these, a cross with *I. chrysographes* resulted in a new iris *Golden Clough*, similar to the *Yellow Flag*, but brown. It won an AM from the RHS in 1973.

The *Yellow Flag* has naturalized itself in some parts of New Zealand, becoming a weed in wet areas, crowding out native vegetation. It is toxic to livestock and is prohibited from propagation, sale and distribution in that country. It is also invasive in Victoria, Australia, and is naturalized along the roadsides in New South Wales. Its earliest naturalization record in North America was in Newfoundland in 1911, in B.C. in 1931 and it was established in California by 1957. Toxicity is not the only concern, as it can also clog small streams and irrigation systems, invade shallow wetlands, and in some cases even interfere with fish production.

The Government of Canada's Poisonous Plant Information System states that *Yellow Flag* has poisoned cattle and swine and warns that it may cause similar symptoms in humans if the rhizome is ingested. The plant can also cause dermatitis in sensitive humans. The toxin is thought to be a glycoside called iridin. The symptoms in animals are abdominal pains, blistering, mouth irritation and salivation. The toxin can survive drying and *Yellow Flag* harvested in hay will cause diarrhea. Also mentioned is a case in B.C. where three calves died after ingesting an unidentified blue iris species. The recommendation is that livestock should be denied access to any iris species that grow wild or in gardens. (A USDA source indicates, though, that cattle usually avoid eating the Yellow Iris.)

Interestingly if you were to check the list of noxious weeds in the various provinces of Canada, you would find that nowhere is *Yellow Flag* listed; you would however find it as a nuisance weed. On the other hand a USDA web site indicates that it is on the noxious plant list in two states, Montana and Washington. It would appear that the plant is not of wide concern in Canada at present. We should enjoy it but be aware of potential problems, and avoid growing it where it appears dangerous to do so. Aside from its attractive flower, another positive for the *Yellow Flag* is that it has long been proven useful in water reclamation treatment, as its roots will remove heavy metals from contaminated water.



Maturity, Temperature and Rebloom

by Chuck Chapman

The summer rebloomers had puzzled me for a long time. While for most plants, the photoperiod (that is the amount of daylight) is a trigger for bloom, the “Summer Rebloomers” (SB) obviously didn’t follow this environmental clue. Even more puzzling was the different bloom times of the same cultivars in different climates. The marker plant for this data is the well known summer rebloomer *Immortality*, which is a widely grown, reliable rebloomer, and there are good reports of when and where it reblooms.



Immortality - well known rebloomer

For me, in the colder part of Southern Ontario, rebloom on *Immortality* usually occurs somewhere between late August to mid September. Spring bloom is usually early June, along with the other SBs, and about a week before the rest of the TBs start. This early start of the SB is a regularly reported phenomenon, with a few rare exceptions. If the trigger for rebloom was photoperiod, then it would be expected that rebloom would be very late, the reverse of their early spring bloom.

With fall cyclic rebloomers (FC) the rebloom is in the reverse order of spring bloom. That is, the earlier in spring they normally bloom, the later in fall they rebloom. The spring sequence is first MDB, followed by SDB, then IB, then TB along with BB and MTB. The fall is the opposite. First rebloom on TBs, along with MTB and BB rebloomers, followed by the IB, then the SDB. Usually that is the end of rebloom here as most SDB cyclic rebloomers will open only a few days before hard frost and MDB cyclic rebloomers never get a chance. Actually, there usually is a frost or two early in SDB rebloom that damages flowers (and puts an end to TB and IB rebloom) but after a couple of frost free warm days, the SDB put out new blooms, often showing no sign of frost damage. If any of the TBs put out further blooms they are badly frost damaged. At times there are cyclic rebloomers that bloom earlier, but every time I have seen this, it would ►

appear to be a primary fan, that for some reason missed blooming in spring, not a new increase. The fall cyclic rebloom would appear to be waiting for the correct day length to trigger fall bloom.

