

The Iris Standard

Newsletter of the Ontario Iris Society

An affiliate of the American Iris Society

Volume 20 Issue 4 - Autumn 2025

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It's your posts that make it an adventure!

ONIS E-Membership Fees

1-year single: \$10	1-year family: \$15
3-year single: \$25	3-year family: \$40

Check the ONIS website for details,
[Ontario Iris Society \(google.com\)](#)

Visit the AIS WIKI

Use this link to access the American Iris
Society's Iris Encyclopedia,
[WebHome < Main < Iris Wiki \(irises.org\)](#).
Find information about irises,
hybridizers, iris societies and more.

Editor's Message

How dry was it in your part of the country this summer? I hope no one was severely affected by any of the wildfires...other than the smoke that filled our skies from time to time. I did some research and found that, in August, 45% of Ontario was under drought conditions while 17% was abnormally dry. My location in Aurora was in that 17% abnormally dry group. Thank goodness for the above average rainfall in late September!

The Nature Conservancy of Canada was able to purchase China Cove on the Saugeen (Bruce) Peninsula thanks to the contributions of private donors (like ONIS) and the federal government. Read the CBC News – London news release reprinted on page 3.



In July, Natural Resources Canada announced that changes have been made to the plant hardiness zones in Canada. I'm sure this is no surprise to anyone who gardens. Read about it on page 4.

This year's online sale and in-person auction/sale were a huge success. Trends from the online sale are outlined on page 5. The colour trend may surprise you. Sadly, there are no pictures from the in-person auction. I was too busy enjoying myself. Terry provides some information in his President's Pointers on page 2.

Our annual meeting is November 2nd. If you want to know what we're planning for 2026, join us! Kate

President's Pointers

In this edition, I would like to extend my appreciation to everyone who supports the Ontario Iris Society. Your generosity plays an important role in sustaining our club.

Thanks to both members and non-members who purchased rhizomes during the annual online sale – your support is appreciated.

Thanks to Carol, Yoko, and Lyn for bringing iris rhizomes to the August auction and sale, and to Jody for shipping hers from Nepean. Your contributions were highly valued.

Thanks to Marion, who regularly supplies us with plastic pots. These are used to pot the rhizomes we sell at our events.



Thanks to Jinny and Lyn for volunteering at our events, and additional thanks to Lyn who serves as our TBG liaison.

Thanks to all those eager bidders with their unwavering arms at this year's auction! This was our most successful auction in years. The following irises received the highest bids.



'Never Ending Story' (Johnson, 2025) - Highest bid.



*'High On Life' (Black, 2025)
Second highest bid.*

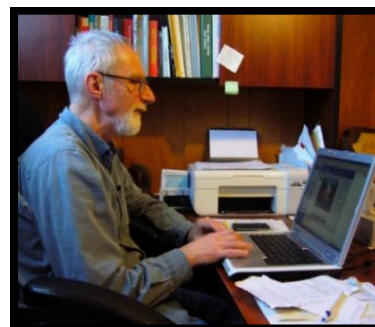


*'She Will Be Loved' (Johnson, 2025)
Third highest bid.*

And a special thank you to Kate for her valuable contributions to the Ontario Iris Society. Her commitment is essential to our operations.

Otherwise, hope to see some of you at this year's annual meeting in Port Perry. If you are unable to attend but have some suggestions regarding our activities, please email me and let me know what's on your mind. Any received will be discussed at the meeting.

As always, feel free to email me with questions about your irises, tlaurin@rogers.com.



Nature Conservancy of Canada (NCC) Buys Land Near Tobermory

Taken from CBC News website, www.cbc.ca

Earlier this year ONIS donated to the NCC in support of their efforts to purchase and manage the area known as China Cove on the Bruce (Saugeen) Peninsula. By June their efforts proved successful. The following is what was reported by CBC News - London.



The section of shoreline is home to a variety of threatened species.

More land at the tip of the Bruce Peninsula has been protected as a nature reserve, with two levels of government providing funding to buy the approximately one-kilometre-long section of shoreline.

Located in an area known as China Cove, Nature Conservancy Canada (NCC) said it will take ownership of the land just west of Tobermory on Lake Huron.

The 29 hectares of forest and wetland had been of interest to developers looking to build cottages but will now be accessible to naturalists and the public, the NCC's Program Director Esme Batten said.

"There's only about 8 km left of unprotected and undeveloped shoreline on the northern part of the peninsula, and these habitats are so important for many species, including lake trout

and lake whitefish that spawn in near the shore," Batten said on Ontario Morning.

