

July 2024

# TAIS Newsletter

Tucson Area Iris Society - established 1965

Our 59th year

An Affiliate of the American Iris Society



## President's Message

Who has inspired you? Who have you inspired? Long-time friend and TAIS member Gary Carruthers passed away on May 31st. Thirty years ago while driving through a different neighborhood, I saw an incredible flower-filled Tucson front yard. As I came to know the owner, Gary, he amazed me with his vast gardening skills and knowledge. He gave me some of my first iris and told me about a group in Tucson called TAIS that specializes in iris. The rest is a wonderful iris history for me. So share a rhizome or two and some culture information with somebody: a friend, neighbor, relative, coworker, or anyone else that you think of. Inspire somebody to grow iris, or anything else, and maybe they will join TAIS and continue the journey. The world always needs more beauty. - Kevin Kartchner

**SPU 'Line Dancing'  
(Jenkins, 2007)**

**Nies Medal 2017 -  
the highest medal for spuria**

Marcusen Sculpture Gardens,  
Prescott, Arizona

Photo by Sue Clark, 2024

*"When the heat like a mist veil floats,  
And poppies flame in the rye, And the silver  
note in the streamlet's throat  
Has softened almost to a sigh. It is July."* - Susan Hartley Swett (1843-1907)

## Upcoming Events

**July:** no meeting. Check out our website at [Tucsoniris.org](http://Tucsoniris.org)

**August 10:** 1 PM, Tucson Botanical Garden's Education Room, Rhizome Auction for members only. Rhizomes from Mid-America Garden and the Region 15 Spring Trek

**Rhizome Sale:** September 21, 9 AM to noon (or when we run out), Harlow Gardens, 5620 E. Pima. Members-only discount hour = 8 to 9 AM. Do you have any excess rhizomes to contribute?

### Birthday Wishes to:

**Pam Court    Evelyn Jacobs    Nancy McKean**  
**Randy Bixby    Julie Pacquing**  
**Candice Hill Crouch    Jessamyn Stinchfield**

**We were saddened to learn of the passing of longtime TAIS member Gary Carruthers on May 31**



*Iris kaempferi*

Source: Childs rare flower catalog

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# More from our Iris Show - photos by Dave Smith



# More from the Show - photos by Sue Clark



Row 1: Cathy and Sally, 'Midnight Velvet,' & 'Revere'  
 Row 2: Sue's arrangement and Japanese Shippo kenzans

Row 3: Arrangements by: Diane Pavlovich, Cristina Bartoldi, and another by Diane



ARRANGEMENTS  
 Class 6  
 "Anthony and Cleopatra"  
 (Far East Market, Free S...)

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# Kevin's Garden Tour - photos by Sally Vega



# Treasurer's Report for June - submitted by Jim Wilcoxon

<u>MAY 2024</u>	<u>YTD</u>
<u>DUES</u>	
INC	+595.00 TOTAL INC FROM DUES
EXP	-13.60 postage
	-36.00 refreshments
	-500.00 web
	-213.41 books
	-45.00 AIS
	-120.00 region 15
	-928.01 TOTAL EXP FROM DUES <b>-293.01 ACT BALANCE</b>
<u>SHOW</u>	
INC	539.27 square sales
	795.00 cash sales
	1334.27
EXP	39.14 TAIS show expenses
	441.02 ROSE SOC
	480.16 TOTAL SHOW EXPENSES <b>+854.11 ACT BALANCE</b>
<u>SALE</u>	
INC	+339.48 rhizomes
EXP	-2483.73 rhizomes
	-2144.25 TOTAL SALE EXPENSES <b>-2144.25 ACT BALANCE</b>
<u>AUCTION</u>	
INC	0.00
EXP	0.00
<b>CHECKBOOK BALANCE 30 JUNE 2024 \$9413.24</b>	



Source: [8ee715ce0f2b53c3e58326d898662826.jpg](https://www.flickr.com/photos/8ee715ce0f2b53c3e58326d898662826.jpg)

## Beneficial Garden Insects, Part II: Green Lacewings

This month's beneficial insect is the green lacewing, which although it may not have the iconic good looks of the ladybug, it can eat aphids and other soft-bodied insects about 20 times faster! Lacewings descend from insects that appeared during the Jurassic period (about 201 - 145 million years ago).

Adult lacewings are rather delicate-looking, with a thin, bright-green body and slender transparent wings which typically have a network of green veins through them. They are approximately 3/4" long. Some of the 1,300-2,000 species are nocturnal, while others are *crepuscular*, meaning they they are active during the twilight intervals of dusk and/or dawn. They feed on pollen, nectar, and honeydew (excretions from aphids). Some species also eat aphids and mites. Lacewings lay their eggs at night, usually on the undersides of leaves of aphid-infested plants. The small white eggs are on slender stalks. The ferocious larvae are known as aphid lions, aphid wolves, or alligators. They are brown or gray and look similar to ladybug larvae. Their diet includes aphids, caterpillars, insect eggs, and often one another. They may even take a quick nip of a human. Lacewing larvae secrete a substance into their prey which quickly dissolves the insects' internal organs. Following the larval stage of 2-4 weeks, the pupa lasts from 1-3 weeks.

