

The Iris Standard

Newsletter of the Ontario Iris Society

An affiliate of the
American Iris Society

Volume 15 Issue 2 – Spring 2020

Inside this Edition

President's Pointers	2
It's Show Time, Folks!	3
Pictures from Get the Jump on Spring & Seedy Saturday.....	5
Pictures from Newmarket Seedy Saturday.	6
In the Months Ahead	7
ONIS Matters.....	8

Editor's Message

The message I had originally planned for this edition was very different from what you read here. In light of the global pandemic I thought it necessary to change it because as I'm finding out life can, and does, change in an instant.

Twenty-twenty was meant to be a year of celebrating irises. The American Iris Society (AIS) was having a 100th anniversary celebration and the Median Iris Society (MIS) was having a mini-convention in Oklahoma City in April. The annual convention for the Society of Louisiana Iris (SLI) was also planned for April in New Orleans. There was lots of excitement at the start of the year. However, since the beginning of March this 'year of celebration' has drastically changed its tone. All three iris groups have cancelled their conventions. MIS is the only one to announced that they have rescheduled their convention for April 8 – 10, 2021...providing circumstances allow. The AIS has simply stated that they are planning a delayed 100th anniversary celebration.

Terry and I had planned on attending both the MIS and the AIS conventions. Registration fees were paid, hotel rooms and flights were booked. In an instant, it all changed. Suddenly my week's vacation has turned into a week's staycation...fortunately the kind I like the best. In the meantime, I am compiling a list of all the chores/tasks I would like to tackle but, as Terry suggested, this will also be a good time to enjoy our garden...and enjoy it I will!

So, if you find yourself taking a staycation this year, find a way to celebrate irises at home. Update your garden lists, take photographs of your emerging irises, post pictures on our Facebook page or even write an article for the newsletter...this can be quite cathartic in stressful times!

Stay well and keep your social distance! We are all in this together!

Kate

The First Irises of the Season!



*Iris reticulatas in bloom on March 9th
'Sunshine' in front, 'Eyecatcher' in back.
Both hybridized by Alan McMurtrie.*

ONIS Membership Fees

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

Check the ONIS website for details
<https://sites.google.com/site/ontarioirissociety>

President's Pointers

The Ruth V Blenis Iris Award

by Terry Laurin, Show Committee Chair

Every year ONIS selects an award sponsored by AIS Region 2. This year *The Ruth V. Blenis Award* was selected. This award will be given to the highest placed tall bearded iris at the ONIS show.

Who was Ruth V. Blenis?

A member of the Capital-Hudson area of New York State she served as Regional Vice President and President of Empire State Iris Society in the 1950's. She was instrumental in organizing the region into active areas and started the tradition of annual regional meetings. This trophy was established to honour the late Ruth V. Blenis, for her dedication to the promotion of iris activities.

For new members, and for those who were interested last year but did not manage to get to the show, here are some helpful hints for showing your tall bearded irises reprinted from last year's newsletter.

Each specimen exhibited is judged in comparison with a standard of perfection for that cultivar. A good example would be a cultivar that has falls that curl under. If that is its usual trait then your specimen will be judged against that trait. It is not judged in comparison with other cultivars being exhibited as they will have different traits. In short, it is the exhibitor's skill in growing, selecting and grooming the particular cultivar that is being judged.

Selecting bloom stalks from the garden.

Because this is an official AIS show cultivars must be correctly named. However, if you have one that has 'lost' its name bring it along. Perhaps one of the judges can identify it. It can even be judged if you want to get an idea of your abilities to select a show-worthy stalk. If nothing else, it would be great just to have it on display for others to enjoy!

Stalks should be straight so when displayed in a container the flower will point upwards.

Choose ones that have a bud or two just starting to open. Whether you cut the stalk the night before or the morning of the show is up to you. Simply

choose stalks with buds that will be open for the show. If cut the night before, keep it in a cool place.

As with any flower show, flower petals should be free from tears, folds and discolouration.

Grooming your bloom stalk.

Grooming refers to the "correction" of minor faults that an exhibitor makes so that the total appearance of the exhibited stalk is as nearly perfect as possible. This is usually done while placing your specimen in the show container.