Initially it would appear that plant maturity by itself is enough of a trigger for reblooms on SDB, and I looked for this trigger, but it didn't seem to be enough. Often the *fans* of the SDB plants would look mature for a long time before they did their summer bloom. As I keep temperature records, I started looking at these records to see if there was a pattern. The pattern that showed, was rebloom followed about 14-18 days after a period of minimum night time temperatures of 5 days above 15C in a row. This was checked over several seasons, and it appeared to be the same pattern every year. When this was checked via Internet groups, with other people, it would seem that other factors were in play. In warmer climates it would seem that rebloom on *Immortality* occurred as the temperature cooled off, having several nights in a row below about 22C. Note that this is air temperature, not soil temperature. **Terry Aitkin** (personal communication) feels that it is ground temperature that is important. It actually may be that both are contributing, probably combining



Immortality - fan

factors. The growing point (referred to scientifically as apical meristem) is located just above the top of the rhizome. While the growing point is in the air, it is just above the surface of the soil, and the rhizome itself would be at ground temperature.



Immortality - flower bud formation

Why this is relevant and important, is that before an iris blooms, there has to occur a process whereby the growing tip (apical meristem) changes from producing leaves to producing flowering parts, or otherwise known as *bud formation*. This process is known to occur sometime in late summer to early fall. Once this change has occurred, the plant can no longer produce leaves—only a flower and associated flower parts. As far as I can tell, there have only been three studies of this in bearded iris. (Kosugi et al 1967, Mega 1952 and Kramer 1932). They have found

Flower bud Differentiation at different times of the year. The German study (Kramer) indicated that this occurred in June, Mega indicated September, and Kosugi indicated it was late August. These were all field studies, so the conditions triggering bud set were not controlled, but left to Mother Nature. A modern study would use growth chambers where the growing conditions could be controlled and the specific triggers identified. Based on the differences, I would suspect that maturity of rhizome by itself is not enough. The rhizomes would reach maturity sooner in Japan, as the studies would indicate that they had warmer growing condition than the German study. The trigger would need to involve maturity of rhizomes to some extent. This is shown by the fact that we don't have regular summer bloom. If mature rhizomes had flower bud set, then the plant would not be mature enough in spring but be mature later in season, and hence summer bloom. Maturity is not enough by itself as the flower bud set would occur much earlier in Japan. It is not likely to be a photoperiod trigger as again, it would thus not show such a disparity between Germany and Japan. This leaves temperature as a likely candidate. In the Japan 1966 study, the ambient day time temperature was 26C, and thus the trigger would not likely be day time temperature. This leaves night temperature (or soil temperature) as the likely trigger, or at least the most substantial trigger.

What seems to be happening with the Summer Rebloomers, is that the plants go directly from bud set to flowering, without need for either vernalization or photoperiod trigger. Thus the triggers for summer rebloom would seem to be the triggering of bud set. Bud set occurs not only in certain temperatures, but also at plant maturity. So the next question is how do we measure plant maturity? Since one method of measuring plant maturity at bloom is leaf count, this was tried. It turned out to be a very accurate measurement. So far it appears that each cultivar had its own leaf count at bloom time, regardless of where it is grown. Different cultivars have different leaf counts at bloom time. This can be a bit tricky to determine, but a few pointers will help.

Mature leaf count includes all leaves produced by the fan. This includes all dead leaves, including those cleaned off the plant. If you haven't cleaned plants during the season, then you can count the dead leaves, as well as green leaves. As the rebloom is on a fan that is new for the year this will work well if the garden hasn't been cleaned up during the season. If it has, then you can count the leaves that have been removed by the "leaf rings" on the rhizome. Each leaf actually encompasses the full top of the rhizome, and when removed leaves a **leaf scar**. These scars can be easily counted. So then count includes leaf scars plus green leaves.



Immortality - leaf scars





Immortality - stalk

The last leaf produced before bloom is actually on the flower **stalk**, but you don't see that until the flower stalk is visible (when this last leaf is just emerging from the fan.) It has a "**pregnancy hook**" at the leaf tip. This hook is actually a better sign of an impending bloom than feeling the base of the fan. I first learned of this from **Lloyd Zurbrigg**, and I believe he learned of it from **Percy Brown**.

