

The Iris Standard

Newsletter of the Ontario Iris Society

An affiliate of the American Iris Society

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Join the Ontario Iris Society
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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

The May long weekend is usually an indicator of the season ahead. This year, despite the weather being cool one day and summer-like the next, we had over 100 cultivars in bloom. The display was gorgeous, the colours eye-catching. In fact, many times during the season I would stand in the garden and take in the colours on display. I hope everyone enjoyed their gardens as much as I did!

In this edition the award winners from our June flower show are announced. You'll also find the results from the People's Choice Ballot. It was a busy day at the TBG. Read about it starting on page 3.

July signals the beginning of the ONIS sales...so we can buy more for our already overflowing gardens. This year's online sale starts on July 21 for ONIS members then everyone else can join in starting on July 23. Details are outlined on page 7.

If you prefer the excitement of an in-person auction, the ONIS Auction and Sale takes place at the TBG on August 10. The 'Table Sales' take place before the auction and continue afterwards. These rhizomes are dug from members' gardens and sell for very reasonable prices.

Lastly, read about the China Cove project on page 6 and how ONIS has contributed to this conservation project. Kate

SDB 'Blissful' bloomed from May 17 to June 15...that's 4 weeks!



President's Pointers

It's that time of year when the iris borer invades our iris rhizomes. On our Facebook group there have been several questions relating to the control of these 'beasts'. If you have the iris borer and are interested in learning ways to deal with them, the Ontario Iris Society has put together an information sheet which has been posted to our website, [Ontario Iris Society](http://OntarioIrisSociety.com).

Get Ready...It's Auction Time!

Our much-anticipated iris rhizome auction is on Sunday, August 10 at 1:00 pm. Once again, ONIS has purchased rhizomes from Mid-America Gardens, and if Thomas Johnson is as generous as he was last year, there will be many newer introductions available to the highest bidder. Please note that sales are cash only.

And don't forget your boxes. Because we receive the order in July, the rhizomes are potted-up to preserve their freshness. Boxes allow you to take your purchases home easily!

Table Sales Start at 12 Noon for Members

Table Sales are rhizomes members have donated from their gardens which are sold at very reasonable prices. August is the time of year most people dig and divide their irises. Those who do, can donate their extra rhizomes to this sale, and help support the club.



If you have any rhizomes to donate, please arrive by 11:00 am so the set-up committee can price and sort. Irises should be washed, trimmed, and labelled with the cultivar name (see picture left). Please note, only named cultivars will

be accepted. If you email me the iris names beforehand, we'll bring pictures.

You can also volunteer to help on the day of the auction and sale. We need people to assist with the set-up, record bids and assist with cash-out. If you would like to join us, email Kate at kbrewitt@rogers.com.

Still On The Hunt For 4" Plastic Pots

Thank you to those who keep dropping off your unwanted 4" square hard plastic pots. Sadly, these are becoming increasingly hard to find as round lightweight plastic pots become the norm.

This means I'm still on the lookout so if you, or anyone you know, has 4" plastic pots they would be willing to donate to the club, it would be greatly appreciated. You can email me at tlaurin@rogers.com if you have any questions.



4" square plastic pots

Please note, only pots, as pictured above, will be accepted. Other types of pots can be recycled or contact your local nursery. Many have recycling programs.

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



ONIS Annual Flower Show

By Kate Brewitt

Like every year, we didn't know what to expect for our June 1 show. May temperatures would soar into the upper twenties, causing blooms to fade within a day, then they would drop to almost freezing which slowed down the bloom. And then there was the rain! It was anybody's guess what would be in bloom.

In the end, there was a variety of irises; everything from Standard Dwarf Bearded to Siberian with the majority being Miniature Tall and Intermediate Bearded. It was a nice change to see irises from the median classes.

Five exhibitors entered 44 bloom stalks into the show. This included a novice exhibitor who was eager to enter the beauties from her garden...and they were beautiful! As always, the People's Choice ballot was very popular. It is always fun to watch visitors circle the room, agonizing over which irises are their favourites. The list of favourites, with pictures, is found on page 5. Thanks to all who participated!



*Court Of Honour L to R: MTB 'Silence Please',
IB 'Witty', and TB 'First Violet'*

The Award Recipients

Thanks to everyone who cut their bloom stalks for the show, and congratulations to the award recipients!

