



May 2025

Newsletter

Tucson Area Iris Society - established 1965

Our **60th** year

An Affiliate of the American Iris Society



'Spring Elegance'
(Tasco, 2018)

Marcusen Sculpture Gardens,
Prescott, Arizona

Photo by Sue Clark, 2024

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President's Message

What a show! We had more flowers displayed than I can recall from many years gone by. We had beautiful arrangements and plenty of potted iris for sale. Thanks to so many of you who do so much work to put on a spectacular show from creating the schedule, months of potted plant care, transportation of all the show materials, the venue setup, the flower entries, moving the entries to the display area, the arrangements, the clerks, the cashiers, huge cleanup, and more. Thanks!

Remember to take iris photos to enter in our Fall contest. The summer survival season will be here soon.

On the sad side, longtime TAIS member Tony Kutz passed away recently. Tony was very active in TAIS and other gardening groups for many years. Please reply to the newsletter with your memories of Tony.

- Kevin Kartchner

*"Oh! fragrant is the breath of May In
tranquil garden closes, And soft yet regal is
her sway Among the springtide roses."*



– William Hamilton Hayne (1856–1929)

Upcoming Events

May 10: Noon. TAIS meeting and 60th Anniversary Luncheon, 6940 E. Loma del Bribo (Sunrise Mountain Ridge subdivision)

June and July - no meetings. Newsletters will continue

August 9: 1 PM. TAIS Rhizome Auction. Details to be announced

September 13: 9 AM to Noon. TAIS Rhizome Sale at Harlow's Gardens nursery, 5620 E Pima Street. Set up Sept 12

Birthday Wishes to:

Kevin Kartchner Wendy O'Rourke
Cheryl Modaff Margie Valenzuela
Rand Craft Tim Krone

We regret the passing of Tony Kutz & hospitalization of Melania Kutz



Iris ensata: Japanese iris

Source: Biodiversity Heritage Library

Report from the Iris Show



19 April 2025 - Our third judged show in three years was held in a room completely filled with flowers, as it occurred in conjunction with the Rose Society of Tucson. Majestic stalks of irises lined both sides of a long table and ten artistic arrangements lined another. Besides tall bearded, we had historic tall bearded, Japanese, Louisiana, spuria, dwarf, miniature tall bearded, and two potted iris. Kevin brought the most entries and won 36 blue ribbons, as well as Queen of Show with 'Center Ice.' Terry's Japanese iris, 'Blue Embers,' won a rosette for Best in Section, and Kevin's 'Epicenter' won Best in Section for Historic irises. Other blue-ribbon winners were Susan (2), Dan (2), Pat (2), Cathy (2), Don Murphy (1), and me (1). In the Artistic Division, Dave won a red ribbon, Cindy won a red and a

white, Diane a red, and I won a white, four blue, and a rosette for Best Artistic Design.

Sales of potted irises were not as brisk as they were last year, possibly because there were less attendees due to Easter weekend.

Cathy, Cindy, and Dave carried the prepared stalks downstairs to the show table. Joyce and Cathy served as clerks who placed ribbons and rosettes, punched the appropriate space to indicate awards on each item's tag, and wrote a summary of the judge's comments on the back of the tags. Dave and I tallied the total numbers of entries in each category, the total awards in each, and the total number of exhibitors. These statistics will be submitted to AIS. Seven people exhibited irises, five contributed artistic arrangements, and I did a

bit of both.

Kevin arranged for the local PBS station to visit the show. Both he and Terry provided interviews, and many flowers were filmed.

Thank you to everyone who helped make the show a success! Terry as the organizer, Diane who initially suggested combining it with the Rose Society's show, Sam and Jim for being cashiers, Joyce and Cathy for clerking, Linda and Cindy for the breakfast snacks, Cathy, Cindy and Dave for ferrying the stalks to the tables, Pat for being an apprentice judge, and everyone who helped with set-up and take-down. And to those who tended potted irises to sell: Terry, Joyce, Sally, Susan, Kristee, and Kathy. And especially to all those who brought irises to display. Thank you to the Rose Society for hosting lunch from Baggins this year. I apologize if I missed anyone who helped or won prizes.

Several individuals were first-time TAIS Show entrants: Cindy, Don Murphy (whose named seedling was displayed by Pat), Jennifer Hearnese, and Pat. Approximately 85 stalks were displayed. All in all, an excellent show!

- Sue Clark, secretary



**Queen of Show
was Kevin's
'Center Ice'**



**We're on the web:
Tucsoniris.org**

TAIS Iris Show - photos by Dave Smith



TAIS Iris Show - photos by Dave Smith



Queen of Show =
'Center Ice' exhibited
by Kevin Kartchner

Best of Section Historic
= 'Epicenter' exhibited
by Kevin Kartchner

Best of Section
Beardless = 'Blue
Embers' Japanese iris
exhibited by
Terry Swartz

Two Potted irises =
'Rim of the World' and
'Above it All' exhibited
by Cathy Pane-Scire

Our Sale table!