1. Select a show container proportionate for your bloom stalk. The tubes and the bases, (supplied by ONIS) come in different sizes. Position the bloom stalk so it is as upright as possible. Stalks falling forward, backward or sideways loose points. Place wedging material (supplied by ONIS) into the top of the container to keep the bloom stalk standing straight.
2. Remove spent blooms. These can be carefully cut or snapped off. Also be careful not to tear the spathe (the papery material at the base of the flower).
3. Snip off brown leaf tips in such a way as to preserve the natural shape of the leaf.
4. Remove any insects, dead or alive. The same applies to dirt, cobwebs and other residue.
5. Remove fingerprints with a cotton ball or tissue.

Once you are done

The Show Chair will help you find the correct placement for your specimen. Section A is for tall bearded iris however if your iris was introduced 30 or more years ago it is considered an 'historic' so you could place it in Section L for historic iris. There is also a section for Canadian introductions, Section K. Check with the on-line AIS Checklists to determine if your iris was hybridized by a Canadian. In short, you have three choices. Choose the one you like!

All these instructions may seem daunting however it is easier than you think. Our main goal is to have fun and to share our beautiful blooms with visitors to the TBG. You would be surprised by some of their reactions!

It's Show Time, Folks!

This show is not just for ONIS members. It is open to ANYONE who grows irises and wishes to exhibit bloom stalks from their garden.

If you have any questions, please contact the Show Chair, Terry Laurin, at 905-841-9676 or by email at tlaurin@rogers.com.

ONTARIO IRIS SOCIETY Annual Flower Show at the Toronto Botanical Garden 777 Lawrence Avenue E. Toronto, ON



Sunday, June 7, 2020

Show Setup: 10:00 am to 11:30 am

Judging: 11:30 to 1:00 pm

Public Viewing: 1:00 pm to 3:30 pm

Free Admission

Show Chair: Terry Laurin 905-841-9676
tlaurin@rogers.com

*Photo: 'Hoosier Belle' MTB (Bunnell, 2012)
2019 R.D. Little Trophy Winner
Photo courtesy of K. Brewitt*

ONIS Awards

R.D. Little Trophy

Best Specimen (Queen of the Show)

Toronto Region Award

Second Best Specimen (Princess of the Show)

F.W. Caulfield Trophy

Highest total points in the Tall Bearded classes

Jean Sanderson Trophy

Best Canadian Introduction

W.J. Taylor Trophy - Best Seedling

Verna Laurin Plaque - Best Historic Iris

AIS Awards

AIS Silver Medal Certificate

Exhibitor with highest number of first place ribbons.

AIS Bronze Medal Certificate

Exhibitor with next highest number of first place ribbons.

AIS Section Medal Certificate

Most first place ribbons in qualifying sections provided minimum requirements are met.

The Ruth V. Blenis Award (AIS Region. 2 Award)
– Highest Placed Tall Bearded Iris in Show.

Best Specimen of Show Certificate - Youth

Exhibition Certificates are awarded to the outstanding seedling, plus any seedling that obtains at least five (5) votes from certified AIS judges. All AIS judges are asked to contact the Show Chair in order to pick up seedling ballots.

Show Rules and Regulations

1. This accredited show is being held and judged under the rules and regulations of the American Iris Society (AIS). These rules and regulations may not be violated. Judges' decisions will be final.
2. All entries **MUST** be staged between 10:00 am and 11:30 am. Late and unnamed entries will be accepted for display purposes only.
3. Exhibition privileges are open to all, including judges. Judges may not judge their own entries however they may judge entries of immediate family members.

4. Only specifically authorized personnel will be allowed in the show area during judging.

5. This is a cultivar show. All entries must have been grown and entered in person by the exhibitor whose name appears on the entry tag with the correct cultivar name and placed in the appropriate section. Members of a family may exhibit from the same garden.

Cultivars are to be arranged alphabetically in each section.

Each exhibitor is limited to one entry per cultivar; otherwise the number of entries by an exhibitor is not restricted.

Containers are furnished by the Society except where noted.

The Show Committee will aid the exhibitors to correctly identify the appropriate section.

