



PRESCOTT AREA IRIS SOCIETY

MARCH 2013

Volume 10, Issue 2

President's Message

Greetings to All,

Spring is coming soon, the weather is warming, the trees are budding and our iris are awakening from a long winter sleep. They are showing new leaves and increases. Our activities for the year have begun. We had a wonderful February general meeting with great food at our pot luck, wonderful speaker (thank you Kathleen) and a fun time with a white elephant game (thank you Sharon Luebkin). This year is going to prove to be an exciting year of creating new friendships, education, opportunities and fun.

Our recent cleanup in the Yavapai College Sculpture Garden was a great success. We had a good number of volunteers who worked hard, shared stories and had a productive and good time. The iris garden looks great. Many hands make light work. The cleanup took two mornings (thank you Bonnie and all those who worked these two mornings).

We are quickly approaching our Spring Farmers Market Sale on May 11th at Yavapai College (thank you Judy for handling this). We will have a large number of potted irises on sale there if you or friends would like to get a jump start on the season.

Our Spring Iris Show, the Kaleidoscope of Color 2013, will be on May 18th. This is a people's choice award program (thanks to Carolyn Alexander and Kathleen Shaffer). Everyone is encouraged to bring your irises to be viewed and voted on by all our visitors. Last year's program was widely attended by over 250 people from across the state. Current indications are that this event will be more highly attended than last years. Please let all of your friends, neighbors and other garden enthusiasts know about this premier show. We will also be selling potted iris at the show. Word of mouth and enthusiasm can do as much to bring people to our show and events as all our advertising. Help make our show and other event a success. Look for articles in High Roads Magazine and the Prescott Courier in early May.

As most of our members are aware, our community outreach program's main focus for the last 7 years has been the Yavapai College Sculpture Garden and it will continue to be our premier location for the display of our iris and the Wm. R. Dykes Medal Iris Garden. We are looking at renovation of several areas and possible expansion of the gardens to include additional irises and possibly a "Story Book Iris Garden".

We are looking forward to a wonderful Spring Show and participation by our members. Please encourage others to join PAIS and beautify their garden and Prescott with iris.

Kind Regards to All,

Dennis Luebkin

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

April 13

Attracting Butterflies and Hummingbirds

Preparing Iris for Exhibit

See pg. 4 for meeting details

MEETING TIME 1:30-3:30 P.M.

YAVAPAI TITLE

1235 E. GURLEY, Prescott
Parking in back of building



Humming Bird's Blessings
Coleman, 2005 SDB

March/April Birthdays

- March 9 Stan Book
- March 12 Joella Cheek
- March 14 Vera Stewart
- March 27 Judy Book
- March 29 Elaine Fleming
- March 30 Ruth Simons
- April 22 Dennis Luebkin
- April 29 Annette McDonald

Opportunities

PAIS and its members have shown the Prescott Community the beauty of iris by providing our annual iris show, planting iris in our personal gardens and by our public garden plantings of the Wm. R. Dykes Medal Garden at the Yavapai College Sculpture Gardens. The visitors we had at our Spring Show last year marveled at the beauty of these gardens in full bloom. We should all be very proud of what our society and its members have done in these gardens.

PAIS has been presented with several additional opportunities in our community where we have been invited to create and participate in a new iris garden project. Our first invitation came from the Sharlot Hall Museum to plant iris there. After an initial contact PAIS made a proposal booklet presentation to the Museum to create "The Sharlot Hall Museum Historic Iris Gardens". After meeting with the Museum staff walking the grounds and discussing the program, the proposal was accepted by the Museum. The Museum has asked PAIS to create Historic Period Gardens at each of their exhibits throughout the property. This presents a significant opportunity to display historic iris (period 1500 to 1920) in another widely visited venue in the center of the city. The Board is considering this to be a 5 year plus program to gradually develop these gardens. We are asking all of our members that have historic iris from the indicated periods to contact Dennis Luebkin with the names of the historic iris that you may have that you would like to donate to these gardens. We will keep you apprised of the status of this program in our next newsletter.

