

# The Iris Standard

## Newsletter of the Ontario Iris Society

An affiliate of the  
American Iris Society

Volume 17 Issue 2 - Spring 2022

### Inside this Edition

President's Pointers .....	2
3rd Annual Virtual Flower Show .....	3
Ten Years of Queen Of The Show .....	4
2022 AIS Membership Drive .....	6
In the Months Ahead .....	7
ONIS Matters .....	7



The Ontario Iris Society has a  
Facebook page.

We hope you will join us then...

- upload your pictures,
- share your experiences
- ask questions.

It's your posts that make it a success!

### 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  
<https://sites.google.com/view/ontarioiris>

### Visit the AIS WIKI

Use this link to access the Iris Encyclopedia  
of the American Iris Society,  
[WebHome < Main < Iris Wiki \(irises.org\)](http://WebHome%20Main%20Iris%20Wiki%20(irises.org)).  
Find information about irises, hybridizers,  
and different iris societies.

### Editor's Message

As I look out the window at the clumps of irises in the garden, I find I am anxiously anticipating this year's iris season. After last year's massive dig, divide and purge it will be interesting to see what blooms. We ended up with a whole bed of NOIDs (no IDs) due to disappearing tags, intertwining rhizomes, and poorly drawn maps. Whatever blooms, I'm sure it will be an adventure!

Unfortunately, the ONIS Board made the difficult decision to cancel this year's in-person flower show at the TBG. Instead, we hope you will enter our 'new and improved' virtual flower show...read on...

With the British Iris Society (BIS) celebrating 100 years in 2022, Terry took out a membership. It's been educational as we discover how gardeners celebrate their love of irises in another country. Like us, BIS had to find ways to engage their members during the pandemic. They held not one but two virtual flower shows: one summer and one winter. As a change, ONIS has adopted their Show Schedule. It's more simplistic plus it includes a class for landscape pictures as well as a Member's Choice selection. There is also a category for "other Iridaceae" such as crocus and gladiolus making for a more inclusive show. The schedule starts on page 3.



We are also looking back at 10 years of 'Queen of the Show' recipients which starts on page 4. And in President's Pointers the President announces he is opening his garden for the first time in two years, by appointment only. See details on page 2.

Otherwise, we will soon find ourselves spending more time in the garden. I hope your garden provides you with many, many pleasant surprises!

Kate

## President's Pointers

*By Terry Laurin*

Like you, I can't wait to get out in the garden. And like every year, there is the usual list of Spring chores to be done to prepare your irises for the season.

1. Check rhizomes for soft rot. If found, cut back rhizome to where it is white and firm. Do this on a sunny day to allow cuts to callous over.
2. Replant heaving irises by either pushing them in the ground or, if still frozen, cover roots with some soil.
3. Clean up garden debris and damaged foliage from around iris rhizomes.
4. Fertilize with 10-10-10 once new growth appears.

### **Will We Have 'Normal' Spring?**

One of our Facebook friends asked if weather effected how irises performed because she found that her irises performed well one year, but not the next. In 2019 her irises were upright and grew well however the following year, many did not bloom, while those that did bloom flopped over.

These are just some of the problems experienced by most of us in southern Ontario. The last two Springs have been unkind to irises. Both years saw above normal temperatures in March causing the irises to start their growth cycle. This was followed by below normal temperatures in April. As a result some of the developing bloom stalks were damaged. As the season progressed these bloom stalks appeared S-shaped or wavy. Buds formed on the stalks but rather than emerging as a flower, they turned to mush. Another problem we experienced was short stalks. Many of the stalks on the median irises did not reach the cultivars usual height.

The following picture of the SDB 'Radiate' (Johnson, 2019) taken last year shows the stunted growth in the stalk. This iris usually measures about 12" but as you can see from the picture, the bottom branch is only an inch or so above the base of the plant. The full height was only about 8" tall.



With any luck we will have a more normal spring this year. March's temperatures were more in line with a typical year. Hopefully April will provide us with further seasonal weather patterns!

### **Open Garden**

After a two-year absence we're opening our garden to visitors. The garden will be open every Saturday and Sunday between May 21<sup>st</sup> and June 12<sup>th</sup> by appointment only. To reserve your appointment call (905-841-9676) or email ([tlaurin@rogers.com](mailto:tlaurin@rogers.com)). This will allow us to control the number of visitors to ensure a safe environment. Masks are not required but visitors are encouraged to wear one. Potted irises will be available for sale. Hope to see you in the garden!

As always, feel free to email me with any of your questions about irises, [tlaurin@rogers.com](mailto:tlaurin@rogers.com).



