

March, 2006

Next meeting Friday, March 17th
 Doors open 7:00 P.M.
 Meeting 7:30 P.M.
 Place Native Sons Hall
 239 High Street, Santa Cruz

March

Growth is in high gear now. Fungus disease such as leaf spot and rust are a problem. Spray your irises with any leftover dormant spray (at the same time that you spray your trees and roses) or any good fungicide. Also aphids begin being a problem. A systemic insecticide will work for about 3–4 weeks before you will need to reapply.



Elena with her new iris and also the Hudson's iris at last Spring's Regional

From The Prez

DEAR IRIS CLUB MEMBERS,
 We have the honor of having David and Anna Cadd for this month's regular meeting, March 17th! They will present a free and accredited judges training on Spuria Irises for our club. Hope to see you there!
 We are planning to have an informal garden tour for members only on Saturday, April 15th. Those who have agreed to open their gardens so far are Phillipa and Jack Alvis, Wayne and Carolyn Craft, Jim and Irene Cummins, and Diane Sampson. Our tentative schedule is: 9:00 A.M. at Diane's, 10:30 A.M. at the Cummins, and the Los Gatos gardens for the afternoon. Anyone else who is able to have an open garden, let Diane know. Please check for final details in the April newsletter.

Also, please let Charley or Diane know if you cannot make the March 17th meeting, but would be willing to help greet the public at our Annual Show, coming up on Saturday, April 29th, at the Capitola Mall.

Happy Spring!

❁❁ Diane

Get Pinned

Pins are still available. Ask at the next meeting or contact Shirley to buy one. We still have a few left from the Regional last Spring

2006 Calendar

Monthly meetings are held in Native Sons Hall unless otherwise stated.

Regular Meeting

Friday, January 20 7:30 P.M.

Program

Hot Garden Topic

Refreshments

Shirley Linck and Carolyn Craft

Regular Meeting

Friday, February 17 7:30 P.M.

Program

Our Website and Using the Internet

Refreshments

Mjeanne Erwin and Phillipa Alvis

Regular Meeting

Friday, March 17 7:30 P.M.

Program

David and Anna Cadd Present

Refreshments

Brenda Wood and Diane Harrison

Regular Meeting

Friday, April 21 7:30 P.M.

Program

Mini Show

Refreshments

Rosa Radicchi and Irene Cummins

Annual Iris Show

Capitola Mall..... April 28 to April 30

Set up

Friday 9:00 P.M.

Show

Saturday 9:00 a.m.–8:00 P.M.

Sunday..... 9:00 a.m.–6:00 P.M.

Regular Meeting

Friday, May 19 7:30 P.M.

Pizza Potluck



CULTURE TIPS

LAST YEAR WE WROTE, "Once again we've had a very mild winter with almost no frost. The rains are here again and the growth is rampant. By the end of the month the Pacificas and SDBs will be in the upside of bloom. It is that time of the year already! These heavy late rains leach out nutrients quickly especially if you have sandy soil. Even if you fertilized earlier, another light application of a balanced fertilizer would be helpful now. Spray now and at the end of the month with a good fungicide and insecticide to control leaf spot, rust, and aphids. Another application of an insecticide like *Orthene* two weeks before the show will take care of pests through the show date. If the soil dries out as the stalks are forming, water is needed to help growth and stalk formation. Water will help bring out the color and size of the blossoms." This was true in last year in 2005 and just as true now in 2006.

🌸 Joe

MBIS Fashion Statement

Dear Charley,

It was at the close of the Region 14 Spring show, when you loaded me with some wonderful bargains: T-shirt, mug, etc. You must hear my story about the T-Shirt that traveled to Paris, France. Upon the insistence of my French friend, we attended the France Iris Competition Gardens on May 16th and 17th. The T-shirt attracted a lot of attention. I even introduced the MBIS T-shirt to Dr. Roy Epperson, of AIS, who happened to be there as a judge!

And then, while shopping in Isle de la Cite, it upstaged all the other touristy shirts *aux fenestres!*

Happy Days!