In conjunction with the Sharlot Hall Museum program the PAIS Governing Board has been asked to participate in a renovation project at the Citizens Cemetery on Sheldon Street near Yavapai College by the Yavapai Cemetery Association. This Cemetery was the original Cemetery in Prescott and was in operation from 1863 to 1933. It was customary in that time period to plant iris near the headstones to beautify the graves. We have been asked to thin and remove many of the existing historic irises that have overgrown portions of the Cemetery. These irises can be used at the Sharlot Hall Museum project. The Board is also considering this proposal. Both of these projects at Sharlot Hall Museum and Citizens Cemetery would be for the preservation and conservation of historic iris in our community.

The board is looking for members that may be interested in these historic preservation and display projects. Both projects are 5 plus year programs. We encourage our members to ask others in the community to join PAIS and participate in these programs. Please contact Dennis Luebkin for information at 623-980-6627.

We are also creating a horticultural program involving iris in the public school system. Thank you Sharon Luebkin for dedicating your time to this program. Volunteers from our community who may be interested in working with second, third and fourth grades are encouraged to contact Sharon Luebkin concerning this exciting opportunity. If you know anyone who might be interested in this opportunity outside of our group have them contact Sharon Luebkin @ 623-628-4860.

Kind Regards to All,

Dennis Luebkin

Miniature Dwarf Bearded Iris (MDB)

This class of iris is one of my favorites. The small size, 8" or less, the diminutive blossom and the early bloom are so welcome after the cold, drab winter months. Miniature Dwarf Bearded iris are the first to bloom and can bloom through light frosts and moderate snow cover. The iris shown below began blooming March 25. MDBs produce short, small leaves which can be all but smothered by the abundance of blooms. Their color range includes shades and tints of nearly every color in the visible spectrum They can be one color, bicolor, spotted, speckled or veined with beards that may be any shade from white, tangerine, blue to almost black. They are excellent rock garden plants, make colorful edgings for garden borders and are striking in patio planters. Some even rebloom in the fall. For more information visit the [Miniature Dwarf Bearded Iris Society](http://www.miniature-dwarf-bearded-iris.org/).

Growing Miniature Dwarf Bearded Iris—Robert Pries—AIS Iris Encyclopedia

Information from: <http://wiki.irises.org/bin/view/Main/Mdb/InfoGrowingDwarfIrisMDBs>

The culture of most bearded irises is similar and easy but there are things to consider that are special with the Miniature Dwarf iris.

- First, they are small. Under 8 to 10 inches or 20cm. Because of this, they can be easily overwhelmed by weeds. In the summer, if it is hot and wet, weeds will block the airflow around the dwarfs and steam them so they are susceptible to rot. Good maintenance is essential.
- Second, although their root systems will eventually grow deep to a foot or more, newly planted plants may take a year to achieve this and in their first winter they may be susceptible to frost heaving. If the ground remains frozen there is no problem, but alternating freezes and thaws can destroy newly planted plants. Solution, place a brick on the rhizome the first winter and check them to see if the roots have been forced out of the ground. If so, keep some spare, screened soil around to cover the roots quickly.

Sources for purchasing MDB iris:

Long's Gardens
<http://www.longsgardens.com>

Chapman Iris
<http://www.chapmaniris.com/id208.htm>

C & T Iris Patch
<http://www.candtirispitch.com>

Aitken's Salmon Creek
http://shop.flowerfantasy.net/~flowerfa/shop/category.php?id_category=6
http://shop.flowerfantasy.net/~flowerfa/shop/category.php?id_category=6

<http://www.beardedirises.info/kellys-top-picks/miniature-dwarf-bearded/>



Soil Amendments for the Garden

Sharon Phelps

Information taken from Arizona Cooperative Extension, Yavapai County paper, written by Jeff Schalau, County Director.

"I know spring fever is here and everyone is dying to do something in his or her...garden...vegetable and annual flowers require regular (once or twice per year) inputs of soil amendments and fertilizers. The goal of soil amendment is to provide a better environment for plant roots. Fertilizers provide essential plant nutrients that improve growth and production of the crop plant. The correct combination of amendments and fertilizers can make the difference between success and failure in your garden..."

