

# The Iris Standard

## Newsletter of the Ontario Iris Society

### An affiliate of the American Iris Society

Volume 19 Issue 2 - Spring 2024

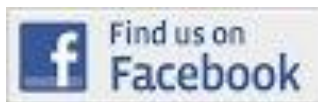
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#### Editor's Message

We are all about the iris show in this edition of *The Iris Standard!*

It's hard to believe it's been five years since our last iris show and sale at the Toronto Botanical Garden. Since entering a flower show isn't something you do every day, we have dedicated this edition to the things you need to know for our show. Within these pages you will find the ever important show schedule which provides the details. You will also find hints on how to groom your flowers plus an explanation on how to compete the show tag.



Join the Ontario Iris Society  
on Facebook

[Ontario Iris Society | Facebook](#)

*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.



I entered my first iris show about 20 years ago as a novice. I think I was the only exhibitor in that category however I soon found out that the show was really about meeting new people, sharing stories and enjoying the colourful display of irises. If you choose not to 'show', join us for the fun!

Also in this edition is an article on companion plants for tall bearded irises. These plants can help 'show-off' your irises, as well as the other flowers in your garden.

Mark your calendar and see you on June 2<sup>nd</sup>!

Kate

## President's Pointers

### What Does a Judge Look for When Judging?

by Terry Laurin, Show Committee Chair

Since ONIS' last show was in 2019, and we have some new members, it's time to review the different aspects of 'showing' that affect a judge's decision.

#### It starts in the garden.

Cultural perfection, or how well the specimen is grown, is the most important part of judging. Does it meet the perfection for that particular variety? For this reason, it is important to have as fresh a specimen as possible.

Look for a flower where...

- a. The colour is clear with no discolouration.
- b. The size is in proportion to the bloom stalk.
- c. The petals show no signs of fading, streaking, curling or transparency (crepiness). These are all signs a flower is past its prime.
- d. The standards and falls hold themselves firmly with no tears, folds, or pleating.
- e. It is almost or fully open. If not open by the time judging starts, partially opened flowers can still be judged but will be penalized as the bloom cannot be thoroughly examined.

Look for a stalk where...

- a. The bloom sequence is typical of the variety. Most varieties open one blossom at a time. Multiple blooms are acceptable if this is typical of the variety.
- b. The branch balance and bud placement are typical of the variety being evaluated. Toed-in buds, i.e. buds growing inwards towards the stalk, will be penalized (see example on page 4).
- c. The leaves are free from spots, holes, or tears. Pleating in leaves is not normal so avoid these stalks unless the leaf can be removed.

Specimens are judged as they appear at the moment of judging so careful transportation is important to maintaining the integrity of your 'winning' bloom stalk.



*A well-balanced stalk of TB 'Montmartre'. Looks good at a distance however a closer look reveals a flaw – see below.*



*Discolouration on the fall will cause this potential winner to lose points.*



**Before the judging begins.**

Grooming is the next most important part of showing your irises as bloom stalks are judged on the whole stalk not just the flower.

- a. Select a show container proportionate for your bloom stalk. The tubes and the bases, which are supplied by ONIS, come in different sizes. Position the bloom stalk so it is as straight as possible. Stalks falling forward, backward or sideways loose points. Place wedging material, also supplied by ONIS, into the top of the container to keep the bloom stalk standing straight.
- b. Spent blooms should be removed. Use scissors or a knife to carefully remove. Try not to tear the spathe (the papery material at the base of the flower).



*The spathe on an iris – MTB 'Hot News'.*

- c. Discoloured foliage can be removed entirely or neatly trimmed by following the natural contour of the leaf.
- d. Fingerprints should be removed from the bloom stalk using a moist cotton ball or paper towel.
- e. Bugs and/or cobwebs should be removed. They may look good in photographs, but they are not welcome on the show bench. Dirt, dust, and other residue should also be removed.
- f. Improper modifications such as taping of petals or leaves result in disqualification.

**Show Entry Tag**

Once you have finished grooming your iris you will complete a show entry tag. Examples of how to complete the tag are provided at each grooming station. Using the MTB 'Hot News' (2009) as an example, the particulars are as follows,

- Division: 'I' (Roman numeral one) for Horticulture
- Section: 'F' – Miniature Tall Bearded (MTB)
- Class: first letter of the iris' name e.g. 'Hot News' would be 'H'.
- Cultivar: the full name of the iris, in this case 'Hot News'.
- Exhibitor's No.: sign up for one with the Show Committee Chair.

DIVISIONS /SECTION		CLASS
<u>I</u>	<u>F</u>	<u>H</u>
Cultivar: <u>HOT NEWS</u>		
V		
Exhibitor's No.:		<u>2</u>
Name:		<u>ANN SMITH</u>
1	2	3
1	2	3
Division: <u>I</u>		Class: <u>H</u>
Exhibitor's No.:		<u>2</u>
Name:		<u>ANN SMITH</u>

*Show Entry Tag*

If you are showing an iris that was introduced 30 or more years ago it is considered 'historic' so you can place it in either the cultivar section or Section L for Historics. Year of introduction must be noted on tag.