This information of leaf count provides us with some useful information. First is that if the plant is not mature, it won't rebloom. Thus the old adage of water and feeding during summer carries a lot of weight. This extra growth means that you have more mature fans ready to respond to the temperature triggers for summer rebloomers and for the photoperiod triggers for the fall cyclic rebloomers. And of course, the more mature plants you have on the "whenever"

rebloomers, the more rebloom you will have. So feed and water. And supplemental light will also result in more growth, and thus more rebloom. This is why plants in a front garden by a street light rebloom better than those in a back garden.

A second, and more important fact for hybridizing, is that the lower the leaf count trigger for rebloom, (all other factors equal) the earlier you will get rebloom, and the more likely it is that that plant will rebloom in any given climate. Thus for selecting for breeding, it is best to select low leaf count plants for breeding. Fast maturing plants will also have an extra advantage. Using this information I have noted that the seedlings that rebloom the earliest from a cross are those that have the lowest leaf count. A couple of other reblooming hybridizers have done a leaf count on their seedlings and found the same thing. So for hybridizing, be sure at least one of the plants has a low leaf count trigger.

A mature plant will often not show its full leaf count, before rebloom is triggered by temperature. This past summer I kept a close watch on *Immortality* and *Queen Dorothy* (always the first SDB to bloom here). The fans just set there for the longest time, looking like they had about 8-9 leaves. Of course the plants had the other leaves developed, but hidden. The plant couldn't progress with growth until the flower bud was formed, allowing the last few leaves to mature. An interesting observation was that following three days of night time minimum above 15C, *Queen Dorothy* initiated rebloom. It was several weeks after this that I got 6 days in a row above 15C, and then *Immortality* was triggered into rebloom, followed quickly by other summer rebloomers. This suggests that different cultivars have different temperature needs to initiate bud set.

I'm including a chart of some of my observations from last fall's rebloom season. As this is just new information, there is the need for further observations. Hopefully others will do leaf counts and distribute their information.

A further point in regards to plant survival and minimum temperatures: One thing I noted was that as rebloom was triggered on summer rebloomers, there also was a sharp increase in growth of the daughter rhizomes. It seemed to correspond with the bud set. This has implications for iris grown in colder and hotter climates. In both climates, there are reports of plants just dwindling away over time, after an initial good year. The flower bud and increased on a first year plant have been set in the garden of origin. Subsequently, bud set and increases need to be set in the garden it is grown in. Thus if in cold climates, the minimum temperature is not high enough, the plant will not have bud set and increases sufficient to maintain the plant, and it will gradually fade away. Same in hot climates, but in reverse. That is it won't have cold enough night time minimums to initiate bud set and increases before



Immortality - pregnancy hook

daylight is too short to maintain growth. In hot climates I suspect supplemental light in late fall (when night temperatures are between 15-22C) could overcome this problem. Right now I have a number of volunteers from very cold climates (Canadian Prairies) who will engage in an experiment in testing this with a number of selected cultivars. It would be interesting to hear from growers in hot climates who would be willing to try supplemental light in fall, to see if this makes a difference for them. Interestingly, there are cultivars that do well in both cold and hot climates. My own *Garden Bride* is an excellent example of this.

Chart of Last Fall's Rebloom Season

TB

Queen Dorothy	12
Immortality	12
Pure As Gold	9
Clarence	11
Dorcus Lives Again	11
Again And Again	11
Red Revival	11
Then And Again	11
Violet Music	11
Blue Moonlight	13
Renascent	10
Misty Twilight	12
Rosalie Figge	13
Autumn Tryst	13
I Do	13
English Cottage	9
Pinkness	11
Brother Carl	12
Purple Magic	15
Sugar Blues	16
Lord Of Rings	12

Renown	13
Lilac Stitchery	12
Certainly Certainly	13
Buckwheat	15
Masterwork	16
Scorpio Star	15
Second Show	13
Sunny Disposition	13

