



PRESCOTT AREA IRIS SOCIETY

March 2011

Volume 8, Issue 2

President's Message

We had a great turn out for our February meeting in spite of the chilly weather that turned to snow shortly after the members arrived. Many had to eat and run as they were afraid of getting stuck in the snow. About half of the members attending were from out of town scattered in every direction from Buckeye, Wilhoit, Sedona, Camp Verde and Glendale. Reports are that all made it home safely, thank goodness.

Unfortunately with the frigid weather we were unable to organize our committee activities fully. We are asking for your help in planning the first activity of the spring, our Iris Exhibit at Mortimer Nursery.

- First we need a chairperson to coordinate the tasks listed below and keep in touch with the committee volunteers
- Create the program which outlines the rules, categories and awards
- Publicity—all information is outlined in detail—it just needs to be sent
- Order ribbons and/or other prizes for winners
- Volunteer (preferably with SUV or Pick-up) to bring supplies from storage to Mortimer Nursery on May 6
- Members to come May 6 to set up the vases, alphabet letters/signs for types of irises and arrange the tables in the tent in the late afternoon
- Greet guests and hand out rhizome sale flyers May 7, exhibit day
- Marketing - set up and inventory items we have for sale
- Set up the iris displays and provide instructions to those bringing in their entries.
- Tally the people's choice winners
- Photographer – take photos of the event and winners for our newsletter
- Clean up/take down everything afternoon of the 7th and return supplies to storage

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

April 9
1:30-3:30 p.m.
Yavapai Title

April 30
Region 15 Spring Trek
Stanton Iris Gardens
Valley Center, CA
Register Now!!

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May 7
Spring Show
Mortimer Nursery

...

May 29-June 3
AIS National Convention
Victoria, B.C.

*Yavapai Title, 1235 E. Gurley,
Prescott at the Gurley and Sheldon
intersection beside Circle K

Screen Play, Keppel, '96 is reported to be an early bloomer. This iris is growing at the YC sculpture garden. It will be fun to see which iris blooms first in the garden this year.



MARCH 26 *Sun Country Iris Society* **APRIL 16**

EARLY IRIS EXHIBIT

POTTED IRIS SALE

Gardener's World

9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

3401 E. Baseline Road

Phoenix, AZ 8504

SPRING A.I.S. SHOW

POTTED IRIS SALE

11 a.m. to 4 p.m.

BAKER NURSERY

3414 N. 40th Street

Phoenix, AZ 85018

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Those of you that indicated on your renewal application that you would to help with the show are listed below. Let us know which tasks you can help with. Email me: artwest@cableone.net or phone 928-778-1551.

Carolyn Alexander

Claude Baker

Judy & Stan Book

Valerie Casale

Joella Cheek

Diane Clarke

Ruth DeVries

Doris Elevier

Elaine Fleming

Bonnie Haughton

Robert Smith

Vera Stewart

Carol Thomas

Audrey Velonis

This show can't go on without your help. We need you to step up today as planning must be done now for this show to be successful. Thank you in advance.

Carolyn



Exhibit table 2010 Show

Mortimer Nursery's Iris "to do" list for Spring

Spring is here and the ground is warming up! It is time to clean up the iris beds by removing all the dead and old leaves and uncovering the tops of the rhizomes so they can bask in the sun! Pull out all grass and weeds so that the iris can use all of the nutrients from the fertilizer you will be giving them.

We recommend using **Mortimer All Purpose-Starter Fertilizer** to get your iris off to a great start. Our formula is 7-19-9, with extra iron and minerals. A light application in early spring and a second light application about a month after blooming will feed them well. We do not recommend using high nitrogen numbers for iris as it encourages rot problems.

Thrips and **aphids** are two of the worst pests for iris. They damage the flower buds, stunting and ruining the flowers and leaves. A systemic insect treatment works well to deter these insects. The plant takes in the product through the root system with the insecticide traveling throughout the plant. We recommend using **Bayer Advanced 2 in 1 Systemic Rose and Flower Care** in granular form which feeds and protects for 6 weeks. Remember to apply once a month or so until the blooming cycle is finished. Another Bayer Advanced product we recommend is **All-In-One Rose and Flower Care** which feeds and provides insect and disease control, a liquid which you just mix and pour around the iris.

Bring a copy of this article in to the Nursery and get a 20 percent discount on any of the above-mentioned products. *This offer is good thru April 30, 2011 and cannot be combined with other promotions or sales.*

Happy Spring from Mortimer Nursery, go out and dig in the dirt!

