



# PRESCOTT AREA IRIS SOCIETY

Calling Card - photo by Carolyn Alexander

VOLUME 13 ISSUE 2

FEBRUARY 2016



## Presidents Message

Greetings to All,

Happy Winter!! It has been an interesting winter with beautiful white snow covered mountains, rain, cold weather and then sunshine with nice warm days. El Nino has been good for the Prescott area and the state as a whole. With the Region 15 Fall conference now behind us and a new year of exciting speakers and events coming up, we look for continued participation from the PAIS members to

make this another successful year. See our article on page 3 updating our outreach projects for this year's plans.

If you have information or would like to do an article for the newsletter all members are welcome to contribute. If you would like to see a particular subject discussed or need information on a topic let Judy Book, Vicki Hughes or me know and we will try to get that information for you. Our success is in sharing information and working as a team to help us all learn.

This year we will be concentrating on learning what our club is about, what each of the volunteer and elected positions in PAIS do, and how you can participate to a greater degree in the mission of PAIS. It is with the support and volunteering of our members along with bringing new members into the club that we keep PAIS a vibrant, forward thinking and fun place to be.

We are in a cycle this year where many of our current board members including myself will be leaving the board due to expiration of our terms. Many have been on the board either in their current position or have switched positions on the board as needed for several years. Some have been on your board for many years and are looking forward to new people joining the board with fresh, exciting ideas and enthusiasm.

We will be having speakers from other portions of Region 15 and AIS speakers from other parts of the country to bring you information on irises and other related topics. Page 10 of the newsletter outlines our programs and activities for 2016. This information will also be in the 2016 club handbook.

We have been honored by the American Iris Society to have two of our public garden projects placed on the current list of AIS display gardens. These are the Sharlot Hall Historic Iris Gardens and the Hot Shot/Fire Fighters Memorial Gardens at Embry Riddle University. This year the Robert Marcusen Sculpture Garden (formerly the Yavapai College Sculpture Garden) will be cont. pg. 2



Janice with her name sake, Janice Chesnik

## Saturday, February 20, 1:30 pm

Our first meeting for 2016 features, Janice Chesnik, and her "Iris War Stories". We also hope to have our Club Handbook ready for distribution.

*"My love for irises began when as a child, on Memorial Day (Decoration Day in those older times) I would ride in my aunt's car to the cemetery in the Flint Hills of east central Kansas just after she and I had cut huge bouquets of irises from her garden to decorate my grandparents' graves, followed by a picnic with the entire huge Jones family. Happy times! And the wonderful aroma in that car from all the irises stayed with me all my life. So when I found a Schreiner's iris catalog in 1968, I immediately ordered some for my Phoenix garden, where I lived for 21 years and raised my family. I was active in garden clubs in Phoenix, and when I met some fellow iris enthusiasts, we formed Sun Country Iris Society, and my hobby really took off. My garden was on the Region 15 Spring Trek in the early 70's, and I met many new friends throughout the region, served as president of Sun Country, and was Region 15 VP for a couple of years after that. I grew mainly tall bearded iris, but had some spurias also.*

*After marrying Ray Chesnik in '76 I moved to San Marcos, CA where he and Bob Brooks had a mail order catalog specializing in irises & daylilies, called Cordon Bleu Farms. I had acres of iris to try my hand at hybridizing, but most of that activity was with daylilies. I had two introductions in 1980 or thereabouts, and both won HM medals with AIS. Ray and I both became AIS judges and life members.*

added to the list of AIS display gardens. PAIS can take pride in this distinction since we will have in Prescott, three of the only AIS recognized public display gardens in the Southwest. This distinction is due to the dedication of the PAIS membership in making each of our projects and programs a success. From our public gardens to our work at the cemetery to our adult and youth education programs the American Iris Society looks at PAIS as an example of what an AIS affiliate can do to promote iris horticulture across the US and Canada.

Those of us that are caring for potted irises for the spring exhibit sale should check their plant markers to make sure that they are readable. Around Valentine's Day be sure to give them, as weather permits, a dose of fertilizer and a good watering if needed. I would like to thank Judy Book and Vickie Hughes for their work on the new Membership Handbook. There is a lot of wonderful information included in it. Also a welcome to Carolyn Alexander to the Board to replace Sharon Luebkin as Membership Chairperson. Sharon will assist as her health permits.

Best Regards to All, Dennis Luebkin

## Controlling Rust Disease on Irises

Dennis Luebkin

In the past year I've had several members indicate that they are troubled by spots on the fans of their irises. Though bearded irises are relatively hardy, these plants can sometimes fall victim to a fungal disease called rust. Symptoms of rust include oval brown or red spots on the plant's leaves and stems. If left untreated, the disease can kill your iris and spread to other plants. Eradicate rust immediately to help protect your garden. Rust is not normally seen in the desert southwest and is more frequently found in more humid climates like the Midwest and coastal Calif. However, with climate change occurring in all portions of the country what was once normal is no longer. Rust can be caused by several factors. Higher than normal rainfall, higher humidity, improper watering of your plants and too much shade and not enough sunlight resulting in too much moisture. For those experiencing a situation with rust do the following.