## 3rd Annual Virtual Flower Show

**April 1 to July 15, 2022**

We are back with the third annual virtual iris show! This year we have made some changes hoping to make it a bit more interesting. We took a 'page' from the British Iris Society's virtual show so please read the show schedule carefully to ensure your entries comply with the new requirements.

Summary of changes,

1. Only 8 classes.
2. Only 2 pictures required in 5 of the classes.
3. Addition of other Iridaceae such as crocus.
4. 'Display Only' class - share pictures of your irises...just for fun.
5. Members' Choice voting - Pictures will be posted on the ONIS website, [Ontario Iris Society \(google.com\)](http://OntarioIrisSociety.google.com).

### The Show Schedule

Classes are as follows.

Class 1. Any bearded iris except Tall Bearded.

Class 2. Any Tall Bearded iris.

Class 3. Any type of Beardless iris.

Class 4. Any seedling iris that you have bred yourself (Bearded or Beardless).

Class 5. Any Historic iris (Bearded or Beardless) introduced 1992 or earlier.

Class 6. Any Species or Species Cross iris (e.g. Junos, Reticulatas) or other Iridaceae (e.g. Gladiolus, Crocus etc.).

Class 7. Any iris or irises in a landscape setting.

Class 8. Display Only – Got a picture you'd like to share? We welcome other iris related photos. These will not be judged and are ineligible for prizes.

### **How To Enter**

Number of entries is limited to 3 entries per class provided each entry is of a different cultivar.

For classes 1 - 5 please send 2 photos per entry, one of the whole bloom stalk and another of a close up of a bloom on the stalk. This way the judges can

do a similar job to that done at one of our in-person iris shows.

Only named irises registered with the AIS can be entered for classes 1, 2, 3, and 5. If you are not sure of the name of your iris go to the AIS Iris Encyclopedia at [WebHome < Main < Iris Wiki \(irises.org\)](http://WebHomeMainIrisWiki.irises.org) and do a search. Seedlings (class 4) should be given seedling designation e.g. 19abxn2.

Images should be nearly square and of a reasonable size. Please reduce large images (no more than 2 MB). The optimum size would be 300 to 600 dots per inch. Images may be "enhanced" to correct for brightness or contrast on underexposed images but should not look artificial. The goal is to have images showing the flower as it is grown in the garden.

Photos must have been taken during the 2022 flowering season and not have been entered in our previous virtual shows.

### **Some Helpful Hints for Taking Photos**

Since each entry is judged in comparison with a standard of perfection for that cultivar there are things to look for in your specimen before you press the button on your phone or camera to capture an image.

1. How well is the iris grown? It should be standing straight, not flopped over. The plant and flower should be well-balanced.
2. There should be no damage. Look for brown spots, brown leaf tips or torn petals.
3. Insects, though artistically delightful, are not included in 'standards of perfection'. Same with stakes, helpful in supporting a flower but not true-to-nature.
4. Is the image in strong sunlight with distracting shadows?
5. Is there a disruptive background detracting from the flower e.g. a photobombing garden gnome?
6. Flower/leaf colours should be true-to-nature.
7. If in a pot, the pot should be clean.
8. Remove any weeds surrounding the plant.
9. Carefully remove any spent blossom except in class 4 - Seedlings.



The two pictures below were entered into the British Iris Society (BIS) summer virtual show by B.J Jackson of the CanWest Iris Society (CWIS). She won 1<sup>st</sup> place in Class 1 – Any bearded iris except Tall Bearded. They are a good example of how an entry should look.

**Class 1 – Any Iris Except Tall Bearded  
'Scrambled' MTB – side view**



**'Scrambled' MTB Stalk View**



(photos © B.J. Jackson)

### **Deadline for Submitting Entries**

Entries will be accepted by the Show Chair until 11:59 p.m. Saturday, July 16, 2022. Send your entries to Kate at [just1moreiris@gmail.com](mailto:just1moreiris@gmail.com).

### **After Your Entry is Submitted**

Once your entries are received, they will be numbered so that they are anonymous when they are judged. Only the class number and the name of the cultivar/species will be visible to the judge.

### **Members Choice Judging**

All members will be notified when entries have been uploaded to the ONIS website. Everyone is encouraged to view the entries posted and vote for their favourites. Email name and number of the exhibit to Kate at [just1moreiris@gmail.com](mailto:just1moreiris@gmail.com).

All photos will become the property of ONIS. If used for publication (Newsletter or Facebook), you will receive photo credit.

PRIZES! The top choice in each class will receive a \$10 gift card from either Tim Horton's or Shoppers Drug Mart. Winners will be notified by email. A complete list will appear in the Autumn 2022 edition of *The Iris Standard* and on the ONIS website.