SDB/ MDB

Autumn Jester	9
Forever Violet	9
Autumn Encore	9
Forever Blue	12

BB

Mid Summer Eve	9
October Splendor	15

IB

Precious Little Pink	9
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DON LOWRY

By Dorothy Stiefel of AIS Region 2 (New York)

Donald Ray Lowry, Chairman of the Board and co-founder of Lifetime Assistance, Inc., died at the age of 72 on Feb. 6, 2009. Don and his wife of 54 years, **Donna**, began a legacy in 1957, when their son was born with Down Syndrome. They “mainstreamed” their son before the term became popular, and before facilities for people with disabilities were available. Joining forces with several other parents of developmentally disabled children, the Lowrys formed Lifetime Assistance, Inc., an organization which grew into the Rochester area’s largest and most comprehensive developmental disability agency. Current CEO of Lifetime Assistance, **James Branciforte**, stated: “Don was front and center in the civil rights movement on behalf of people with developmental disabilities. He was willing to step up to the plate and be a voice for people who didn’t necessarily have a voice in the public arena.” (Rochester Democrat & Chronicle, Feb. 10, 2009). For their work with Lifetime, Don and Donna received many accolades, including the Greater Rochester Board Leadership Award, Oct. 2007; ESL/News 10 NBC Jefferson Award, May 2007; Rosalyn Carter Caregiver Award, May 2004; Lifetime Assistance Humanitarian Award, Nov. 2003; and New York State Rehabilitation Association (NYSRA) Martha Fitzpatrick Award, Sept. 2003.

While Don clearly considered his work with Lifetime his highest calling, he also took time to become involved in his hobby of gardening. He created the Greater Rochester Perennial Society and served as its president for nine years, and was past Chairman of the Board of Cornell Cooperative Extension in Monroe County.

Most of us knew Don best from his association with the Empire State Iris Society, and later, Region 2 of the American Iris Society. Both Don and Donna became life members of AIS, and they were responsible for the rebirth of an iris society in the Rochester area in 1999. Both became AIS judges and served until 2008, when Don’s illness and inability to travel made maintaining judges’ accreditation untenable. They were truly a team, serving as the Empire State Iris Society’s Auction Chairpersons and volunteering for the daunting task of maintaining a display garden of hybridizers **Tony and Dorothy Willott’s** iris introductions. Both Don and Donna gave freely of their time and resources to promote culture of the Iris, and received Regions 2’s highest honor, The Irwin A. Conroe Distinguished Service Award, in 2007. This past summer, the Greater Rochester Iris Society held their first AIS accredited show. Although Don was too ill even to stay through the judging, he managed to enter an iris in competition so that there would be enough exhibitors to meet the requirements for AIS awards. Region 2 irisarians will greatly miss this selfless man.

Don is survived by wife Donna, four sons, several grandchildren, and his mother **Bertha**. Memorial contributions in his honor may be made to: Donald R. and Donna J. Lowry Founder’s Fund, c/o Lifetime Assistance Foundation, Inc., 425 Paul RD, Rochester, NY 14624.

Note: This item is reprinted from a 2009 AIS Region 2 (New York) Newsletter. Don Lowry was a friend of the Canadian Iris Society and along with Donna attended iris functions and events in southern Ontario over the years. Don was truly a really nice guy and will be missed.





Don Lowry

American Iris Society (AIS) Region 16 2009 Fall Report

by Kate Brewitt, AIS Region 16 RVP

It's hard to believe the 2009 iris season is behind us. It always seems to pass too quickly. If you are like me, you will be spending the wintery months ahead catching up your 'iris' reading, drooling over iris catalogues and making iris wish lists...or perhaps adding to an already extensive wish list! Here are a couple more things for you to think about while you relax in your easy chair with your favourite beverage.