While the NCC said many private donors contributed to buying the land, the federal government also contributed \$940,000, and the Ontario government gave \$300,000, both through funds earmarked for conservation.

New Indigenous Name



The area formerly known as China Cove, has been renamed Crying Water or Aah Mahwi Nini by Chippewas of the Nawash Elder Miptoon.

The land is located near several parks, as well as one end of the Bruce Trail. The area earned its namesake, China Cove, when a ship named The China crashed near the shore in 1883.

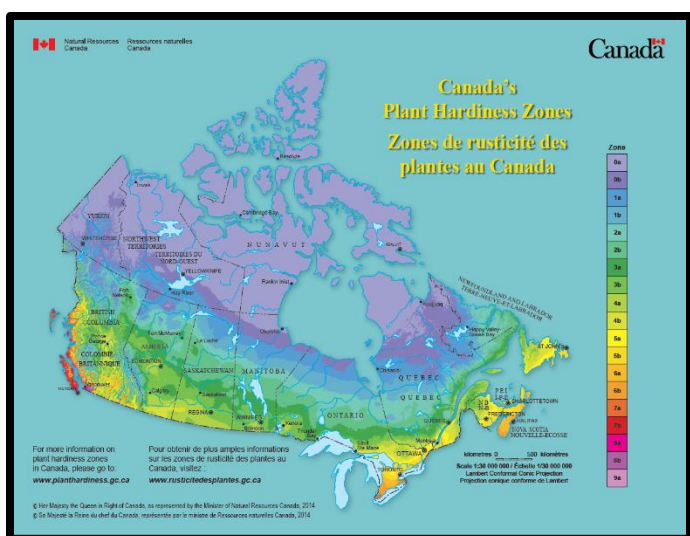
The NCC said that when it purchased the land, it invited Indigenous board members and Chippewas Of Nawash Unceded First Nation elder Miptoon to the area.

"He came out to the property with us, and he heard the water crying out to him, sharing stories of the wreck. He asked that we name the property Aah Mahwi Nibi or Crying Water to honour that history," Batten said.

The nature reserve is also home to other species at risk, including the midland painted turtle, the eastern massasauga rattlesnake and Hill's thistle (*and the dwarf lake iris – ed*). The NCC said it will be working on access points so that the land is accessible to hiker.

New Plant Hardiness Map for Canada

I don't know about you, but it seems that no sooner do I adjust my language to the newly prescribed hardiness zones then Natural Resources Canada revises them. A blog post came to my attention this summer and once again, Natural Resources Canada is announcing it has revised the hardiness zones. If you want to read the blog, this link will take you to it, [New Plant Hardiness Map for Canada - Laidback Gardener](#).



Terry and I first started gardening seriously when we moved to Aurora in the 1990s. At that time, Aurora was considered zone 5a by Natural Resources Canada. It remained zone 5a for 20 years, and it became second nature to say “5a” when asked which hardiness zone I lived in.

Then, in 2010, Natural Resources Canada revised the hardiness zones. Aurora was now in zone 5b, which didn't seem a stretch from zone 5a. Regardless of their scientific reasoning, I was reluctant to revise my thinking, and I continued to tell people, “I live in zone 5a”.

Then, a couple of years ago, when I started to notice changes in the way the garden behaved, and recognized the effects of climate change, I decided it was time to accept the 2010

hardiness zone changes. I started telling people I lived in zone 5b.

And now that I'm comfortable with this number, doesn't Natural Resources Canada announce changes to the plant hardiness zones, again. Aurora is now in zone 6a. Their reasoning for the need to change the zones is that Canada's climate has changed, and so have the techniques used to analyze climate information. No surprises there!

Here's how some of Ontario's towns/cities have been affected.

City	Previous Zone	New Zone
Barrie	5b	5b
Hamilton	6b	7a
Kingston	6a	6a
Lindsay	5a	5b
London	6a	6b
Niagara Falls	6b	7a
North Bay	4a	4b
Ottawa	5a	5a
Owen Sound	5b	6a
Toronto	6a	7a

Here's a link to the *Plant Hardiness Zone by Municipality* table, [Canada's Plant Hardiness Site | Natural Resources Canada](#). Searches can be done by province and then by town/city. Look up your location to see if you are affected. Most cities in Ontario changed by only one zone, while others remained unchanged. But Toronto changed by two zones to 7a! WOW!