Valerie Phipps, Nursery Manager

More AIS on the Web

In addition to the update of the American Iris Society website, there is also a new blog called the [World of Iris](#). One recent post is about iris reticulata which several of our members are growing. It is one of the first iris to bloom in the very early spring.

The AIS also has a presence on [Facebook](#). Feel free to make a comment or share a photo of one of your iris in bloom. This is a great way to make friends with iris enthusiasts from other parts of the country.

Another way to keep track of AIS is to follow them on [Twitter](#). Here you will find links to iris introductions, interesting seed sales and current information you might otherwise miss.



Iris Reticulata, Harmony by David Nicholson

Introducing Sharon Shellhorn Phelps, PAIS Secretary

For me my love of the outdoors, gardening and “playing in the dirt” probably stems from growing up with parents and grandparents who always had large vegetable gardens and many beds of flowers. My great grandfather was known as the “orchard man” as he had a huge orchard in Nebraska. I have always preferred being outdoors to indoor activities and seeing the marvels of nature is still a wonder to me.

I must confess that during my younger years I was drawn to pansies and violets. I think that every card that I ever gave my mother must have had pictures of either pansies or violets. But during our residency in the mid 1970's in St. Charles, Missouri (just west of St. Louis) I was given the opportunity of digging up wonderful old irises from a piece of property that had at one time been used as a retreat for the Catholic Church. Those few iris began my love affair with this marvelous, sometimes delicate-looking flower that continues to be a main-stay in every yard I have developed since then.

Growing up within a military family and being married to a man that insisted on moving often, I have lived in many states from the East Coast to the West. Born in New Mexico, I then mostly grew up in Virginia and North Carolina. I do miss the GREEN, azaleas, camellias, gardenias and all of those wonderful moisture-loving plants. Those plants again graced our yard in Georgia, but garden changes had to be made when we found ourselves in Missouri, Oklahoma, New Jersey and California.

Moving to Prescott has challenged my gardening skills as it does for so many. But, wonders of wonders, iris still can grow here and even flourish! My knowledge of iris has expanded tremendously since I joined the Prescott Area Iris Society. I pretty much had always grown tall bearded iris until moving here. Now my iris world has expanded thanks to many of you.

Besides gardening, I keep busy with many local activities including volunteering at our local public library and I am very active in the international program of American Association of University Women. Still being drawn to my social work background, I now mentor women who are nontraditional women students returning or beginning college and I also work with a program to provide encouragement to teenage girls in their educational endeavors.

Introducing Cathy Craig, PAIS Treasurer

Cathy Craig is a California native who moved to Prescott with her husband and Mother from southern California. She is self-employed and specializes in doing taxes and investments for her clients. When they moved permanently to Prescott 3 years ago, they bought a wonderful, flower-potential lot with house attached near Thumb Butte.

Cathy is the former treasurer of International Bulb Society, founded the Pacific Bulb Society and is currently treasurer of PAIS and NADS (Northern Arizona Daylily Society).

Until about 20 years ago, Cathy was a card-carrying Brown Thumb. However, one day she saw a hybrid hippeastrum (sold and improperly labeled as amaryllis these days) in bloom and fell in love. This started her love for tender bulbs. She then discovered daylily cultivars (mail order) and other perennials, shrubs, trees and the more hardy bulbs that cannot be grown in southern California.

She moved a thousand plants and bulbs when they moved to Arizona from the yard in San Clemente. She has been expanding the garden area here since then. Cathy is in the process of increasing her collection of daylilies, iris, and other perennials and small shrubs with an eye to becoming an AHS Daylily Display garden next year. There is only one in the entire state of AZ and it is in Phoenix.

Cathy became interested in iris when she went to an IBS member's home in Fresno to salvage his collection of iris and amaryllis hybrids some years ago. Carolyn encouraged her to join PAIS so she and her mother joined. Personally she is primarily interested in seeing other gardeners' gardens.

The splendor of the rose and the whiteness of the lily do not rob the little violet of its scent nor the daisy of its simple charm. If every tiny flower wanted to be a rose, spring would lose its loveliness.

Therese of Lisieux

Is Spring Here?