Some types of lacewings can eat up to 60 aphids in a day and others about 150 in their lifetime. They are sold as a beneficial insect to aid in control of aphids, mites, caterpillars, whiteflies, thrips, and scale. Lacewings are offered as eggs so that they do not eat one another during transit. You can order lacewing eggs [here](#) or [here](#). Some important considerations are to avoid pesticides, especially systemic and broad-spectrum types, and to have an adequate source of prey to feed your lacewing guests. Attract the adults by growing asters, coreopsis, cosmos, dill, yarrow, sunflowers, and dandelions. They particularly like flowers with [umbels](#). - SC

Sources: Wikipedia article: 'Chrysopidae,' [Green Lacewing Eggs in Rice Hull - Aphid Exterminator - NaturesGoodGuys](#), [Lacewings - Evergreen Growers Supply, LLC](#), [Green Lacewing | Biological Pest Control for Aphids \(arbico-organics.com\)](#), [Master gardener in training: Ladybugs are good, but lacewings and mantises may be better - Los Angeles Times \(latimes.com\)](#), [Attract Lacewings Video](#)



Above: close-up of lacewing larvae eating an aphid. It is this predatory stage that is most helpful in the garden (image by Eric Steinert, [Wiki-media](#)). An adult lacewing (Source 4). Note the veined wings and golden eyes

**TAIS OFFICERS, ETC. FOR 2024**

Kevin Kartchner - President  
 Cindy Long - Vice President  
 Sue Clark – Secretary, Signatory on Account  
 Jim Wilcoxon – Treasurer, Asst. Secretary  
 Diane Pavlovich & Sally Vega - Programs & Publicity  
 Cindy Long, Linda Briggs, Kathleen Marron,  
 and Evelyn Jacobs - Hospitality  
 Bonnie Else and Susan Schaefer - Door Prizes  
 Taffy Holvenstot - Membership  
 Dave Smith - Photographer  
 Sue Clark - Newsletter

### What to do in the Iris Garden during July:

**Maintenance:** Be sure irises receive afternoon shade. Monitor soil with moisture meter and water irises when it reads close to dry. Check for aphids and other pests. Remove pests, weeds, and debris. Replace faded labels so you don't lose the names of your irises. Cut off all spent stems near base using scissors to avoid damaging the rhizome. They can act as a pest and disease vector. Remove spuria stems - since they remain green, they take nutrients from the plant per Jim Hedgecock of [Comanche Acres Iris Garden](#), e-newsletter, 6/8/24.

**Organic care:** Feed with fish emulsion every other week and with feather meal and alfalfa meal (or pellets) monthly. Apply humic acid as desired.

**Non-Organic care:** No fertilizer required till fall except for reblooming irises - feed these in June or July and continue to water them. - SC



### Tip Exchange

If you have considered certifying your yard as a wildlife habitat, this is the month to do it and save money! Wild Birds Unlimited stores have teamed up with the National Wildlife Federation during National Pollinator Month (June) and July. Use code GARDEN20 to receive 20% off the \$20 fee until July 31. Dave and I certified our yard, as well as our yard in Tucson when we had a house there. I also certified the schoolyard where I taught. The [online application process](#) is easy. Just have these essentials in place in your garden: food (native plants, feeders), water (birdbath, pond, or fountain), cover (shrubs and trees), places to raise young (bird houses, trees), and sustainable practices (think environmentally-friendly - rain barrel, compost, rain garden). - SC

### Iris Limerick

There once was a man named Joe  
 Who gardened with a pick and a hoe.  
 He grew lots of flowers  
 And spent many hours  
 Giving breeding red irises a go.  
 - Sue Clark



Source: Prof. Dr. Otto Wilhelm Thome & Flora von Deutschland, Österreich und der Schweiz 1885, Gera, Germany

### Did You Know?

There are two [shops](#) associated with the Tucson Botanical Gardens. Their on-site gift shop features many items by local artists, while the Gardens' Green Shop around the corner in the former Fry's shopping center at Grant and Alvernon features garden tools, hats, compost materials, hummingbird feeders, garden bells, and numerous other interesting things. Thank you to Terry for suggesting that these shops be highlighted in the newsletter. - SC

"Hark, the honeybee's low hum Tells us that  
 the summer's come!" -Frank Dempster Sherman (1860-1916)



### A Little Bit of Botany and Iris History

In 1920, Iris names were a big mess and this was part of the reason that the American Iris Society was founded. The earliest mention of the mess dates back to 1851, but it most likely began well before that. Bearded irises had waned in popularity in the late 1800's and were surpassed by the exotic Japanese irises and other newly-discovered irises. All, of course, had their own naming challenges.

Hardy perennials became popular again after the dawn of the 20th century, with irises amongst them. Because irises were now in demand, they were studied, and the naming issues became more apparent. Different irises bore the same names, many named varieties were similar to one another, and wholesalers were renaming older types to jazz up their names and make them stand out.

This situation was not unique to irises. The American Joint Committee on Horticultural Nomenclature put out a reference book called [Standardized Plant Names](#) in 1923. Their purpose was to set one standardized scientific name and one standardized common name "for every tree, shrub, and plant in American commerce..." This also involved setting mechanisms in motion for "registration and identification of horticultural varieties." One of their goals was to reduce the confusion of names which ultimately led to the public and the trade over-using common plants to the exclusion of many more worthy specimens.

Peony names had been successfully sorted out just prior to this by planting a test garden at Cornell University and using direct visual comparisons of plants and blossoms to those named varieties in the test garden. Many members of the fledgling American Iris Society were also members of the American Peony Society and they set their sites on doing the same for irises - and sooner rather than later. The first AIS checklist is coming! More next month... - SC

Source: "The Origins of the American Iris Society Check Lists" by Anner Whitehead in *AIS 100 Years Bold*, Supplement 2 of 4 to *IRISES: the Bulletin of AIS*, 2020