Ontario Iris Society Awards

R.D. Little Trophy

Best Specimen (Queen of the Show)

IB 'Witty' (Black, 2012)

Exhibitor: Terry Laurin



Toronto Region Award

Second Best Specimen (Princess of the Show)

MTB 'Silence Please' (Black, 2022)

Exhibitor: Ilona Shtepan



Verna Laurin Plaque - Best Historic Iris

TB 'First Violet' (DeForest, 1952)

Exhibitor: Terry Laurin



F.W. Caulfield Trophy

Most total points in Tall Bearded classes

Lyn Hickey

Jean Sanderson Trophy

Best Canadian Introduction

Not Awarded

W.J. Taylor Trophy - Best Seedling

Not Awarded

AIS Awards

AIS Silver Medal Certificate

Exhibitor with most 1st place ribbons

Terry Laurin

AIS Bronze Medal Certificate

Exhibitor with 2nd most 1st place ribbons.

Ilona Shtepan

**The Magdalen Award
(AIS Region 2 Award - Highest Placed
Median Iris)**

IB 'Witty' (Black, 2012) Exhibitor: Terry Laurin.



Selecting Favourites



Miniature Tall Bearded Exhibits



ONIS Annual Show in Studio 1 at the Toronto Botanical Garden © L. Gruve

People's Choice Ballot at the ONIS Annual Flower Show

The People's Choice Ballot is an important part of our annual show. Judges evaluate irises based on a set of criteria while visitors will base their decision on different criterion such as iris colour or patterning. In the end, the awards winners are never the same as visitors' favourites...as you will see here!

Thank you to everyone who participated! If you want to know how your choices compare, email Kate at oniseditor@gmail.com and she will send you your list. And remember, if you join us at the TBG on August 10th for the auction and sale, don't forget to bring your coupon for a free iris rhizome from the Table Sales!



1st choice – TB 'Wintry Sky' (Keppel, 2002)



2nd choice – TB 'Classic Look'
(Schreiner, 1992)



3rd choice – MTB 'Pink-All-Over' (Fisher, 1999)



4th choice – IB 'Bold Stroke' (Jones, 1993)



5th choice – IB 'In A Flash' (Black, 2001)
"Nice beard, 😊," commented one person.

The Ontario Iris Society Donates to the Nature Conservancy of Canada

Parts taken from the NCC website.

In the March/April 2011 edition of *The Iris Standard* there was an article on the dwarf lake iris (*I. lacustris*). This iris is native to the Great Lakes region of North America, where it grows in cedar swamps and swales in clearings in forested sand-dunes.



Dwarf Lake Iris (I. lacustris)

The dwarf lake iris is small with narrow, arching leaves which are about 6 cm long during the flowering period and can grow to 18 cm by the end of the season. The highly visible flowers have a diameter of 3 to 5 cm. Flowers are typically blue, although there is a variety that produces white flowers.

This species reproduces mainly vegetatively through its rhizomes (underground horizontal stems). This allows the species to establish large colonies often resulting in spreading clumps consisting of genetically identical plants.

In 2008, when the Endangered Species Act took effect, this species was listed as 'threatened'. In 2012 it was re-classified as 'special concern'. It should be noted that species under this classification do not receive species or habitat protection. At present, the main threat to the

dwarf lake iris is the loss of habitat due to human activities such as land development.

China Cove is an area on the Saugeen (Bruce) Peninsula where the dwarf lake iris grows amongst other important species of plants and animals. This 29-hectare property supports many other species at risk including Hill's thistle, and the midland painted turtle. However, this property is under threat and has already been divided into seven building lots ready for development. The Nature Conservancy of Canada (NCC) is looking for donations to help them preserve this area. With the help of generous donors, NCC has already raised \$2 million of the \$3.2 million required to purchase the China Cove property and care for it over the long-term. Raising the remaining funds is one of NCC's top priorities in Ontario.



China Cove, ON. Photo by Esme Batten/NCC staff.

Part of the American Iris Society's (AIS) vision statement is "*to support the conservation and protection of all irises, including existing wild and cultivated species*". Because we are an affiliate of the AIS the ONIS board felt this project was worthy of our support. To that end, ONIS has donated \$2,000 to NCC in support of the China Grove project.

If you'd like to read more, this link will take you to the NCC website, [NCC: Where We Work - Ontario - China Cove](#).

Annual Online Sale

It's time for the Ontario Iris Society (ONIS) online rhizome sale. Fee-paying members will receive 'the list' of available irises via email. It will also be posted on the ONIS website: [Ontario Iris Society - Auctions and Sales \(google.com\)](https://www.ontarioirisociety.com/auctions-and-sales).

To ensure everything runs as smoothly as possible here are some guidelines.

Please read carefully

WHO CAN PARTICIPATE?

The sale is open to anyone who lives in Canada.

SALE PERIOD

ONIS MEMBERS: starting Monday, July 21st, fee-paying members can place their orders.

NON-MEMBERS: starting Wednesday, July 23rd, orders will be accepted from non-members.

NOTE: Facebook 'members', who have not paid the ONIS membership fee are considered non-members.