Special Membership Offer

(October 1, 2009 to September 30, 2010.) If a person/couple joins the AIS for a triennial single or dual membership, either a new membership, or a renewing membership from a single or dual one year membership, AND join at least one AIS Section (such as the Median Iris Society or the Siberian Iris Society) or Cooperating Society for a triennial membership, THEN all memberships will run for FOUR years for the price of THREE years.

Note: This special member discount plan will apply only to AIS Sections or Cooperating Societies that have agreed to accept the '*four-years-for-three*' discount. To date, only the Historic Iris Preservation Society (HIPS) section is not participating in this offer.

Mad About Wisconsin

It's time to start thinking about next year's AIS National Convention taking place May 31 to June 5 in Madison, WI. It will be hosted by the Madison Area Iris Society, an affiliate of AIS Region 8. Details about registration, accommodations and guest gardens can be found on their Convention website at www.madisoniris.org/Convention/Welcome.htm. Below is a brief description of each of the Convention Gardens. Hopefully this will tempt you to join us.

Breezeway Gardens – this eighty acre property of partially wooded land is set amid the rolling rural hills of Wisconsin. This is the location of the Convention's Master planting.

Skyline Garden – located on the property of **Herbie and Cathy Rowin** and owned and operated by the Madison Area Iris Society. There are about 1,200 varieties of irises PLUS 200 guest irises.



Meadowbrook Gardens – located in Waukesha, WI, and owned and operated by **Francis and Ruth Rogers**. Francis will be honoured at this year's convention for a lifetime dedicated to the promotion and hybridizing of irises. Three hundred guest irises have been planted in three beds.

Becker's Gardens – a private home located on five acres, deep in a wooded area in southeastern Wisconsin. Along with the owner's existing collection of over 1,000 irises, there will be another 400 guest irises on display.

Earthspirit Gardens – with forty separate gardens on several acres of land, the gardens overflow with huge collections of perennials; added to this are 300 guest irises.

Rotary Gardens – a famous 20 acre non-profit Botanical Garden located in Janesville, WI. Home to many themed gardens. There will be approximately 500 guest irises on display.

If you are interested in learning more about AIS Region 16, or the AIS, you can find more information on our website at <http://sites.google.com/site/aisregion16/>. You can also email me at aisrvp16@irises.org.



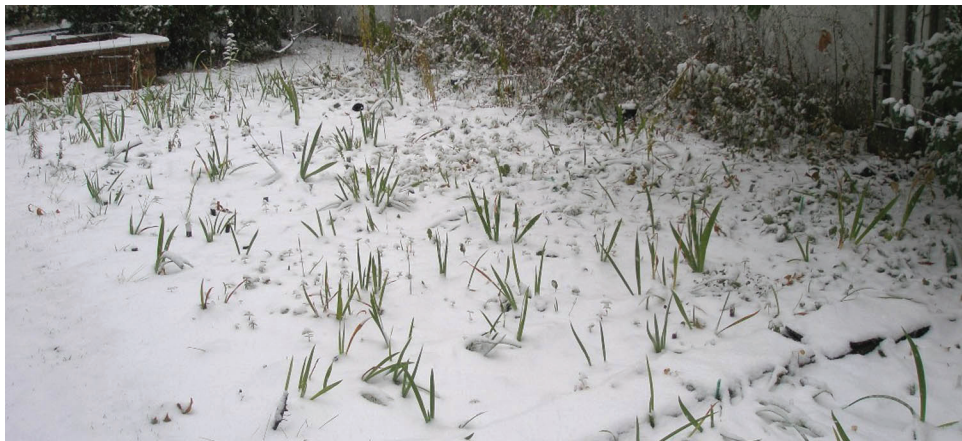
CIS Membership Message

Not sure of your Canadian Iris Society (CIS) membership term? Check your mailing label of the CIS newsletter for your current CIS membership term dates. If you receive the electronic version of the CIS Newsletter and you wish to know this information please e-mail the CIS membership chairman at cdn-iris@rogers.com and we will be pleased to advise you. Early renewals are always appreciated.

