

# Newsletter of the Capital Hudson Iris Society

Volume 24

Number 6

June 2017

## *\* 2017 Calendar \** *Mark your calendars now!*

**Saturday, June 3<sup>rd</sup>:** Iris Show at the Bethlehem Public Library, Delmar, 2-4 pm. Arrive at 10 if you want to show irises!

**Wednesday, August 2<sup>nd</sup>:** 9:00 – 12:00  
Rhizome Prep party at Euthemia's in preparation for Rhizome Sale at Faddegon's Saturday, August 5<sup>th</sup>. Dig your bearded irises that are ready to divide, label them and bring them to the Digging Party so we can get them ready for the sale.

**Saturday, August 5<sup>th</sup>:** 9:00 – 12:00  
Annual Iris Rhizome Sale at Faddegon's Nursery, 1140 Troy-Schenectady Road, Latham, New York.

**Now is the time to go into your garden and see what is blooming, what is ready to be divided, and put a string around the ones you want to dig for the rhizome sale.**

***Don't forget the IRIS SHOW  
Saturday, June 3<sup>rd</sup>!***

*\* Join the American Iris Society \**  
[www.irises.org](http://www.irises.org)

## **Annual Iris Show Saturday, June 3, 2-4 p.m.**

The annual Capital Hudson Iris Society Show will be held Saturday, June 3<sup>rd</sup>, at the Bethlehem Public Library, 451 Delaware Avenue, in Delmar. The show is open to the public from 2-4 p.m. Members bring their prize irises, cut that morning (usually) and the display is just breathtaking. Be sure to come and bring your family and friends – all ages enjoy this beautiful show.

If you want to show a named iris that is growing in your garden, get to the library at 10:00 when they open. You'll have until 11:30 to prep and label your irises (you'll need all that time) before the judging begins. If you've never entered an iris in a show, other members will be there to assist you in how to groom your flowers so that they look good for the judges. It's not hard to do, but it's important to get the stalks wiped clean and do other trimming if needed.

If you have any questions, be sure to call Kathryn Mohr at 952-4995.

## **Label Your Bearded Irises Now!**

As your bearded irises begin to bloom, it's a good time to label them, and to mark where one begins and another ends if they've been growing together. Then you'll know what you've got and where to dig those you want to divide for the Rhizome Dig on Wednesday, August 2<sup>nd</sup> at Euthemia's home. If you don't label them well, you won't know what to dig – and you know you've GOT to divide some of those rhizomes right away!

At the dig we'll take your clumps, clean and divide them into separate rhizomes, mark each rhizome with a label that has the name and description of the rhizome, put them into a bag that has a picture and description of the rhizome on it, and we'll bring the hundreds of bags of rhizomes to the Rhizome Sale at Faddegon's Nursery. Anyone planning on digging irises from their garden should **let Euthemia know their names by July 26<sup>th</sup>** (at the latest, earlier is better). She'll make labels and pictures for the bags so that the work goes quickly at the Dig. In addition to what we dig here, Bob and Ann Keup are planning to send some of their bearded irises from Maine for the sale. As everyone who has been there knows, the Rhizome Sale is the best place to buy new bearded irises!

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[www.irises.org](http://www.irises.org)

## Linda says...

Hello All,

I sincerely hope the rainy weather we've been having will decide to hold off for a while. I want some warmth!

We had a great dig on Wednesday, May 3<sup>rd</sup>, where we divided and potted Siberians and other beardless irises for the sale on May 21<sup>st</sup>. The sale was, as usual, a great success. Besides the many Siberians and day lilies sent from Maine by Bob and Ann Keup, we had hostas and other shade and sun perennials contributed by our members from their gardens, and a beautiful selection of special perennials Ann Vandervort and Ana Webb bought at a wholesaler. We still have a few of the Siberians left that we will be able to sell at Faddegon's on August 5<sup>th</sup> (the Rhizome Sale).

Coming right up on June 3<sup>rd</sup> is our Iris Show at the Bethlehem Public Library. It's a judged show that we hold each year with some beautiful irises on display. If you aren't planning on showing your irises, do come to the show, which will be open to the public from 2-4 p.m. And you'll get to see whose irises win in each category and who wins the big purple ribbon for Best in Show! It's lots of fun and always inspiring. **Please post the attached flyers** for the Show and for the August 5<sup>th</sup> Rhizome Sale around your area. Anywhere there is a public bulletin board is useful – supermarkets, pharmacies, libraries, and coffee shops.

- Linda

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## Results of Perennial Sale

Our treasurer, Don Salhoff, reports that we netted approximately \$2,100 at the Siberian Iris and Perennial Sale on Sunday, May 21<sup>st</sup>. With that money and what we earn at the Rhizome Sale on August 5<sup>th</sup>, we will be able to bring expert speakers to our monthly meetings, and support activities such as the Annual Iris Show. Thanks to everyone who worked so hard to bring the sale together, and thanks to you, our customers, for being so enthusiastic about the plants. We're pleased to be able to bring such beauty to our communities and to spread the word about irises and gardening!

## What do I do with my Overgrown Bearded Irises!

When irises become crowded, usually every three to four years, bloom will decline. At this time, old clumps may be thinned by removing several divisions and leaving a portion of the clump in the ground. A better practice is to remove the entire clump, remove excess dirt and discard the old center divisions, replenish the soil and replant a few large rhizomes. Discard any rhizome that has an old flower stalk. Dividing and replanting usually is best in late July or early August in this area.

Planting rhizomes 12 to 24 inches apart is the norm. Close planting results in immediate effect, faster clump formation, and more color but makes dividing clumps a necessity in two to three years.

Newly planted rhizomes need moisture so their root systems develop. Once established, irises should be watered when the top three inches of soil dry out. **Over watering of Irises is a common mistake.** After planting, water well and continue watering until the first good rain. If lack of rain persists, watering should be deep enough to penetrate the shallow root system. Less frequent deep watering is better than frequent shallow watering.

The soil type for your area will determine your fertilizer needs. Superphosphate, or a well-balanced fertilizer with an N-P-K ratio of 10-10-10 or 5-10-10 are most often recommended. Avoid anything high in nitrogen as it encourages soft growth that is susceptible to disease. Provide a light application in early spring and again a month after bloom. Place fertilizer around the rhizomes, not directly on them. Alfalfa pellets (without salt) are extremely beneficial when incorporated in the soil around newly planted irises. Do NOT use Feed and Weed preparations.

The article above is adapted from the website of the American Iris Society, [www.irises.org](http://www.irises.org). Go to this website for further information.

The Capital-Hudson Iris Society presents their annual

# Iris Show



**Saturday, June 3rd**

**2:00 - 4:00 p.m.**

**Bethlehem Public Library**

**451 Delaware Avenue, Delmar, NY**

This judged cut-flower show will have a generous display of named irises of all sizes and varieties grown by iris lovers from around the Capital Region. For additional information, call 952-4995.

# **Iris Rhizome Sale**

**Saturday, August 5th**

**9:00 AM - 12:00 PM**

## **Faddegon's Nursery**

**1140 Troy-Schenectady Road (Route 7), Latham  
about 2.5 miles west of I-87 Northway exit 6**



**Ready-to-plant rhizomes of bearded irises: tall bearded, medians, miniature tall bearded, standard dwarf bearded and miniature dwarf bearded iris**

**For information call 518 439-3758 or 952-4995**