Once I got over what this truly meant, I started to wonder how this would impact reblooming irises. Will I be able to grow more from the warmer USDA zones? That's probably not the right 'take away' from this change but I'm trying to find a silver lining.

ONIS Online Rhizome Sale

by Kate Brewitt

Our online rhizome sale continues to be a hit with members and non-members alike. ONIS would like to thank everyone who purchased rhizomes. Proceeds from this sale go towards the running of the club which includes insurance costs, booth fees, and room rentals

2025 Trends

It's interesting to watch the trends over the years, especially when it comes to colour. Every year someone is bound to mention what 'the colour of the year' is while visiting one of our events. For example, this year I learned at 'Get The Jump On Spring', that yellow was not an 'in' colour for flowers. Who knew? That said, if this year's orders are an indication of colour popularity for 2025, then orange is 'in' as several people requested 'Tiny Titan', 'Autumn Tangerine', 'Mango Parfait', 'Summer Peach' plus other irises in varying shades of orange.

Once again, 'Wench' was one-of-two most requested TBs. The iris sold out quickly after last year's overwhelming demand left us with a limited supply. 'Up In Flames' was the other most requested iris. This striking dark garnet iris, which is a reliable performer in our garden, sold out within the first two days of the sale.



TB 'Wench' (Miller, 1993)



'Up In Flames' (Johnson, 2010)

The colourful MTB 'Dollie And Me' and the vibrant IB 'Bounce' tied for the second most requested iris. 'Dollie And Me' was exhibited at our show, where its popularity was evident as visitors asked where they could purchase it.



'Dollie And Me' (L. Miller 2010)



IB 'Bounce' (Blyth, 2003)



ONIS Matters

In the Months Ahead

2025 ONIS Annual Meeting

Sunday, November 2 at 11:30 am

Jester's Court, 279 Queen St., Port Perry, ON

Join us for our annual meeting when we review the events of 2025 and discuss events for 2026. Afterwards ONIS members who attend can enjoy a complimentary lunch. For more information or to RSVP, email Kate (kbrewitt@rogers.com) before October 15.

Region 2 Annual General Meeting

October 18, 8:00 am to 2:30 pm ET

Cornell Cooperative Extension (CCE)

24 Martin Road, Voorheesville, NY.

Join members of AIS Region 2 at the first in-person general meeting since 2019. Details can be found on the Region 2 website, [Meetings](#).

Unable to attend? Join the meeting via Zoom by registering in advance:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/80955209000>. The Zoom link you receive will be good for the 10:00 am meeting and the 1:00 pm presentation by [Howie Dash](#) – 'Picacho Mountain Iris – a Hybridizer's Journey'.

Welcome New & Renewing Members!

J. Alberts-Corush - Nepean, ON

A. Bartlett – Hanover, ON

T. Kienapple – Toronto, ON

C. MacDonald – Long Plain, MB

J., C., & C. Pearcey – Aurora, ON

J. Santos – Scarborough, ON

L. Vandette – Wasa, BC

A. Van Halem – Toronto, ON

Y. Yoshida – Newmarket, ON

AIS Matters



2025 AIS Membership Special Extended until December 31.

Get a single full membership for \$10 US, regularly \$45 US. Must be a new member or someone whose membership lapsed over a year ago. Details outlined on the AIS website, [AIS Members – American Iris Society](#).

AIS Popularity Poll Update

Your chance to vote in the new electronic *Iris Popularity Poll* is coming in November.

In this poll you will be able to type in the names of your favourite irises and submit your choices electronically. The poll will be open to all classes of irises, both bearded and beardless. You will be asked to state where you garden, the names of the irises (up to 25 different cultivars) and the class of each iris you named. Voters will also be asked to provide their name so that several people voting from the same email address will be counted as separate voters.

Votes should be for irises that grow successfully in your region. Pretty faces are nice, but a plant's performance is an indicator of its true garden worthiness.

Wednesday, November 5 at 7 pm ET

AIS Fall Board Meeting via Zoom

Register in advance for this meeting: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/80955209000>. Watch October's edition of *AIS News & Notes* for details.

The Iris Standard is published four (4) times a year, Winter, Spring, Summer, and Autumn. Materials submitted must be received by December 1st (Winter), March 1st (Spring), June 1st (Summer) and September 1st (Autumn). Submissions may be edited for style and clarity. All rights reserved. Reproduction in whole or in part is prohibited without written permission from the editor, oniseditor@gmail.com. Title page: IB 'Bold Stroke' Photo: K. Brewitt