Musings From Manitoba

by Barbara-Jean Jackson

It was almost the summer that wasn't. 2009 left us soggy, and wet, and cold until September. Our first frost can occur anytime after August 25th so when there were just a handful of clear, warm and not windy days by then, I started to think of the season as the summer that wasn't. I had vacationed in Scotland for most of the month of August and was soggy and wet there almost every day, too. It was like I had never left home. Then September came and with it all the nice warm weather Mother Nature had been holding back from us.



Snowfall October 14, 2009 on one of BJs Iris Gardens

The garden was actually at its best in September. Daylilies, hosta, heuchera and others were outstanding for so late in the season. And not a single frost the entire month! Truly exceptional. Although there was no rebloom for me in south-western Manitoba, many others in other parts of the province, most notably the south-eastern areas experienced a good rebloom 2nd season. Once again I find myself experiencing “rebloom envy”. Perhaps next year.

And then came October and well below normal temperatures. It was a real chore trying to get motivated to do the garden cleanup and hence, it has not yet been done. As I write this on October 17th, the gardens are covered with several inches (actually 13 cm) of wet, sloppy SNOW (see photo). Several tree branches were broken and those that weren't were bent over grotesquely almost to the ground. The last few days my routine has included heavy socks in rubber boots as I go around the yard shaking snow from the trees and picking up broken branches with warm mittens under my leather work gloves. Needless to say, the conditions are not conducive even thinking about working outside! So, I wait for the promised return to normal temperatures and for the snow to be gone to clean up the gardens and get them ready for winter.

In other iris news, the Can-West Iris Society summer sale was a huge success. This year our major supplier was Sutton's Iris Gardens and we were very pleased with the quality and size of the rhizomes **Mike Sutton** sent including several new introductions and several more recently introduced varieties, all from the Sutton family of hybridizers. The sale, which is held on-line only, usually runs for a full week but it had to be closed early when we sold out of almost everything in just 4 days! That is definitely a record.

In addition, 9 CWIS members are participating in **Chuck Chapman's** 5 year cold climate TB trial. Our discussion group has been abuzz with chatter since it was announced and most of us have already submitted the data for August and September to him to start off the project. The project required an extension to my nursery bed to fit in all 20 rhizomes and I am very interested to hear the results once it is over.

So, as winter comes ever closer, it is time to update databases, organize pictures, plan for 2010, and try to stay warm. Here's hoping for a milder winter than last year that was the coldest and snowiest in recent memory.

Barbara-Jean Jackson
Brandon MB
jacksonb@mts.net



The Mission Statement:

The Can-West Iris Society is an on line group dedicated to the promotion of the genus iris in cold climates.

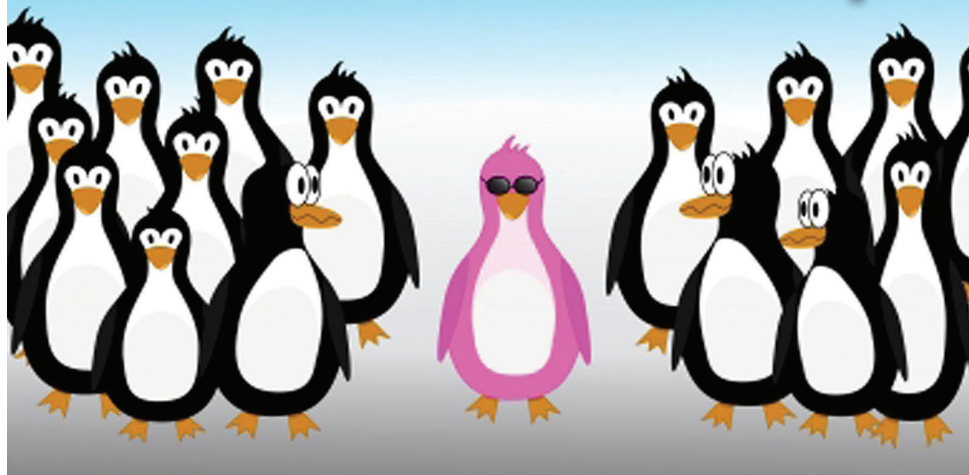
The Mandate:

- to promote interest in growing iris in cold climates
- to provide information needed to successfully grow different types of iris in cold climate areas through Society publications, access to the CWIS website exclusive members area, educational opportunities, a discussion group at Yahoo! (To subscribe to the discussion group send an e-mail message to CWIS_Open_Forum-subscribe@yahoogroups.com)
- to encourage iris hybridizing and recognize hybridizing achievements (in future).