Here's a photo of my 'Mellow Yellow' flower bed. The daffodils in this bed have been blooming for about 2 weeks. They are the first to bloom because of the warmth from the concrete. With over 600 daffodils in the yard there will be many more daffodils blooming in the next few weeks. This will take the blooms right up to when the dutch and



the dwarf bearded Iris start to bloom. I like to color coordinate my beds so everything in this bed is yellow. There is a bearded iris , Bright Sunshiny Day, to the left of the daffodils and beyond that there is a yellow daylily. There are yellow pansies in the front (not shown) and yellow chrysanthemums behind the daffodils. By blending different plants in the same bed you can achieve flowers nearly all year. As you can tell, I love flowers.



Bright Sunshiny Day, Johnson '10

I noticed thrips in my daffodils a few days ago so I will have to spray for insects as soon as the wind dies down a bit. If I don't catch the insects soon they will start laying eggs in the irises and then I will have a BIG problem. I already have Bayer Rose and Flower food with insecticide in the ground but it didn't get the job done. Sometimes we have to use more than one method to control these pests.

Carolyn

HOW TO EXTEND YOUR IRIS SEASON WITH PHOTOGRAPHY

By Melanie North

How do you extend your Iris season? Take pictures, that way you can enjoy them all year round.

By following these simple steps you can take beautiful pictures no matter what type of camera you own.

- 1. Know your camera, lenses and equipment, read and re-read your camera's booklet. Practice taking pictures, developing your film and evaluate your pictures. If you plan on purchasing a new camera , do your homework, visit a camera store, let the salesperson know what you are going to do with your camera. Buy a photography magazine , once a year, usually in December or January they have special buyers guides to help you pick out the best camera, equipment and film for your needs . The best camera to use on Iris photography is the SLR or the Single Lens Reflex Camera with interchangeable lenses. I personally use the 80-105 mm zoom lens for most photographs, but my telephoto lens , the 100mm to 300mm zoom, can also give you some very interesting close up shots. My camera, Canon EOS 3 is an automatic with a manual setting to give more versatility in picture taking If you have a point and shoot camera, you can still get some very nice results by using your telephoto and wide angle zoom control on your camera. Don't be afraid to take a whole roll of film and experiment with it. Try different angles, backgrounds and different lighting situations. Take notes so that when you develop your film you can improve your photo the next time you take your picture ,or know that you are on the right tract and can use that information to take other photos.
- 2. Avoid shooting at noon. The bright sunlight will bleach out your colors. If you can only shoot at noon use a , diffuser or a reflector to get rid of unwanted shadows. A diffuser works the same way as a cloud passing overhead. I use a white umbrella but you can also use a transparent white material. Hold this material over your subject, get someone to help you with this. Your material can be attached to a wire hanger. If your subject is in an uneven lighting situation, half shade half sun, a reflector can allow you to bounce the light around and fill in the shadow area, making the light appear more even. A plain white poster board is ideal for this situation. Other colors to try are silver (you can use aluminum foil for this attached to a piece of cardboard) and gold. The silver board will give

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your subject's area a crisp clear light, and the gold will give a warm glow. Make sure to hold the board as close to the subject without getting your board in the shot. The best time to photograph your Irises is during overcast days, early morning or late afternoon. Your colors will be more vibrant. Taking a picture after a rain storm is pleasing when you can photograph tiny droplets of rain on your Irises. But never take pictures in the rain unless you can protect your lenses and camera. Unwanted droplets on your picture can ruin a perfect shot, not to mention water in your camera can damage it. Pros use a water bottle to mist flowers and get pretty much the same effect.

