

Tucson Area Iris Society



June 2016

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TUCSONIRIS.ORG

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Tucson's World of Iris

Reminders for June

There will be no meeting this month.

Your list of donated iris for the
September sale due by **June 11th.**
(see pages 2 and 3)

Mark your calendar - August 20th
at Tucson Botanical Garden - for
our next big meeting.



President's Message:

Please start planning for the September Sale. What do you want to dig and bring? Email a first draft of your list to Roger Osgood, Kathi Windischman, or me in the next 2 weeks. If you have pictures, email them to us also. We will be displaying the large rhizomes in plastic shoe boxes and will have grab bags of the smaller and older varieties. Greta gave us the list of what needs to be dug at Tucson Botanical Gardens beds and we have enough volunteers to dig and mark the TBG rhizomes on September 17th.

Gordon Jenson will need volunteers to help with his irises. He will let us know which mornings that he needs help.

We had 12 members at the May potluck and general meeting. We discussed and accepted the changes to the bylaws. Thanks, Gary and Roger! Roger recorded the meeting and will be sending me the minutes. Members will receive them later. I also read the Southwestern Report from our Reblooming Iris Society director Bill Molnar describing how to use ice to chill the soil of rebloomers to help them rebloom earlier and more reliably in our climate. By October 1st, I need to send a list of the irises that have rebloomed for us here in the Tucson area since October 2015. I have several and our TBG beds have 2. If you had rebloom, please send me a list.

Another reminder: If you are a member of Tall Bearded Iris Society, your votes for America's Choice are due by June 30th.

I received a call from my friends in Las Cruces, NM. Mesilla Iris Society will be hosting a Trek for the Aril Bred Iris Society in April 2017. Arils and Aril Bred irises grow very well in our climate. We may want to get a couple of cars of members and attend that 2 day event as long as it doesn't interfere with the date of our exhibition.

I got an email from Jerry James at Peaceful Acres Iris Garden. Because they are selling their place in the country and moving into town, he will be selling his irises at \$2 each this year. Anyone interested?

Roger will be sending the newsletter in both June and July, but we will not meet again until the Potluck, Auction and Club Iris Presentations at TBG on August 20th. Have a wonderful summer!

Kristee

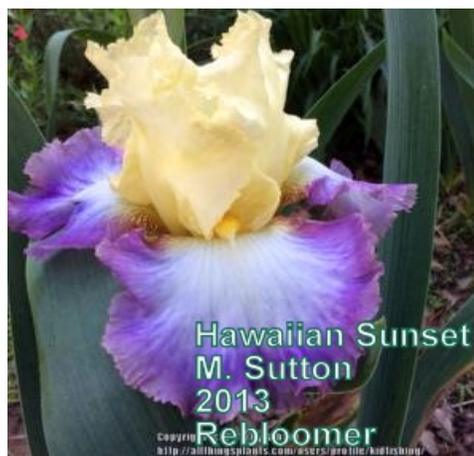
Reminder time: It's time to walk your garden.

We need your list of the iris you intend to donate to this years September sale. Please have this list to us by E-mail on, or before, JUNE 11th.

We also ask that you take, or locate a high pixel, good resolution photo of each iris (4 x 6) which will be on display with the rhizome. We need time to add information to the photos using Picasa 3 and then laminate them for use in future years. This will create many hours of work for Kristee and Roger, so be proactive on this request, please.

This photo of **Hawaiian Sunset** was taken in my Yuma garden in April (photo courtesy of Steven Ginter). Notice the close-up of the bloom which shows better than a photo taken from too many feet away. The colors appear true. Photo is clear.

After choosing the photo, it was downloaded into the Picasa 3 program where the iris name, hybridizer name and year of introduction are added. This is then saved to a thumb drive. We will have the photos of the entire collection printed in a standardized 4 x 6 format and then they will be laminated. As you can see, there will be many hours of work involved this first year, to get everything started and ready by August.



A little garden humor.

Terminology

Can you define PLICATA?

How about BATIK?

These are terms our judges know all too well. Care to take an educated guess?

An example of Batik was found at our show in April. Do you know which iris it was?

Look for your answers next issue, or head for the AIS website, if you can't wait.



Birthdays to Celebrate– June

Diane Tweedy June 4

*Your mind is a garden, your thoughts are the seeds.
You can grow flowers, or you can grow weeds.*

Author Unknown

An important heads up for TAIS members.

We would like to send our sale iris home in paper bags this year instead of the traditional re-cycled plastic bags. We don't want those rhizomes to sweat while being left in the garage until time of planting.

Most grocery stores will give you a choice of **paper, or plastic**. Won't you please choose paper for the next couple of months and save the bag for our September sale? This will help us a lot as we won't have to buy any bags. Free is good!

Fry's is great. They are completely willing to put everything in bags for me. I have over 2 dozen in just a few weeks. Don't forget to say "thanks".



Albertson was just added to the free bag list. (I don't often shop there.)

The Bearded Family of Iris

This article is written for our friends and members who are new to the world of iris. Each month we will focus on a specific genus. Next month will be Louisiana's. This issue is the bearded iris family.

Growing iris in the desert is fairly simple as they are naturally drought resistant plants. Kristee, our president is fond of saying, "Yes, iris do grow in the desert." Because of our extreme temperatures, some experimentation is necessary to provide the best possible environment for them.