Seedlings must be entered under seedling name or number and in the name of the originator.

Novices are those individuals who have never participated in an AIS sanctioned iris show.

Youth (persons under 19 years of age) may enter the Youth Division or the Adult Division but not both.

6. Judging will begin at approximately 11:30 am. The show is open to the public from 1:00 pm to 3:30 pm. Exhibitors may not remove entries prior to 3:30 pm. Unclaimed entries may be sold for the benefit of the Ontario Iris Society.

7. The Show Committee will exercise all possible care but cannot be responsible for loss or damage to exhibits.

8. Sections or groups for bulbous irises and collections are eligible to receive award stickers and special section awards. Award stickers are included in the tally for Silver and Bronze Medal Certificates although these entries are not eligible for the 'Best Specimen of Show' award.

Show Schedule

DIVISION I – HORTICULTURE

SECTION A - Tall Bearded Iris (TB)

SECTION B - Miniature Dwarf Bearded (MDB)

SECTION C - Standard Dwarf Bearded (SDB)

SECTION D - Intermediate Bearded (IB)

SECTION E - Border Bearded (BB)

SECTION F - Miniature Tall Bearded (MTB)

SECTION G - Siberian (SIB)

SECTION H - Spuria (SPU)

SECTION I - Louisiana (LA)

SECTION J - Any other Beardless

SECTION K - Any iris of Canadian origin

SECTION L - Historic Iris (Introduced in 1990 or earlier)

SECTION M - Bulbous Irises (not eligible for Best Specimen of Show)

SECTION N - Collections (not eligible for Best Specimen of Show)

Class 1 - 3 stalks/one variety

Class 2 - 3 stalks/all different

DIVISION II – SEEDLINGS

SECTION A - Tall Bearded

SECTION B - Other Bearded

SECTION C - Other Iris

DIVISION III – NOVICE

SECTION A - Tall Bearded

SECTION B - Other Bearded

SECTION C - Other Iris

DIVISION IV – YOUTH

SECTION A – Bearded

SECTION B - Beardless

Exhibitors complete a point credit sheet during the Show and have it approved by the Show Chair. **Each point is worth \$0.30.** The accumulated points may be redeemed at the 2020 ONIS August Auction/Sale.

Major Trophy Awards:	10 pts
Court of Honour:	10 pts

Other Awards:	1st place	5 pts
	2nd place	3 pts
	3rd place	2 pts

Pictures from Get the Jump on Spring & Seedy Saturday

by Kate Brewitt

It must have been the spring-like weather that encouraged people to attend this popular annual event as this year there were record crowds! There was also more variety in the vendors, everything from books to clothing and food to plants. The ONIS booth was busy; Charlie shared pictures from his phone, Lyn and Jinny enthused about irises to interested gardeners, Terry explained the do's and don'ts and I took photographs. Thanks to everyone who helped and those who dropped by the booth. Welcome, too, to our new members!



Busy at the ONIS Booth – Jinny, Terry and Lyn



Succulents on Display



Blooming Dutch Iris in a display at the Floral Design Show



"The Gang"

Front row: Terry and Jinny/Back row: Lyn and Charlie



A Crowded African Violet Booth

Pictures from Newmarket Seedy Saturday

There is always plenty to do at the York Region Food Market's Seedy Saturday. The ever-popular Kid's Corner had kids planting bean seeds, making buttons and colouring pictures. There was a booth where you could test your senses by smelling and touching herbs in an effort to guess their names, and I participated in a vote for ideas to reduce our food's impact on our environment by putting beans in different 'idea' jars. I also watched a smudge ceremony conducted by an Indigenous elder from The Three Sisters' house. It was a fun day with lots to do. It was also nice to chat with those of you who stopped by the booth!



Testing Your Senses – (I passed! - ed)



Food Reduction Vote



Homemade Pickled Foods and Spices



Vegan Butter Tarts



Lots of homemade crafts for sale



In the Months Ahead

ONIS Annual Iris Show

June 7 – 10 am to 3:30 pm

(Date correction – ed)

Set-up starts at 10 am

Judging starts at 11:30 am

Open to the Public at 1 pm

Toronto Botanical Garden, Studio One

777 Lawrence Ave. E., Toronto.

Free Admission



The ONIS Board of Directors will continue to carefully monitor information coming from the TBG, Ontario Ministry of Health and Toronto Public Health regarding COVID-19. If a decision is made to cancel this event, this will be communicated online and directly to our members. Your health and safety remains our top priority.