### Step 1

Remove the environmental factors that encourage rust growth on bearded irises. Prune back surrounding foliage to expose the affected plant to more air and sunshine, thus helping to reduce humidity. Change your watering practices so you are only applying water at the iris plant's base instead of getting the foliage wet.

### Step 2

Trim off any infected stems and foliage using pruning shears. Dispose of the infected plant parts immediately to avoid spreading the rust spores to other vegetation. Do not compost these infected leaves. Put in garbage or burn them. Disinfect shears after use. <https://ag.arizona.edu/yavapai/anr/hort/byg/archive/sanitizingpruningtools.html>

### Step 3

Treat the bearded iris with a fungicide spray labeled for use on ornamental plants. Such products are available at most garden stores and nurseries. For iris plants, North Dakota State University recommends chlorothalonil, thiophanate-methyl or triadimefon fungicides. Apply the products according to their labeled guidelines, as toxicity varies by product. It will most likely be better to go to a nursery like Mortimer's, Watters or PV Nursery since it may be difficult to find those products at Home Depot or Lowes.

Check how to apply and verify that it will not affect any edible vegetable or herbal plants you may be growing. You can also check with the County Agricultural Agent.

### Step 4

Retreat the plant four to six weeks after the initial fungicide application if the rust growths persist.



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## Focus on PAIS Outreach Projects

Dennis Luebkin

For many of our membership, both new and veteran members, there have been questions on what is happening on our outreach projects and what are we going to do this year. In 2015 our projects had some interesting turns and took a back seat to other PAIS activities and to events which occurred last year. In 2016 we will be moving forward on most of our projects. Here is an overview of the status of our projects and what we will be doing. If you can assist on any of these projects please contact the individuals indicated at the end of each section.

Citizens Cemetery Restoration: Our participation continues with the Yavapai Cemetery Association in their restoration of the old Citizens Cemetery. We have been asked by the cemetery association to dig, thin and remove irises from the cemetery. The historic irises we dig there serve several purposes. We use them as gift irises for our adult and youth education programs along with selling them at our summer rhizomes sales. A portion of the proceeds of our sales are donated back to the cemetery association to assist them in their restoration efforts. We will continue our iris thinning efforts this year at the cemetery. Contact Dennis Luebkin at [dluebkin@q.com](mailto:dluebkin@q.com) if you can assist. We are looking for a member to help coordinate our efforts with the cemetery.

Hot Shot/Fire Fighter Memorial Garden: The garden located at Embry Riddle Aeronautical University was initiated in 2014 and has been under development now for 18 months. Walks, lighting, landscaping and a memorial monument were completed in September of 2015 by the university. Located at the entrance to the Hass Interfaith Memorial Chapel, the iris garden defines the walkway to the chapel. The named irises describe the characteristics of first responders and spiritual names. The irises were planted in November of 2014.



This year we will be digging, dividing and respacing the irises to fit the finished development along with planting daffodils and day lilies to extend the bloom season in the memorial. The Garden has been designated by the American Iris Society as an AIS Display Garden. Contact Dennis Luebkin at [dluebkin@q.com](mailto:dluebkin@q.com) if you can assist.

Yavapai College Sculpture Garden: The YC Sculpture Garden has recently been renamed the Richard Marcusen Sculpture Garden after its founder. Our work in the sculpture garden this year begins on a positive note with an invitation by the Yavapai College Foundation to attend a meeting with the foundation concerning designating the sculpture garden as an AIS Display/National Iris Garden due to its unique **combination of sculpture, irises and native companion plants. Our meeting will include this year's proposed work in the garden along with the potential expansion of the garden's iris plantings and in participation with the YC foundation.** PAIS has been involved in the iris plantings since 2006. Our involvement in the sculpture garden was originally through the Friends of Yavapai College Art which is no longer in existence. With the potential of having the sculpture garden classified as an AIS Display/National Iris Garden Prescott, we will have three of the prestigious AIS classified display gardens in our community and the only AIS Display/National Gardens in the southwest. PAIS should be proud to have achieved this recognition. We will continue our maintenance of the Dykes Medal Garden and the other iris plantings in the garden as we



formulate future expansion plantings in the garden. Contact Patrick Beatty at [patrick.beatty@att.net](mailto:patrick.beatty@att.net), 928 -541-9086 if you can assist.