Tall Bearded	TB	over 27.5"
Border Bearded	BB	16" to 27.5"
Miniature Tall Bearded	MTB	16" to 27.5"
Intermediate Bearded	IB	16" to 27.5"
Standard Dwarf Bearded	SDB	8 to 16"
Miniature Dwarf Bearded	MDB	up to 8"
Arils and Aril bred		



Gypsy Lord
2016 Dykes Medal Winner

The American Iris Society (AIS) has divided the bearded iris into 8 groups for garden judging awards.

The bloom we all enjoy is composed of many elements, however the three standards (the upright petals), the 3 three falls (the petals drooping downward) and the beard are most visible. Notice the beautiful red-orange beard on Gypsy Lord.

Obviously "bearded" comes from the prominent "bushy finger" found at the intersection of the standards and falls. This distinguishes this family of iris from other iris varieties, which have no beards. Beards can be many colors. Did you know that a "true red" iris does not exist?

Planting bearded iris: Some sites suggest planting the rhizome with 1/3 still above the soil line. Tucson gardeners would probably recommend you place it level with the soil and even allow a slight dusting of soil to cover the rhizome. This helps prevent blistering from our scorching sun.

When will my iris bloom?: Bloom season for the bearded iris can vary. TB typically bloom later than the smaller iris. Mid March and into May is typical for our Tucson area.

Other things to consider: Iris prefer at least 6 hours of sun, or more. Older cultivars have tolerated more shade than newer varieties.

Iris prefer well drained, neutral to slightly acidic soil. Standing water is death to the rhizome. It is a very drought resistant plant, although I find daily water in hot climates is desirable for the plant's health. Mine enjoy a drip irrigation system

Keep your nitrogen under 10. Too much leads to bacterial rot and lush, but weak foliage.

Re-bloomers are a recent introduction to the "bearded iris" family. With proper cultivation, you should see two bloom periods in the same season.



Spot Light on Publicity

Melania Kutz is our current Publicity Chair

Melania and her husband, Tony, have been Tucson residents since 1974. She attributes her love of gardening to her mother who had extensive flower gardens back in Michigan where she grew up.

Melania saw a Tucson newspaper article about an iris event in 1986, she attended and the rest is history.

The **publicity chair** is one of the most demanding of our volunteer positions because of the scope of work to be done. Work never ceases. She has filled this position for the past four years. Programs and speakers need to be selected, venues to hold the events need to be found and any equipment we need for the presentation has to be organized. These 7 meetings are just the beginning. Then, we add a Spring Iris Show and a huge September Iris Sale to her workload. This could only be accomplished by a dedicated and focused volunteer. Melania attributes much of her knowledge and success to Maxine Fifer who, for over a year, shared her vast knowledge of how to plan and organize the events, while they transitioned into their chair positions.

Additional responsibilities on her job description include some of the following:

- . Creates posters and advertising copy for media release at appropriate times.
- . Maintains appropriate entries on the TAIS WEB Page. Tony Kutz, our photographer, submits many photos for the enjoyment of our readers.
- . Partners with other clubs to place our events in their newsletters, and theirs in ours.
- . Communicates with the club President and newsletter editor to ensure timely information is getting published.
- . Maintains a current list of free and fee based advertising opportunities and places timely news releases in available publications.

Thank you so much, Melania, for all that you do for us.

There is always a test. Did you study the parts of the bloom in the last issue? Remember our guests rely on us to give correct information when they ask us questions at our shows. Education is the primary focus of our society. See if you can correctly identify the parts of the iris. I have helped you with the obvious standards and falls.

Bearded Iris Flower Parts

Standards– there are 3 _____

Falls– there are 3 _____



So! How did you do?

I give myself _____ % on this quiz.

Help Wanted

We are seeking **LETTERS TO THE EDITOR** from our membership. Your voice and input make our club what it is. Informative and exciting.

As editor, I never intended that my voice be the only voice to be heard. Please, won't you volunteer to write a short article that is of interest to you, or perhaps an article that might help one of our newer members get started on the right path of iris care. Photos are always welcome, too.

We should never take anything, or anyone for granted. What appeared yesterday, can disappear tomorrow. As my mother used to say: "You never miss the water until the well runs dry!" Keep our newsletter alive.

Dots and Splashes was featured in our April issue as one of the iris being grown in our Test Iris Program... TIP. I thought you might like to see how this 2015 iris is doing in the heat of Yuma. This photo was taken 4/28/16 after only 6 months in the ground. It gets full sun every day

AIS describes the color as palest lavender, but this appears to be purple-blue. Could it be the soil composition? Too acidic? The color is much stronger than the hybridizer's description. It's still a lovely iris.



Photo courtesy of Steven Ginter

By laws and pot luck General Meeting on May 28th

Although we were few in number, the food was great and the socializing brought about a great deal of laughter. The Wilmot library was a great meeting space.

A discussion of proposed by laws, led by Gary Carruthers disclosed only a few concerns. The biggest change was suggesting our Executive Committee be the four executive officers and (**no more than six directors**) and the past president. Also, three new chairs were officially added: Trek, Photographer and Web Monitor. Tony is now formally recognized for his contributions as photographer to TAIS and Susan Oates will officially work with our Web Master to insure our web site is always up to date. An amendment concerning transitioning "nominated" positions into "elected" positions needs further study and approval.