It is important to have your iris correctly named. Judges use the American Iris Society (AIS) Iris Encyclopedia to verify names of irises. If the name

has not been registered with the AIS then it will be disqualified. Check with the Show Chair if you are unsure.

Finally, find the correct placement for your exhibit. Again, check with the Show Chair if you are unsure. Once your exhibit is in place, make sure that the best viewing side is facing forward. Then stand back and admire your efforts.

### Entering Seedlings

If you have done some hybridizing and have a seedling you would like to have judged, bring it along. Exhibiting seedlings in a show differs from exhibiting introduced cultivars in that it is not necessary to groom. The judges want to see every spent bloom, flower, bud, and leaf. Simply select the best-looking seedling in your garden, steady it in a show container and fill out your entry tag. What could be easier?

All these instructions may seem daunting however it's easier than you think. The main goal is to have fun...and this year ONIS trophy recipients will be awarded prizes.

Good luck!



*Example of a 'toed-in' bud  
(bud growing towards the flower stalk).*

## Past Show Award Recipients



### 2012 Court of Honor

*L. to R. Best Seedling 03-31-04 (TB), Best Historic BB 'Brown Lasso', Princess of Show TB 'Dizzy Miss Lizzy', Queen of Show MTB 'Stitched in Blue' and Best Canadian TB 'Great Lakes'.*



### 2015 Court of Honor

*L. to R. Queen of Show TB 'Paul Black, Best Historic TB 'Blue Sapphire', Best Novice BB 'Batik', and Princess of Show TB 'No Place Like Home'*



### 2019 Court of Honor

*L. to R. Princess of Show TB 'Imprimis', Best Seedling 03-40-03 (SDB), Queen of Show MTB 'Hoosier Belle', Best Canadian TB 'Northward Ho, Best Historic TB 'Champagne Elegance'.*

## It's Show Time, Folks!

This show is open to ANYONE, ONIS members and non-ONIS members alike! In short, if you grow irises and wish to exhibit bloom stalks from your garden, then this is the place for you!

If you have any questions, please contact the Show Chair, Terry Laurin.

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



**Sunday, June 2, 2024**

**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

**The William McGarvey Beardless Iris Award** (AIS Region. 2 Award) – Highest Placed beardless iris in show.

### **AIS Silver Medal Certificate**

Exhibitor with greatest number of 1st place stickers.

### **AIS Bronze Medal Certificate**

Exhibitor with 2<sup>nd</sup> greatest number of 1st place ribbons.

### **Best Specimen of Show Certificate - Youth**

### **AIS Silver Medal Certificate (Youth)**

Exhibitor with most 1st place.

### **AIS Bronze Medal Certificate (Youth)**

Exhibitor with 2nd most 1st place.

### **AIS Section Medal Certificate**

Most first place ribbons in qualifying sections provided there are at least 3 exhibitors and at least 5 cultivars in the section.

**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 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.

5a. 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.

b. Cultivars are to be arranged alphabetically in each section.

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

d. Containers are furnished by ONIS except in the Single Blossom section.

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

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

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

h. 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 opens to the public at 1:00 pm until 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 for bulbous irises & single blossom entries are eligible to receive award stickers and section certificates. Only bulbous iris award stickers are included in the tally for Silver and Bronze Medal Certificates. Neither is 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 1994 or earlier)

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

**SECTION N** – Single Blossom (not eligible for Best Specimen of Show or sweepstakes awards)

### **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

## EARNING POINTS

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 ONIS Auction and Sale on August 11, 2024.

Major Trophy Awards: 10 pts

Court of Honour: 10 pts

Other Awards: 1st place 5 pts

2nd place 3 pts

3rd place 2 pts

## Top Picks For Tall Bearded Iris Companions

From American Meadows website  
[Wildflower Seeds, Flower Bulbs, Perennials](http://www.americanmeadows.com)  
([americanmeadows.com](http://americanmeadows.com))

ONIS attended Evergreen Brick Works Seedy Saturday the first weekend in March. One of the most often asked questions was, "What are good companion plants for irises?" Hopefully this article will answer that question.

When growing tall bearded iris, companion plants can enhance your garden display by adding texture and colour. Here are some helpful tips to think about:

- If you're using one variety of tall bearded iris as a focal point, it will be important to know when it blooms and if it reblooms.
- Choose a selection of flowers that will bloom before, with, and following your tall bearded iris flowers to extend the flowering season in your garden.
- Consider the placement of flowers for a more structured, formal look or a more natural, casual effect.
- Consider the look of plant foliage, as well as plant blooms. Bearded irises have unique, sword-shaped foliage that brings an elegant texture to the garden.
- Harmonize with similar colours, or contrast with complementary colours.
- We generally recommend placing taller plants behind your tall bearded iris, and shorter plants in front.