Everyone is welcome to display bloom stalks from their garden at this American Iris Society (AIS) accredited flower show. Visitors who vote for their favourite bloom stalks will receive a coupon for a free iris rhizome from the table sales at our Annual Iris Rhizome Auction and Sale in August.

The Show Schedule, found on page 3, outlines the criteria upon which the bloom stalks are judged. If you are new to flower exhibiting there will be lots of members there to help you display your flowers.

We hope you join us!

Notice Regarding TBG Parking

Paid parking began at the Toronto Botanical Garden (TBG) in July 2019. Funds from paid parking go directly to the TBG, which is a registered charity. The cost is \$2.50 per hour.

Annual ONIS President's Open Garden

Aurora Borealis Iris Garden

Due to 'shelter-in-place' and 'social distancing' guidelines the President will not be opening his garden to the public this spring. Look for us next year!

ONIS In Brief

Mark your calendars now so you don't miss these upcoming ONIS events. Details to follow in future editions of *The Iris Standard*.

August 9 – ONIS Annual Iris Rhizome Auction and Sale at the TBG. **(Date correction – ed.)**

Oct/Nov – ONIS Annual Meeting

Upcoming Conventions



The American Iris Society (AIS) National Convention A Centennial Celebration May 18 - 23, 2020

The AIS has formally canceled the 2020 Convention. There is a new ban on meetings in New York and New Jersey that covers our meeting dates.

All registration money will be refunded.

Registrants should contact their hotel and travel providers to cancel their reservations.

A delayed Centennial celebration will be planned.

Please all stay safe during this crisis. We need you all!

Jody Nolin, AIS President

ONIS Matters

2020 Member Benefit!

In previous years **SHERIDAN NURSERIES** has offered a 10% discount to ONIS members! Due to COVID-19 Sheridan Nurseries is temporarily closed.

For ONIS members who have a discount card – if Sheridan reopens for the 2020 gardening season take your discount card to your local store and ask if they can honour it.

For new members who do not have a discount card - if you are interested send your name, address and telephone number to Terry Laurin at tlaurin@rogers.com. Indicate "Sheridan Offer" in the subject line. If Sheridan reopens, we will contact them.



Welcome New and Renewing ONIS Members!

C. Bradshaw – Toronto, ON
M. Curry – Whitby, ON
A. Hill – Queensville, ON
S. Hossain – Richmond, ON
F. Kershaw – Toronto, ON
T. Laurin/K. Brewitt – Aurora, ON
I. Rodionova – Aurora, ON
I. Smith – Aurora, ON
R. & L. Smith – Oshawa, ON

Visit the AIS WIKI

The IRIS ENCYCLOPEDIA of The American Iris Society is a great resource for information about all things irises: <http://wiki.irises.org>

Learn about hybridizers, view articles, books and catalogues in *The AIS Hager/DuBois Memorial Library*, watch videos from *The Iris Video Library* and much, much more!

Youth Matters



Hope to see you at this year's flower show! There is a special section for Youth (persons under 19 years of age). See the Show Schedule starting on page 3 for details.

For information about the ONIS Youth group email Jinny Missons at jojimiss@sympatico.ca



The Ontario Iris Society has a Facebook page.

We hope you will 'like' us then...
- upload your pictures,
- share your experiences
It's the visitors to the page that make it a success!



We are also on Pinterest!

Join the American Iris Society



Annual Single: \$30 US / Dual: \$35 US
Triennial Single: \$70 US / Dual: \$85 US
(Includes a quarterly bulletin)

A one-year electronic membership, or e-membership, is also available for \$15 US.

[Click here](#) to go to the American Iris Society website and a list of additional membership types.

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: 'Ginger Twist' (Schafer/Sacks, 2009) taken at Aurora Borealis Iris Garden, Aurora, ON. Photo: K. Brewitt, Editor.