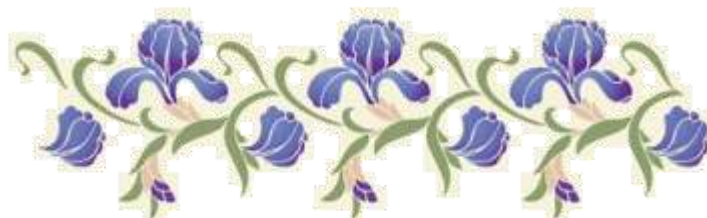
Sharlot Hall Museum Historic Iris Gardens: In 2013 PAIS began the development of the Historic Iris Gardens at Sharlot Hall with the intent of displaying historic irises from the year 1400 to the early twentieth century **which would be the irises consistent with Prescott's pioneer settlement period. The garden has been** designated by the American Iris Society as an AIS Display Garden. After meetings with museum staff the initial garden development was enthusiastically welcomed during its first year with many positive comments coming from both staff and visitors alike. In late 2014 with a new administration coming on board at the museum, the expansion of the project was put on hold . We will continue to assist in the maintenance of the garden areas which we have planted, but there are currently no expansion plans for the Victorian gardens and early twentieth century gardens originally proposed until a friendlier environment is achieved at the museum. We have also been requested by the new director to move our two day annual summer rhizome sales from the museum to a new location. We have held our annual sales at the museum for the past 10 years. We will be **holding this year's summer sales at the Yavapai Tile** building where we hold our meetings. We have in the past donated a portion of our sales proceeds to support the museum. This practice will be under review by the PAIS board for 2016. Contact Dennis Luebkin at [dlobkin@q.com](mailto:dlobkin@q.com) if you can assist.



Adult and Youth Education Programs: We have had requests to continue our education programs both at Yavapai College and in the Prescott area elementary schools. However, with the illness and long recovery time needed for Sharon Luebkin this year we have placed a hold on our adult and youth education programs until fall of 2016. Contact Sharon Luebkin at [dlobkin@q.com](mailto:dlobkin@q.com) or Sue Crabtree at [sue49@cablone.net](mailto:sue49@cablone.net) if you can assist.

PAIS supported Cub Scout Pack 15 by teaching them about irises and they have helped PAIS work at the **Citizen's Cemetery. We donated irises to the pack's school along with assistance in planting an iris garden** at the school. PAIS was working with the 27 boys to achieve an AIS horticultural badge. This year however, the **boy's ages 10 to 12 decided that they would not continue with the program. We thank the boys for their** work with PAIS. We look forward to working with other youth groups to teach them about horticulture and irises.

PAIS should be proud of its work in our community. We have received much publicity from both Region 15 and the American Iris Society for our programs with youth and adult education along with the numerous public outreach projects and financial support which PAIS has established in our community. Contact Dennis Luebkin at [dlobkin@q.com](mailto:dlobkin@q.com) if you can assist in any of our projects.



## Iris Care-Preparing for Spring

Dennis Luebkin

This is a hard winter with much rain, snow and cold temperatures due to El Nino. It is now mid February and March will soon be upon us with warmer temperatures and new growth appearing on our irises. Although we are still in winter and our irises are for the most part dormant, those of us at lower elevations in the Prescott area are already beginning to see some new growth appearing. In general, our winter care and getting ready for spring should be as follows:

**Cleaning and Weeding:** If you did not get your irises cleaned up last fall now would be a good time to consider doing it on a nice warm sunny day. Keep your iris beds free of dead leafs and weeds.

Remove the dead fans by pulling or cutting. One thing to note is that the fans that are not dead or dying back are still producing food for the rhizome even during the winter, so exercise care in how much of the fan you remove. If the fans are dead remove them since the dead fans will harbor the eggs of thrips and aphids.

Check the rhizomes to see if they are covered or buried too deeply. Two things will happen during the freeze and thaw weather of winter. Freezing will either cause the ground to rise around the rhizome and cover it up or it will lift the rhizome and pop it out of the ground.

Check the rhizome and either uncover the top of the rhizome or push the rhizome back into the ground and cover the roots, but keep the top of the rhizome uncovered.

Look for root rot. As you clean, check for the smell of rotting fans and rhizomes. If the rhizome is soft take action immediately. Comet or Ajax cleanser is good to use on the rhizome. Sprinkle the cleanser on top of the rhizome which will help dry out the rhizome and kill bacteria and fungus.

Some members last fall told me that they were experiencing spots on their fans and they were discolored and dying. This condition is most likely rust which is unusual in the Prescott area but does occur. See the article on page 2 regarding controlling rust. You want to treat it before the new fans produce too much new growth and it spreads to other plants.

**Mulching:** For those of us that have mulched our irises you can begin removing it after the weather warms sufficiently and we are not seeing hard freezes, generally in March or early April. Add the mulch to your compost pile.