At a recent presentation by one of the Master Gardener's, the above quoted material was presented in a hand-out and a power point presentation further delved into the mysteries of fertilizers. To summarize some of the salient points:

As PAIS members have previously advocated, using a 10-10-10 fertilizer is often recommended for general application in one's garden. Sometimes a fertilizer higher in the second number is more advantages when planting new plants to promote root growth and flowering.

It was suggested that it is important to remind oneself that it is the numbers representing nitrogen, potassium, and phosphorous that are important, not the brand.

AND A FACT NOT OFTEN KNOWN, ORGANIC FERTILIZERS (worm casings, fish emulsion, kelp, etc) ARE WONDERFUL ADDITIONS TO THE GARDEN BUT, ONE MUST REMEMBER THAT ORGANIC FERTILIZERS MUST FIRST BREAK DOWN INTO AN INORGANIC (these are fertilizers that are mined or man-made) SUBSTANCE TO BE USED BY THE PLANT. What this means is that organic fertilizers will take longer to provide a benefit to the plant. Do not quit using organic fertilizers, just allow time for them to work.

And a reminder, the extension service will provide free soil analysis and free publications and information on gardening and pest control. 928-445-6590 Ext 222 or visit the Prescott Extension Office at 840 Rodeo Drive (off of Gail Gardner Way).

PAIS CONTACTS

President - Dennis Luebkin dlobkin@q.com
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Sculpture Garden - Bonnie Sekenske bsekenske@gmail.com
Iris Show Chair -- Carolyn Alexander artwest@cableone.net

Iris Related Websites

PAIS website: <http://prescottirissociety.org/index.htm>
PAIS on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/PrescottIrisSociety>
American Iris Society <http://www.irises.org/>
AIS Region 15 <http://www.region15ais.org/>
Iris Encyclopedia <http://wiki.irises.org/bin/view/Main/WebHome>

April 13 Meeting

As gardeners and iris lovers, one of our goals is to create a beautiful environment for our own enjoyment and to share with others. Valerie Phipps, club member and manager of Mortimer Nursery will present a program on attracting hummingbirds and butterflies to our gardens.

The May iris exhibit will be here before you know it. Carolyn Alexander, exhibit chair, will present tips on preparing your iris for an exhibit.

See you at 1:30 at Yavapai Title, Saturday, 4/13/13.

Fantastic March 2013

What a fantastic March we have had. One small snow storm that wasn't that cold and the snow melted within a day. The nights having been above freezing in most areas, but there are a few of you that are in colder areas. Hence we are having a very early spring. My fruit trees are blooming along with daffodils and standard dwarf bearded irises and one purple tall bearded iris. I'm sure your yards are reflecting the same early spring rush of growing irises that I'm seeing.

Hopefully you have fertilized the irises and given them a systemic insecticide like 'Bayer Rose & Flower Care'. Bayer has changed their formulas this year as you have a choice of 2 & 1 (old formula) which is fertilizer and insecticide together. Or you can get the new 'All in One' which has the fungicide added to the 2 & 1 formula. Most of us don't need the 'All in One' for irises but if you see mold or black looking stuff on the leaves than maybe you'll want to use the "all in One". I personally would rather have more fertilizer and choose the 2 & 1 formula. If you are using the granular type just scratch it around the rhizome but don't put it directly on the rhizome. If you choose the liquid it works best to spray with water on the leaves. Be sure and start watering your irises now if you haven't already done so. They have a lot of growing to do in the next few weeks before budding and blooming.

It looks like we will depend a lot on the members at higher or colder climates this year for the PAIS Iris Show on May 18th as many of us at lower elevation may have seen our irises bloom prior to show time. As always we want a good showing of a variety of iris for the public to see so plan on attending and sharing your iris with us.

Wishing you happy gardening, Carolyn Alexander



Sculpture Garden Cleanup

Several weeks ago, eleven brave souls worked on cleaning up the dead leaves from the clumps of rhizomes in the sculpture garden. It was a bigger job than some of us anticipated, but with lots of help, the task was completed in record time. The new growth looks good and there are even several bloom stalks emerging.

Thanks Bonnie for taking on this responsibility and thanks to the following willing volunteers:

Sharon and Dennis,
LaDean and Lee
Carolyn
Kathleen
Darrell
Katy
Bonnie
Stan and Judy