Sale closes Saturday, July 26th at midnight (ET).

RHIZOME AVAILABILITY

Order early, some varieties are in limited supply. Orders will be filled on a 'first come, first served' basis. Since we want to fill as many orders as possible, please order only 1 or 2 rhizomes per cultivar. Substitutions welcome. Mark these in your order with 's' or 'sub'.

PHOTOGRAPHS

The 2025 Online Sale List has a link to the American Iris Society's Iris Encyclopedia (aka AIS WIKI) for each cultivar. Click on the link to view pictures and details. If clicking on the link does not work, paste it into your browser.

REBLOOM AND/OR HISTORIC NOTATIONS

Cultivars indicating 're bloom' are listed as such based on information from the AIS WIKI. There are no guarantees an iris will rebloom in your part of Canada.

Cultivars indicating 'historic' were registered with the AIS over 30 years ago (1995 or before).

PRICING

Prices are as indicated in the 2025 Online Sale List. Prices do not include shipping.

Fee-paying ONIS members receive a \$1/rhizome discount. If non-members are ordering more than 10 rhizomes, consider adding a 1-year e-membership for \$10 to receive this discount. Membership details are on the website, [Ontario Iris Society \(google.com\)](https://www.ontarioirisociety.com).

SHIPPING CHARGES

Shipping rates continue to rise so we have had to modify our shipping charges.

Ontario, Manitoba & Quebec residents

1 – 9 rhizomes: \$23.00

10 or more rhizomes: \$23.00 plus \$0.50 for each rhizome over 9.

Pick-up available in the GTA. Email to see if arrangements can be made.

Residents In All Other Provinces

1 – 9 rhizomes: \$30.00

10 or more rhizomes: \$30.00 plus \$0.50 for each rhizome over 9.

SUBMITTING YOUR ORDER

E-mail your order to Kate, Sale Coordinator, at kbrewitt@rogers.com with a subject line of **"ONIS Rhizome Sale 2025"**. Include method of payment plus full mailing address and telephone number. Confirmation of receipt of your order will be emailed to you within 48 hours.

ACCEPTED PAYMENT METHODS

E-transfer is preferred. Details will be included with the order confirmation. For other methods of payment, contact Kate at the email address above. Do not pay until your order is confirmed.

If you have any questions, please contact Kate at kbrewitt@rogers.com.



ONIS Matters In the Months Ahead

Online Rhizome Sale – July 21 – 26.

'The List' will be emailed to all ONIS members by mid-July. See page 7 for details.

ONIS Annual Iris Rhizome Auction and Sale

Sunday, August 10
1 pm to 3:30 pm

Toronto Botanical Garden,
777 Lawrence Ave. E.,
Toronto.

Free Admission



Warm up your bidding arm and join us for this year's iris rhizome auction. Bring your bidding strategies, too! There's always fun to be had as iris lovers try to out bid each other for their favourites. A slide show will be posted to the ONIS website in advance showing what's being offered.

Before the auction, starting at 12:00 pm, members can join us for the Table Sales where rhizomes sell for unheard-of prices. Rhizomes are donated by members from their gardens.

Reminder, sales are **CASH ONLY**. Bring a box or reusable bag to take home your purchases.

Welcome New & Renewing Members!

C. Blakeman – Hamilton, ON

L. Hickey – Toronto, ON

M. Lau – Mono, ON

M. Lepa – Collingwood, ON

S. Lex – Toronto, ON

L. Messervey – Toronto, ON

B. Pennycock – Tweed, ON

I. Smith – Aurora, ON

I. Warenycia – Whitby, ON

A. Zhang – Toronto, ON

Upcoming Events

Region 2 Annual General Meeting **October 18, 2025**

Cornell Cooperative Extension (CCE)
24 Martin Road, Voorheesville, NY.

Join members of AIS Region 2 at the first in-person annual general meeting since 2019. Watch the autumn edition for details.

AIS Matters

2025 AIS Membership Special Continues



Get a single full membership for \$10 US, regularly \$45 US. Offer available until November 1, 2025. 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](#)

The **AIS Symposium** has been cancelled for 2025. Instead, AIS members will receive an invitation to share the names of their favourite irises from all classes. Details released this fall.

Deadlines for AIS Region 2 Judges

August 1 is the **due date** for the AIS Official Ballot for Judges. Vote online (<https://system.irises.org/user/login>) or complete the mail-in paper ballot which must be postmarked no later than August 1, 2025.

August 4 – Deadline for AIS Judges' Activity Report. Print the form from the Region 2 website (www.aisregion2.org), complete it and email to Wendy Roller, AIS Region 2 Judges' Chair, (gwr67@frontier.com).

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.