## **Ten Years of Queen Of the Show**

(Compiled by Kate Brewitt)

Since the in-person flower show at the TBG has been cancelled for another year, I thought a retrospect of the irises that previously received the Queen of The Show, or R.D. Little Trophy, might fill the 'void' until next year.

That said, here are pictures of the trophy recipients from 2010 to 2019 as they would appear in the garden. Whether on the show bench or in the garden judges look for similar attributes when evaluating irises. Some of those attributes are a balanced form, straight stalk, clarity of colour, and clean foliage.

Regardless, I think you will agree, trophy or not, these irises are all worthy of a spot in any garden!

Pictures start on next page...

**2010 – SDB ‘Marksman’ (M. Smith, 1997)**



**2013 – SDB ‘Ray Jones’ (D. Spoon, 2011)**



**2011 – SDB ‘Royal Overtime’ (Chapman, 2000)**



**2014 – TB ‘Stairway To Heaven’ (Lauer, 1993)**



**2012 - MTB ‘Stitched In Blue’ (Fisher, 2006)**



**2015 – TB ‘Paul Black’ (Johnson, 2003)**



**2016 – MTB ‘Stitched In Blue’ (Fisher, 2006)**

This year was the second time this delicate MTB won ‘Queen of the Show’. See 2012 for picture.



**2017 – TB ‘Quantum Leap’ (Sutton, 2005)**



**2018 – SIB ‘Mabel Coday’ (Helsley, 1985)**



**2019 – MTB ‘Hoosier Belle’ (Bunnell, 2012)**



Finally, no retrospect would be complete without a picture of R. D. Little, the man after whom the trophy was named (circa 1960s).



**2022 AIS Membership Drive...EXTENDED**

The American Iris Society (AIS) has extended its membership drive an extra month. From now until the end of JUNE 2022, AIS invites all eligible persons to participate.

The 2022 AIS Membership Drive consists of a Free Standard 1-Year Print Membership for every First-Time member of an AIS Affiliate, such as ONIS, or AIS Section and a First Time Member of AIS.

**AIS Membership Drive  
The Fine Print**

This offer is valid only during the months of March, April, May, and JUNE 2022.

This incentive can not be combined with any other incentive offer from AIS Affiliates or AIS Sections.

This offer does not apply to prior members of the AIS nor to prior AIS Affiliate members and AIS Section members.

This offer is time-limited and limited to the first 750 eligible applications! The AIS Membership Secretary will check for prior AIS memberships.

Please direct any of your questions to Terry Laurin, [tlaurin@rogers.com](mailto:tlaurin@rogers.com).





## In the Months Ahead

### **ONIS Annual Iris Show - CANCELLED** **Toronto Botanical Garden**

There will be no in-person show at the Toronto Botanical Garden this year. Hopefully we will be back in 2023. Feel free to enter our Virtual Flower Show.



### **Third Annual Virtual Flower Show** **April 1 to July 15 - In Your Garden**

We hope you will enter this year's virtual flower show. The show schedule starts on page 3 of this newsletter. If you have any questions, contact the Show Chair, Kate, at [just1moreiris@gmail.com](mailto:just1moreiris@gmail.com).

### **Arbour Gardens Annual Iris Open Garden** **June 11, 12, and 13** **3962 Highway 2, Newcastle, ON**

Watch their Facebook page for more details and up-to-date information. [Arbour Gardens | Facebook](#).

### **Online Rhizome Sale - July 2022**

Back by popular demand! ONIS will hold an on-line iris rhizome sale again in 2022. Details will be emailed to all members in early July so watch your inbox!

### **ONIS Annual Iris Rhizome Auction and Sale** **Toronto Botanical Garden**

ONIS is taking a 'wait and see' approach to this year's Auction and Sale at the TBG. Details will be in the Summer 2022 edition of *The Iris Standard*. Updates will be posted on the ONIS website and Facebook as well.



## Upcoming Conventions



### **'Region of Bloom'** **2022 Siberian/Species Convention** **May 27-29, 2022**

#### **"Come Experience Our Region of Bloom!"**

The King County Iris Society is very pleased to host the 2022 Siberian/Species Iris Convention. The convention will be held in the greater Seattle, Washington area Friday through Sunday, May 27-29, 2022. We offer a tour of three gardens, along with a 1-hour session of in-garden judges training and a species iris trek.

[Complete details and the registration form.](#)

Deadline for registration is May 15, 2022.

Hotel registration should be made by April 27, 2022.

## ONIS Matters

### Welcome New and Renewing Members!

V. Ames – Williamsford, ON

M. Curry – Whitby, ON

K. Granger – Fergus, ON

R. Purwin – Toronto, ON

J. Rachfalowski – Midhurst, ON

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Title page: TB 'My Generation' Photo: K.Brewitt.