Treasurer's Report for April - submitted by Jim Wilcoxon

11,680.37 beginning balance

Income

400.54 Square sales (show)

872.00 Cash sales (show)

15.00 dues

1,287.54 TOTAL

Expenses

280.00 60th Anniversary

140.00 cash for show

677.00 Region 15

25.00 Region 15

1,122.00 TOTAL

11,680.37 Beginning balance

1,287.54 Income

12,967.91 Sub Total

- 1,122.00 Expenses

11,845.91 Ending Balance

Net Profit from Show = \$552.01

A Few Things I Learned from This Year's Show

Some Trader Joe's stores will not permit you to pre-order flowers during a holiday week, such as Easter week

If doing arrangements, bring along a few extra vases in case of breakage. I bumped my tall blue glass vase with a box and it smashed the low bowl container that Dave was going to use

Bring some extra foliage in case some types didn't travel well

I brought and exhibited the last blossom of one of my Louisiana irises since it was something other than a tall bearded and it won a blue ribbon

Writing tags out in advance means one less thing to do at the Show

A Few Ideas for Next Time

On the Queen's Table, all section winners could surround the Queen of Show and thus be displayed in a place of honor

Request that three or four individuals volunteer as Runners to ferry irises from exhibitors to the show tables - SC

TAIS Member Downsizing Iris Collection

Dan Schroeder is reducing his iris collection and TAIS members get first dibs. You may view them in his garden while they are blooming. Make your list now for fall digging. Email taisnewsletter@yahoo.com for Dan's contact information.

Some of what will be available for purchase:

Tall Bearded:

['My Generation'](#) Re
['Johnny Come Lately'](#)
['Peach Jam'](#) Re
['Lady Friend'](#) Re
['Funday Monday'](#)
['Fine Wine'](#)
['Dating a Royal'](#)
['Drifting'](#)

Space Age TBs:

['Poppa John'](#)
['Bye Bye Blues'](#)
['Battlestar Atlantis'](#)
['Wings at Dawn'](#)

Photos at right by Dan



An April Morning in Terry's Garden - photos by Dave Smith



More of Terry's Garden - photos by S. Clark (roses) & Lois Shoaf (irises)



Roses, from top right:
Belle Story, Dainty Bess,
Peace, and Fired Up



Irises: 'Just for Ken' (below), 'Oso Good' (right), 'Deep in Love' with
Allium nigrum (lower right)



TAIS OFFICERS, ETC. FOR 2025

Kevin Kartchner - President

Cindy Long - Vice President

Sue Clark – Secretary, Signatory on Account

Jim Wilcoxon – Treasurer, Asst. Secretary

Pat Olsen & Sally Vega - Programs & Places

Diane Pavlovich - Publicity

Cindy Long, Linda Briggs, and Evelyn Jacobs - Hospitality

Bonnie Else & Susan Schaefer - Door Prizes

Taffy Holvenstot - Membership

Dave Smith - Photographer

Sue Clark - Newsletter

What to do in the Iris Garden during May:

Maintenance: Remove spent stems near base using scissors. 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. Update or create a map of your iris beds and containers in case labels fade or disappear. Replace faded labels.

Organic care: Apply Spring dose of green sand (1 T) and bone meal (1 T) (the latter is **NOT** for Japanese irises!). Add fish emulsion every other week. Mix as on package. Humic acid improves soil texture. Apply anytime.

Non-organic care: Feed with a send-off dose of SuperBloom or equivalent, as the rhizomes set buds by six weeks post-bloom. - SC



Tip Exchange

Aphids are small pear-shaped winged insects whose soft bodies are usually green, yellow, or black. They tend to assemble in clusters on iris buds, leaves, or stems. Because they suck out the plant's juices, growth is stunted and leaves become distorted. Remove aphids with strong blasts of water or by placing your fingers on either side of the base of a leaf and sliding them upwards. Insecticidal soap is another option. Source: [Most Common Iris Plant Pests: Identification and Treatment Guide | Live to Plant](#)

Iris Limerick

There was once a rare first edition
Found in amazingly good condition.
It's about irises that are Dutch.
I read it and learned much
From that iris-filled rare first edition.
- Sue Clark

Did You Know?

There are at least two iris destinations in the Denver area. Chatfield Farms, 8500 W Deer Creek Canyon Road, Littleton, Colorado, is a 700-acre refuge of native plants and a working farm which was started in the 1800's. Their iris collection includes historical varieties dating back to the 1600's and many other bearded types. Peak bloom is mid-May to June 7. The farm is owned by the Denver Botanic Gardens, which also has irises in their main location at 1007 York Street in Denver. Source: [Chatfield Farms website](#)



Irises, including *I. ensata*

Source: [getarchive.net](#)

"Happiness? The color of it must be spring green."



— Frances Mayes

A Little Bit of Botany and Iris History

In 1924, George M. Reed, a PhD botanist, took charge of a test garden for beardless irises, including Japanese irises, for the American Iris Society at the Brooklyn Botanic Garden. By 1926, he had assembled a collection of Japanese irises from one British and eight American growers, including 82 varieties from John Childs of Flowerfields in Queens, New York. AIS helped to fund a trip that Reed made to Japan in 1930 to study this species in more detail, including its history, culture, breeding, nomenclature, etc. During the five months that he was in Japan, he visited nurseries and gardens and helped to establish a Japanese Iris Society.

The collection at the Brooklyn Botanic Garden grew to 350 varieties of Japanese irises, as well as other beardless irises. This Garden and the New York State Institute of Applied Agricultural worked together to establish the Farmingdale Iris Garden on Long Island in 1935. With regards to this new installation, Dr. Reed reported, "In contrast to the behavior of the Tall Bearded iris, the Japanese, Siberian, and miscellaneous species have given very fine results." Some of these were potted and shown at the 1939-1940 World's Fair in Queens, New York, which is widely regarded as the "most spectacular exposition ever held in the United States."

Dr. Reed retired and moved to Pittsburgh in 1946, where he established a planting of Japanese irises in the Phipps Conservatory. All were stolen or lost. In fact, his gardens of Japanese irises at the Brooklyn Botanic Garden and at Farmingdale have all disappeared. - SC

Sources: [The Japanese Iris](#), 1990, by Currier McEwen, published by the University Press of New England for the Brandeis University Press, © by the Japanese Iris Society; and [Archives of the NY Public Library](#)