**Fertilizing:** Now is the time to consider beginning your fertilizing for spring growth. You should wait until mid to **late February. We try to fertilize around Valentine's Day as a benchmark. We call it "Love Your Iris Day" or at the latest early March.** We will talk more about fertilizing at our February meeting. If you live in a warmer climate zone such as Sedona, Camp Verde or Yarnell, fertilizing in late January and early February is appropriate.

Fertilizing in February and early March gives the rains and snow a chance to move the fertilizer down into the ground and break down into the components needed to produce strong new growth and good bloom in the spring. You may want to do two applications.. One in mid to late February and another in mid to late March.

One thing to note concerning one of our most favorite fertilizers. Although being a very effective fertilizer and **insect control, some of the ingredients in "Bayer Systemic Rose and Flower Care", or two in one, which is used to control thrips and aphids, have been linked to the decrease in the Honey Bee population.** Patrick Beatty, one of our Master Gardeners is investigating this to see if there are other options.

A multi-**purpose food such as Arizona's Best all purpose food 10-10-10** is still recommended or use Best 6-24-24XB which also contains sulfur and iron which is wonderful for producing bloom. All purpose rose foods are also good. Fertilizers containing phosphate or triple phosphate are great for bloom production.

**Watering:** Watering is dependent on our weather. With our cold wet winter you may not need to water very much. Check the soil moisture by digging down about 3 inches. If the ground is dry, give the iris a deep watering. You will need to do this as temperatures begin to warm, especially if you are at a lower elevation.

**Composting:** Composting is good to do during the off season. You can add your mulch and the iris leaves to your compost. Good composting now will provide you with good vegetative matter to add to your beds in the summer when you dig, divide and transplant your irises.

**Happy Gardening:** Your irises are currently taking a winter break, but will soon be putting on new growth for spring bloom.

# The Evolution of Irises

by Tom Waters

<http://theamericanirissociety.blogspot.com/2016/01/the-evolution-of-irises.html>

Have you ever wondered where irises come from? Well, we all know they come in a box from Oregon via UPS. But I mean a little farther back than that. How did these particular plants evolve? How do they fit into the long history of life on Earth? How did they come to have so many shapes, colors, and sizes, and spread to so many different continents and climates? Iris is a wonderfully diverse genus, with between 200 and 300 species. And it is part of a larger iris family (which botanists call Iridaceae) that includes something like 2000 species, including other familiar garden plants like the crocus and gladiolus. Early botanists tried to deduce the family trees and family history of plants by noting their physical similarities and what clues could be gleaned from fossils. In this century, much has been learned from DNA studies, giving us a more complete picture of plant evolution. Peter Goldblatt of the Missouri Botanical Garden has taken a special interest in the Iris family, and Carol Wilson of Rancho Santa Ana Botanical Garden has studied the genus *Iris* itself in more detail. I've relied heavily on their work in putting together this post.

**Origin of the Iris Family.** Like many families of flowering plants, the iris family has its beginnings in the late Cretaceous period. At that time, the Earth's climate was about 8C (15F) warmer than today, and there were no polar ice caps. Sea levels were high, and many areas were covered by shallow inland seas. It was a time when flowering plants were spreading throughout the world. They were diversifying and evolving rapidly, both encouraging and encouraged by the simultaneous evolution of bees and other insect pollinators. The iris family probably got its start about 82 million years ago, in what is now Antarctica.

Antarctica?

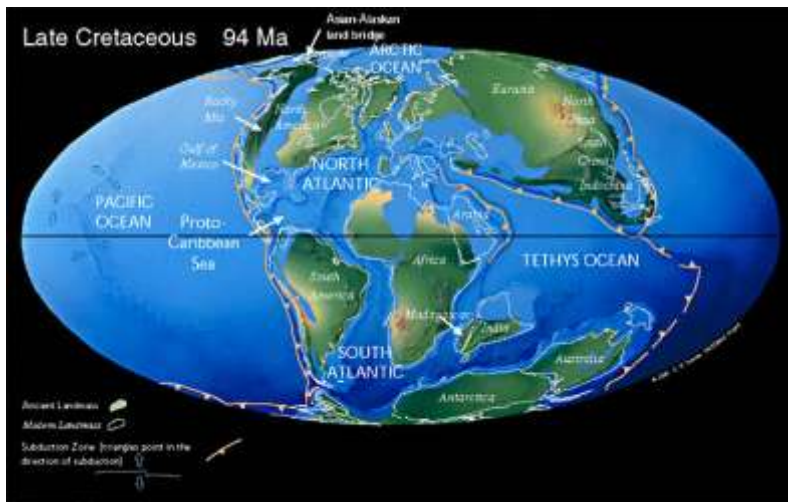
At that time, Antarctica wasn't centered on the South Pole, but was nearer Africa, with some parts of it extending well north of the Antarctic Circle. It was still joined to Australia on the east. The climate was temperate, although cool, and the high latitude made for long summer days and long winter nights. It is thought that the strappy, vertical leaves (a distinguishing feature of the iris family) evolved to make maximum use of the sunlight, which would have been nearly horizontal much of the time. Two of the earliest branches of the iris family were isolated in Australia as it broke off from Antarctica, and five others developed in Madagascar and South Africa. (Madagascar and India were wedged between Antarctica and Africa in the southwest Indian Ocean at the time, making it possible for plants to migrate between the two continents.)