Events:

- member open garden tours
- sale of iris rhizomes
- iris show and judges training

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Dates to Remember

Board of directors meeting RBG 1.30 p.m.

Sun Nov 15

A.I.S. Convention Victoria, B.C.

May 30 – Jun 04/11

For more details contact: tedbaker@shaw.ca

Join the American Iris Society

\$25.00 one year, \$60 for three years

Send payment to:

Tom Gormley

10606 Timber Ridge Street

Dubuque, IA USA 52001-8268

aismemsec@irises.org

or visit www.irises.org for more details



cis website
www.cdn-iris.ca

up to date information on CIS activities and many useful links to other iris sites and information

Canadian Sources for Irises

We provide this listing as a resource for our members and readers. This listing does not necessarily imply endorsement of the businesses by Canadian Iris Society (CIS). The sources listed have paid donations/contributions to help support the society. If you know of someone who should be added to the list please send the information to the editor. The listings in BOLD are members of the CIS

Chapman Iris

RR #1 8790 Wellington Road 124,
Guelph, ON N1H 6H7
Phone: (519) 856-4424
Email: chuck@chapmaniris.com
Website: www.chapmaniris.com
On-line or 2009 catalogue: \$3.00

McMillen's Iris Garden

RR1 285112 Pleasant Valley Rd.
Norwich ON N0J 1P0
Phone 1-866-468-6508
Email: gcmcmillen@execulink.com
e-mail or call for Price List

The Plant Farm

177 Vesuvius Bay Road
Salt Spring Island, BC V8K 1K3
Phone: 250-537-5995
Email: hello@theplantfarm.ca
Website: www.theplantfarm.ca
On-line catalogue

Trails End Iris Gardens

3674 Indian Trail,
RR#8
Brantford, Ontario N3T 5M1
Phone: 519-647-9746
Email: bob@trailsendirises.com
Website: www.trailsendiris.com
On-line catalogue

Liaisons and Regions

British Columbia Iris Society (BCIS)

Ted Baker, 185 Furness Rd., Salt Spring Island, BC V8K 1Z7
ph: 250-653-4430 www.bc-iris.org

Can-West Iris Society

B.J. Jackson, 2421 McDonald Avenue, Brandon, MB R7B 0A6,
ph: 204-725-4696 email: eleanore@mts.net

Halton/Peel Iris Society (HAPEIS)

Chris Hollinshead, 3070 Windwood Drive, Mississauga, ON L5N 2K3
ph: 905-567-8545 e-mail: cdn-iris@rogers.com

London Region Iris Society

Gloria McMillen, RR#1 Norwich, ON N0J 1P0
ph: 519 468-3279 email: info@mcmillensirsgarden.ca
Please inquire for membership and group activities.

Northern Lights Iris Society (NLIS)

Virginia Prins, 296 Furby St, Winnipeg MB, R3C 2A9
e-mail: inanda1@mts.net www.nlris.ca

Ottawa River Iris Society (ORrIS)

Maureen Mark, 1077 Guertin Avenue, Ottawa, ON K1H 8B3
ph: (613) 521-4597 e-mail: mmark@rogers.com

American Iris Society

AIS Region 16 RVP

Kate Brewitt, 120 Glass Drive, Aurora, ON L4G 2E8
ph: 905 841-9676 e-mail: justonemoreiris@yahoo.ca

AIS Region 16 Judges Training

Sandy Ives, 1077 Guertin Avenue, Ottawa, ON K1H 8B3
ph: 613 521-4597 email: rives@rogers.com

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