- 3. Use a tripod, and cable release if possible. A tripod-pod will enable you to shoot at slower speeds which will allow more of the picture to be sharp. A tripod will allow you to take your time with framing your shot. It will also allow you to make sure your area around your subject is free of unwanted twigs, people, pets etc.
- 4. Use a low ISO speed film (this is located on your film box), of 100 or less, which makes for a better picture especially if you want to enlarge it later. Larger ISO, 400 speed film and higher , tend to have a more grainy appearance with washed out color. Kodak and Fuji make excellent films and both have excellent web sites that you can visit to get valuable information.
- 5. Before you take your shot, check your Iris in all directions and every angle. you will be surprised the different shots you will get. Don't forget to try horizontal or vertical compositions with your camera.
- 6. Don't be afraid to get up close to your subject, the biggest fault that occurs with most pictures are shots taken too far away. Frame your subject, get as much of your subject into the shot as possible.
- 7. Have patience with your subject, take your time taking the picture. If it is not a good day for you, chances are you will not take a good picture.
- 8. Try to avoid taking pictures on windy days. But if you must take pictures on a windy day a piece of cardboard held close to your flower will help to steady your subject. Ask someone to assist you with this . Use a 200 ISO or 400 ISO film to make up for movement of your Iris.
- 9. Try something different, why not do a still-life of your Iris. With simple materials you can take a very pleasing photo which can be enlarged and framed. Follow these simple steps:
 - 9a. Find a shady place outside, this will eliminate any unwanted shadows in your photograph.
 - 9b. Place a sturdy table or TV tray against the wall of your house, or in front of a nice back drop such as shrubbery, someplace where it will not distract from your subject. Drape a piece of black velvet on your table, and if your table is against a wall tack up some of the velvet onto the wall . Other color backgrounds that compliment your flowers are blue, black, green, gray or off white. Colors that are least flattering are tan, beige, lavender and peach. Felt also works well as a background material. Try and avoid shinny materials that do not reflect well.
 - 9c. Place your Iris and objects (these can be sea shells, vases, pictures, cards etc.) around the table, experiment with different levels and compositions.
 - 9d. Place your camera on your tripod and look through the lens, do not take your picture at this time, check your composition, and surrounding area. If this looks pleasing to you take your picture. If you have a cable release be sure to use this. If you do not have a cable release slowly release your shutter button. If you are fortunate to have a timer on your camera set this and step away from your camera, and allow your camera to take the picture. All of these suggestions will allow you to take a picture without blurring at slow speeds because of camera shake.
- Note: The best f stops to use are f16, f22 for flower colors such as white, yellow and light pink . For darker colors blues, blacks, orange, browns, use f11 or f13. This will give you the best depth of field for your flowers, and allow the entire flower to be in focus.
- 9e. Experiment with different objects, backgrounds, but most important have fun. Now as old man winter approaches and your beautiful Irises and roses get ready for next year's colorful show, get your photo albums or your slide projector a hot cup of cocoa and enjoy your Irises ...and share them with a friend or loved one....

This article has been published with permission from the author. To view some of Melanie's beautiful iris photographs, visit her website: <http://alligator222.tripod.com/test/rose.html>

Region 15 Spring Trek

Dress Rehearsal for the AIS 2012 National Convention

at *Stanton Iris Gardens, Valley Center, CA*

The American Iris Society

April 30-May 1, 2011

Hosted by RVP Cheryl Deaton

Join us for a fun-filled afternoon roaming Stanton Iris Gardens, one of the 2012 AIS Convention Master Gardens, located in the northern San Diego area. The bus will leave the hotel at 1:00pm Saturday April 30th. Judges' Training in the garden on seedlings and/or tall bearded irises by Jill Bonino. After a delightful afternoon the bus will return us to the hotel at around 5:30pm for our Region 15 Meeting and a simple supper. If time permits, there will be Judges Training after the meeting, or on Sunday morning. We will hold a raffle of iris items donated by hybridizers and other iris enthusiasts. Sunday morning there will be a meeting for the 2012 Convention Committee.

On the same weekend as the Spring Trek, the San Diego Iris Society is holding their Spring Show and Sale at Balboa Park - Casa del Prado Room 101, San Diego, right next door to the famous San Diego Zoo. Come join the fun and see some beautiful flowers!

Full Registration - \$60 per person

Includes Bus and Garden Tour, Judges' Training and Dinner

Bus & Garden Tour Only - \$40 per person

Includes Bus and Garden Tour and in-garden Judges' Training

Hotel - Comfort Inn - (760) 489-1010

1290 W. Valley Parkway, Escondido CA

Rate of \$80 per night for April 29 & 30, departing May 1.

Mention **Region 15 America** for the discounted rate. Rooms are available in limited numbers, so make your own reservations early. If arriving at the hotel after the bus tour Saturday, please arrange for late check-in.

Contact

Cheryl Deaton Email: region15kids@hotmail.com

Tel. (661) 252-6771



Registration Form - AIS Region 15 Spring Trek - April 30-May 1, 2011

Please return this form filled out, along with a check made out to **Region 15 AIS** to:

Cheryl Deaton, Region 15 RVP
27218 Walnut Springs Avenue
Canyon Country CA 91351-3314

Name(s) _____

Street Address _____

City State Zip _____

Phone Email _____

Full Registration (\$60 p.p.) _____ Bus & Garden Tour Only (\$40 p.p.) _____

Judge's Training: Yes _____ No _____ Total Amount Enclosed \$ _____