Around the time these different branches of the iris family were evolving away from one another and beginning to develop their own separate identities, the Earth experienced one of its great mass extinctions when a meteorite struck the Earth in what is now the Gulf of Mexico, 66 million years ago. Most people think of this event in connection with the extinction of the dinosaurs,

but its effects were much more far-reaching than that. Many species of plants that depended on photosynthesis were driven to extinction by the dark envelope of dust that shrouded the Earth following the impact.

Fortunately for the iris family, Antarctica, Australia, and South Africa—on the opposite side of the globe—were the best place to be. Although it is estimated that more than half of North America's land plant species were lost in the extinction, few if any species were lost "down under," although the numbers of individual plants plummeted.

With Antarctica moving south and the world growing colder, the future of the iris family now belonged to these plants that had colonized Africa and other warmer lands.



*The Earth around the time the iris family first emerged*



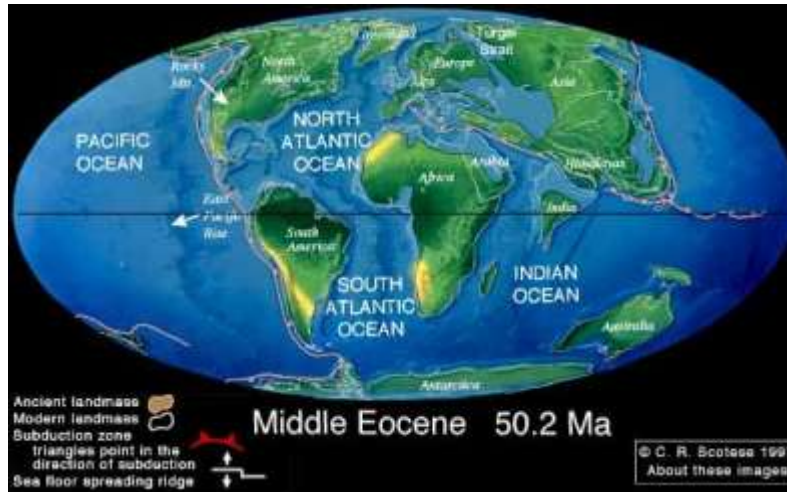
Two of the types of early irids (members of the iris family) in south Africa turned out to be very successful, spreading to other parts of the globe. These are also the branches of the family most familiar to gardeners today: iroids and crocoids





Iroids and Crocoids. No, they are rival not alien factions from *Dr. Who*. The iroids are members of the iris family related to irises, and the crocoids are members of the iris family related to crocuses. The iroids include irises, as well as other familiar genera like *Tigridia*, *Sisyrinchium*, *Moraea*, and *Diets*. A prominent distinguishing feature of the iroids is their wide, arching, petal-like styles that cover the anthers and end in a crest. We can picture this emerging as an especially effective way to channel bees into the heart of the flower. The crocoids include crocuses of course, but also *Romulea*, *Ixia*, *Tritonia*, *Freesia*, *Crocasmia*, and *Gladiolus*. **It's hard to imagine a stylish modern garden without at least a few of this crew.** *Cræcus*, *Romulea*, and *Gladiolus* eventually found their way north into Eurasia from their south African origins, but it was the iroids that eventually made it all the way to the Americas.

*Iris*. In the iroid clan, the closest relatives to the irises themselves are the South African *Moraea*, *Diets*, and related genera. *Iris* separated from these genera about 45 million years ago. The great sea that had divided Africa from Asia was gradually narrowing and vanishing, perhaps allowing the ancestors of the irises to find a new home in Eurasia. Later, the Sahara and Arabian deserts would prevent their return south.



The Earth around the time the genus *Iris* emerged

Turkey seems to be the center from which the genus *Iris* has spread throughout the northern hemisphere. Many different types of irises are found in Turkey today, whereas most other regions have just a few local species.

For centuries, botanists had assumed that the most fundamental divisions of the genus could be seen in the different rootstocks: Junos with their bulbs and fleshy roots, xiphiums (which include the Dutch irises so popular with florists) with their tulip-like bulbs, the small reticulatas with their bulbs covered in netting, and of course those that grow from rhizomes. Some botanists even put these groups into different genera based on their rootstock. The rhizomatous branch of the genus was presumed to have then split into beardless, crested, and bearded sorts.