### **Oriental Poppies**

Oriental Poppies offer deep clear red flowers, the one-colour bearded irises do not have. Tall and showy, with similar needs, they are great companions. Use white flowering oriental poppies for a calming effect, red for a pop of colour, or peach coloured flowers for a soft look. They will die back in summer, so plant other perennials in front of them to hide the dying foliage.



### **Lupin**

Lupins will help create a lovely wildflower look to your iris, with tall, colourful stems of long-lasting flowers. Lupin is available in both warm and cool colours, with flowers blooming in spring.



### **Allium**

Alliums give a sculptural element to the garden, and are available in several heights, from short to very tall. They are easy to grow and long-lasting pollinator favorites. For a formal look, choose allium of medium





height, and plant them in a linear or defined way. In an informal setting, tall allium planted throughout a perennial garden make great garden features with a whimsical feel. Fall-planted allium bulbs are available in pink, blue, white, yellow, or classic purple.

### Delphinium

The lovely tall wands of larkspur (delphinium) are excellent choices to grow with tall bearded iris. Shades of purple, blue, pink, and white offer lovely accompaniment for a late spring display.



### Peony

Peonies are one of the most well-known spring blooming perennials. With dark green foliage and blossoms that open to a lush, fragrant, and long-lasting flower, Peonies are an excellent tall bearded iris companion. While slow to establish, these long-lived plants will live for decades in the right conditions.



### Salvia

Salvia will add a colourful border to your iris garden with its colourful, and long-lasting flowers that attract a parade of pollinators. Typically available with dark purple or red flowers. In a formal setting, a nice border can be created, if informal, plant them in groups of threes or fives for a more natural look.



### More Bearded Iris!

With their wide array of colours, sizes, and bloom times, mixing more bearded iris into your existing bed can increase the season of blooms with a kaleidoscope of colours, patterns, and textures. If you have a reblooming variety, remember to add in some late season bloomers like hyssops, asters, and sedum.



*(For the shorter irises such as Miniature and Standard Dwarf Bearded, we use low lying phlox, aubrieta, and/or arabis to compliment them. Also the foliage of a fern-leaf peony can make a great backdrop. Cornflower and lungwort are good companions for the intermediate irises. – ed)*





## ONIS Matters

### In the Months Ahead

#### **ONIS Annual Iris Show**

**June 2 – 10 am to 3:30 pm**

**Set-up starts at 10 am**

**Open to the public at 1 pm**

Toronto Botanical Garden, Studio One

777 Lawrence Ave. E., Toronto.

Free Admission



Everyone is welcome to display bloom stalks from their garden at this American Iris Society sanctioned flower show. Visitors can vote for their favourites and receive a coupon for a free iris rhizome redeemable at the August Iris Rhizome Auction and Sale.

The show schedule is on page 5. It outlines the criteria upon which the bloom stalks are judged. It is also available from the ONIS website.

#### **ONIS Presentation**

**Wednesday, May 22 starting at 7:30 pm**

Aurora Garden and Horticultural Society

Royal Canadian Legion

105 Industrial Parkway North, Aurora, ON.

'Iris, Four Months of Bloom and Beyond' presentation by Terry Laurin and Kate Brewitt

Visit Garden Aurora's website for details, [About \(gardenaaurora.ca\)](http://About.gardenaaurora.ca)



#### **Online Rhizome Sale - Mid-July**

Details will be published in the summer edition of *The Iris Standard*, due out July 1, 2024. Also watch our website, [Ontario Iris Society \(google.com\)](http://Ontario Iris Society (google.com)).

#### **ONIS Annual Iris Rhizome Auction and Sale August 11 - Toronto Botanical Garden**

Mark your calendars. Details will be in the summer edition of *The Iris Standard*.

## Welcome New & Renewing Members!

C. Bradshaw – Toronto, ON

J. Charendoff – Toronto, ON

M. Curry – Whitby, ON

K. Francis – Minesing, ON

A. King – Innisfil, ON

N. MacFadyen – Barrie, ON

J. Matchett – LeFroy, ON

M. Miller – Innisfil, ON

S. O'Neill – Georgetown, ON

P. Rana – Toronto, ON

K. Rosen – Toronto, ON

V. Sawyer – Gifford, ON

L. Williams – Schomberg, ON

## AIS Matters

**AIS Region 2 Spring Gathering  
May 25 - Lancaster, NY.**

See AIS Region 2 website for details. [www.aisregion2.org](http://www.aisregion2.org).



## AIS National Convention



**'New Horizons'  
2024 AIS  
National/Japanese Iris  
Society Convention  
Portland, Oregon -  
June 25 to 29, 2024**

Details can be found on the convention website: [National Iris Convention 2024 - Greater Portland Iris Society](http://National Iris Convention 2024 - Greater Portland Iris Society).

*The Iris Standard* is published four (4) times a year, Winter, Spring, Summer, and Autumn. Materials submitted must be received by December 1<sup>st</sup> (Winter), March 1<sup>st</sup> (Spring), June 1<sup>st</sup> (Summer) and September 1<sup>st</sup> (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](mailto:oniseditor@gmail.com). Title page: IB 'Rififi' Photo: K. Brewitt.