What has become clear recently is that these different rootstocks do not represent an early division of the genus into separate branches. Early irises were probably all beardless and all grew from rhizomes.

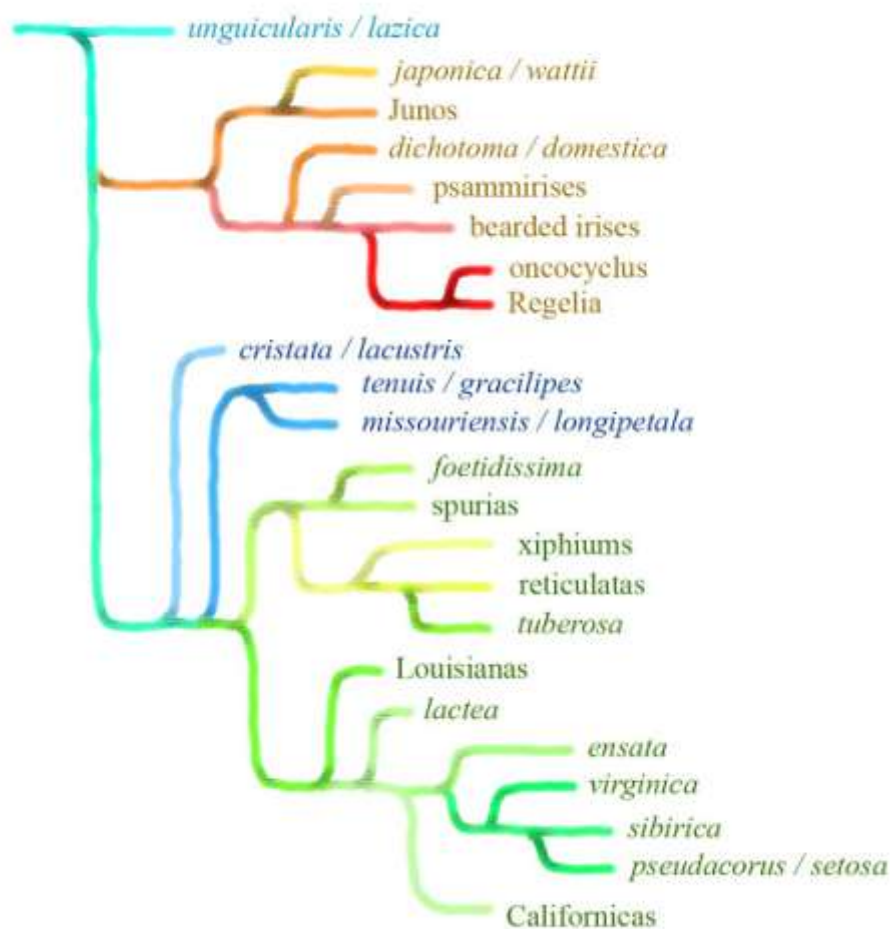
These evolved into several different branches still having these basic characteristics, and then some of these branches gave rise to offshoots with deciduous foliage and bulbs as an adaptation to climates with very dry summers. So spuria irises are more closely related to Dutch irises than they are to Siberians, for example. Crested irises arose in more than one branch of the family tree, and are not a precursor to the development of beards. The earliest group to branch off from the others is represented today by *Iris unguicularis* and the closely related *Iris lazica*. If you want to have a mental picture of what the ancestor of all irises was like, *Iris unguicularis* is a good candidate.

Next, the family tree split into two branches, one of which spread mostly westward in the vicinity of the Mediterranean, while the other spread mainly northward and then east into northeast Asia and eventually North America. The Mediterranean branch produced the bearded, oncocyclus, and Regelia irises, but also gave rise to the Junos, and apparently the crested irises of east Asia, such as *Iris*



*Iris unguicularis* 'Lavender Moonbeams' (Tasco, 2014): the newest version of the oldest iris? photo: Superstition Iris Gardens

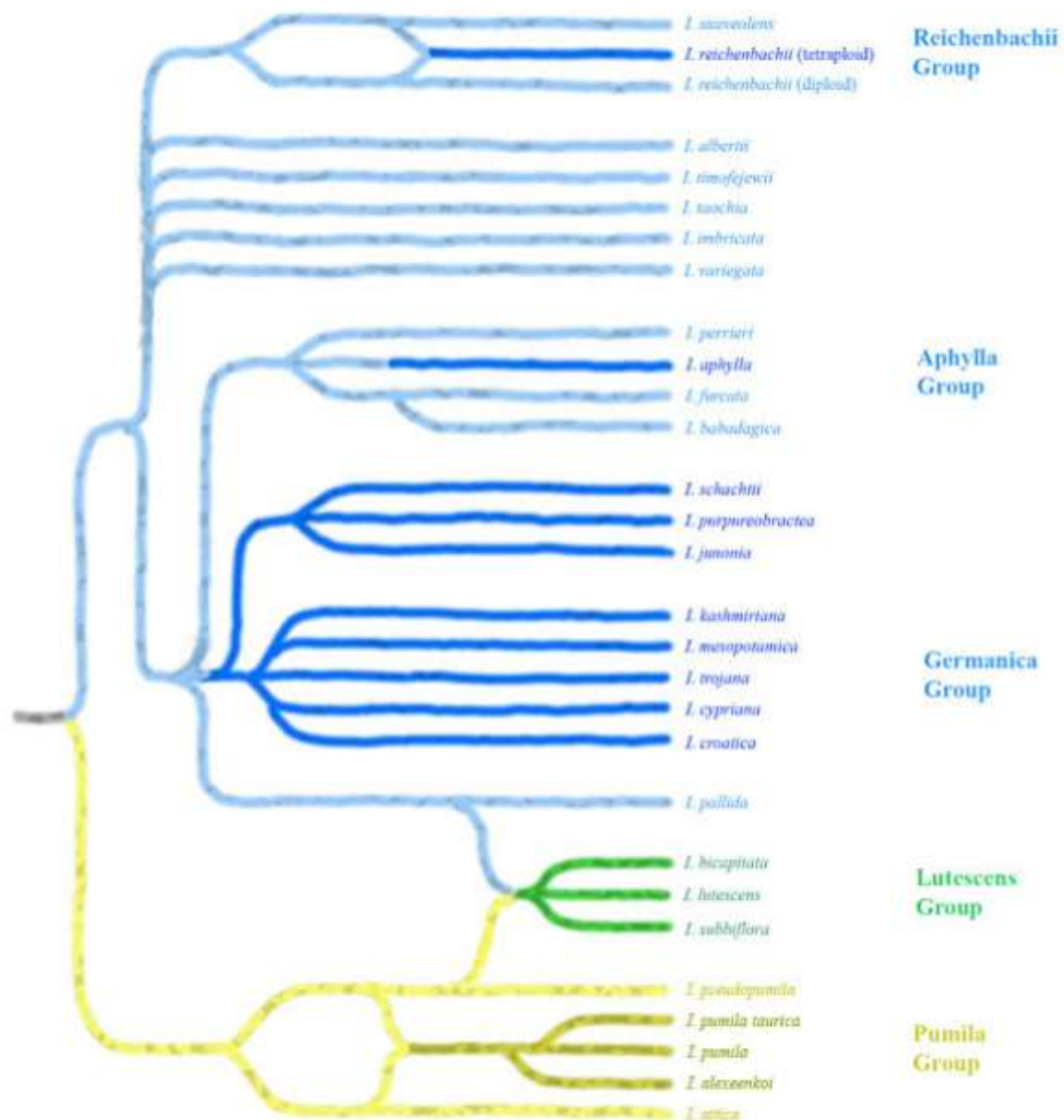
*japonica* and *Iris wattii*. These are actually more closely related to the Junos (which also often sport crests of various sorts) than to any other groups. Interestingly, one small branch of this group gave rise to both *Iris dichotoma* and *Iris domestica*, once thought to be so dissimilar that they were each placed in their own genus!



Meanwhile, the Asian branch of the genus led to the spurias, xiphiums, and reticulatas, plus most other beardless species. The migration of irises into North America was apparently not a single event, as there is no single branch of the iris family tree that has all the American irises and no Asian iris. The American crested irises, including *Iris cristata*, have the oldest lineage, but they do not seem closely related to the east Asian crested irises, as was once supposed. The crest feature developed independently in these two distantly related branches. A second venerable branch of irises in north America includes *Iris missouriensis* (the Rocky Mountain Iris), and the western species *Iris tenuis*. The Louisiana irises represent another early branch of the evolutionary tree. The other North American irises were presumably later arrivals, with close cousins in Asia. *Iris virginica* is related to the Siberian Irises and to *Iris pseudacorus*; this Asian-American grouping has a common ancestor with both the Pacific Coast group and also with the widespread Asian *Iris lactea*.

Bearded Irises. The bearded irises grow around the Mediterranean, with some species ranging northward into central Europe. The tall bearded irises were the first to attract the attention of European nurserymen and plant breeders in recent centuries, and they are the most represented in our gardens today. There was probably an earlier division of bearded irises into dwarf species with a basic chromosome count of 8 (*Iris attica*, *Iris pseudopumila*, and *Iris pumila*, which apparently arose as a tetraploid hybrid of the first two) and other species (mostly taller and branched) with a basic chromosome count of 12. It is from this latter branch that our modern TBs, BBs, and MTBs are directly derived. The chart of bearded iris relationships here is not from DNA studies, but based on chromosome analyses, geographical considerations, and other suppositions.





In the big picture over long time scales, we think of evolution as a branching tree, where populations divide, become isolated, and go their separate ways to form new species. But if we look at the process in more detail, we see that species sometimes come about in other ways: as hybrids of earlier species, by polyploidy (doubling or otherwise increasing the number of chromosome sets), or by both these processes at once. The relationships among the bearded irises, for example, sometimes resemble a branching tree, but in some instances are more like a network, which species separating and then coming back together to make new species. Evolution is an intricate process.

Irises, being prized as garden flowers, have attracted the attention of human breeders. When looking at the difference between modern hybrid TBs and their wild predecessors, it is tempting to see a new, accelerated evolution now dominated by human intervention. But although the effects of human breeding efforts are dramatic, it remains to be seen what impact they will have in the long term. Our own genus *Homo* is perhaps 3 million years old; the genus *Iris* has been here about fifteen times as long already. The last two centuries of iris breeding, compared with the 45-million-year evolution of the genus, is a very tiny fraction indeed (the same as about half a second out of a day). The irises humans have created mostly depend on humans for their existence—you find them in gardens, and sometimes in old cemeteries, but they have yet to take over the Asian Steppes or the Amazon. Will there still be irises 5 million years from now? 20 million years from now? Will our present interest in them leave any traces that far in the future?

The American Iris Society blog, [The World of Iris](#), is updated weekly. You may want to sign up for email notification of new posts.

## 2016 PROGRAMS AND SPEAKERS

### FEBRUARY 20 JANICE CHESNIK IRIS WAR STORIES

Back in the 60's and early 70's, Janice along with some fellow iris enthusiasts formed the Sun Country Iris Society in Phoenix. Janice served as the society's president and as VP of AIS's Region 15. After marrying Ray Chesnik in 1976, they moved to San Marcos, CA where Ray and his partner Bob Brooks owned a mail order business specializing in iris and daylilies, called Cordon Bleu Farms. During this time, Janice hybridized and introduced two new irises that both won HM medals from AIS. She helped develop and maintain many acres of iris and daylilies during their 30-year residency. After San Marcos there was a brief stint in Georgia, then a return to Arizona in Cottonwood to be closer to family.

### MARCH 19 JANIS SHACKLEFORD- IRIS COLOR PATTERNS: HYBRIDIZATION

Janis is the immediate Past President and Treasurer of the San Diego Iris Society. She is an award-winning irisarian, hybridizer, and master gardener. She has given iris presentations to fellow master gardeners and local organizations. She has a Master of Science in Biology from San Diego State University where she currently works as a Biochemical Research Associate.

### JUNE 18 GAIL MORRIS CREATING A MONARCH WAY STATION

With climate change, Prescott is now on the monarch butterfly migratory route. The "National Monarch Butterfly Project" is looking for people to create butterfly gardens, sanctuaries, and way stations for their new migration paths. Gail Morris is the Director of the Southwest Monarch Study Organization. Southwest: <http://swmonarchs.org/> National: <http://monarchwatch.org/>

### AUGUST 27 RILEY PROBST REBLOOMING IRIS

Riley Probst is a member of the AIS Board of Directors and is the President of the Reblooming Iris Society. Riley and his wife Shirley own Fleur de Lis Iris Garden in Modesto, CA. He is also a hybridizer with a particular interest in working with Miniature Tall Bearded iris. Some of his recent introductions include: Holiday in Mexico, Plum Quirky, Power Lines.

### October 22 – Eugene Zielinski Iris Species

Eugene Zielinski, our very own PAIS treasurer/member will present an illustrated talk on iris species/varieties.

### November 18 Local Nursery Drought Tolerant Plants

Companion plants for iris that are also drought tolerant. One of our local plant nurseries will present this information to our group.

*Meetings are held at Yavapai Title, 1235 East Gurley, Prescott, unless specified otherwise.*



## 2016 PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES

February 20	Janice Chesnik, Iris War Stories
March 19	Janis Shackleford, Iris Color Patterns: Hybridization
April 16	Exhibit Preparation
April 23	Garden Tour
April 30	Spring Iris Exhibit, Kaleidoscope of Colors Mortimer Nursery
May	no meeting
June 18	Gail Morris, Creating a Monarch Way Station
July 16	Sculpture Garden Dig
July 23	Marking Party
July 30-31	Rhizome Sale—Yavapai Title
Aug. 20	New member orientation—Linda Rossman
Aug. 27	Riley Probst, Rebloomers
Sept. 17	Iris photo contest, silent iris auction, ice cream social
Oct. 22	Rebloomer potluck, local speaker
Nov. 19	Elections, drought tolerant plants as companion plants
Dec.	no meeting