Mary Lou Wyman

Web Bits

The newest material on our website includes the iris introductions of Lois Belardi and Elena Laborde, for your viewing pleasure. Joe Ghio's 2006 irises are there also, and soon we will add his 2004s and 2005s. Check them out!

If you have pictures of your own iris introductions, please send them in for posting on our website. We also have room for photographs of MBIS members' gardens, so if you would like to show your garden for the world to see, send a photo or two.

Here's a word to the wise about web-surfing—Firefox is one of the best browsers. It has more security features than the popular Internet Explorer.

Most websites look better when viewed with Firefox, Safari, Mozilla or Opera than they do when viewed with Explorer. Make the switch!

Finally, there is a great office program that can read and write Word and Excel files using the latest updates. It is also more secure than those widely used programs and the price is right—FREE. PC users Google for Open Office; Mac users, Neo Office. Here's to open source software.

Board of Directors 2006

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Garden Events

San Francisco Garden Show

The Cow Palace

San Francisco, California

March 15–19th

Wednesday to Saturday, 9 A.M. to 8 P.M.

Sunday, 9 A.M. to 6:30 P.M.

<http://www.gardenshow.com/sf/>

Cabrillo College Plant Sale

Horticulture Department, Cabillo College

6500 Soquel Dr., Aptos, CA

Presale for members only, Friday May 12th

Saturday and Sunday May 13th–14th, 9 A.M.–5 P.M.

AIS National Convention

Portland, Oregon

May 22–May 27

Judy Nunn, Registrar

4728 Jade St. N.E.

Salem, OR 97305-3138

Nunnjk@comcast.com

Monterey Bay Master Gardeners

Smart Gardening Faire

Scotts Valley

June 24

10 a.m.–6 p.m.



Hudson's RT-02, 1st runner-up for the Melrose Cup at Regional photo by Elena Laborde

Iris spuria

Anna and David Cadd, Cadds Beehive Iris Garden

The Spuria irises are probably one of the most exciting of the wild irises, but they have never received the admiration that they deserve. One of the reasons for this neglect is their name, which got the off to a bad start. Linnaeus gave them the name from the Latin word *spurius*, meaning “false,” probably because he thought it was a hybrid. That’s easy to understand: they are a complicated bunch of plants and difficult to sort out.

The Spurias can be found from Spain to China, with the greatest concentration in Central Asia. There are at least sixteen different species in this group, from one to three feet tall, growing in wild locations from wet and even salty marsh to rocky and dry deserts and everything in between. Most hybrids in cultivation are between 36 and 64 inches tall.

One of the most widely known species is *Iris orientalis* (formerly *I. ochroleuca*) from the Middle East, which has white flowers and big yellow signals on its falls.

Another, famous from the paintings of Pierre Joseph Redouté is *I. monnieri*. This ancient hybrid between *I. orientalis* and *I. xanthospuria* has pale yellow flowers with darker yellow signal. When growing at Versailles in 1808, it was known by the name, “Iris de Rhodes”.

Sir Michael Foster, who created his first hybrids from those same species, introduced a mid-blue variety, “Monspur,” in the late nineteenth century.

In California, Eric Nies and Marion Walker were using it in the early 1940s to create more modern-looking hybrids, with tall, upright standards and wilder, not so “spidery” falls. In their steps worked Carl Milliken, who introduced

“Wadi Zem Zem” (1943), which was the first winner of the E. Nies Award in 1956 and the parent of modern spurias.

And then there were Ben Hager, Eleanor McCown, David Niswonger, Charles Jenkins, Joe Ghio, Floyd Wickenkamp, Jim Hedgecock and recently Anna and David Cadd.

All Spurias have woody rhizomes, wiry roots and narrow, upright leaves that form tough, hardy plants. They don’t like to be disturbed by replanting, so it’s wise to plan them in clumps three feet apart. They can provide an excellent backdrop in the garden, but because their leaves die back in the summer, it’s good to plant them with companion plants on a separate drip system.

The Spuria’s flower stalks are tall, sometimes with two or three branches, usually with three or four branches, and, in recent introductions, with seven or eight flowers (at least that’s true in California). Flowers are white, cream, blue, purple, yellow, orange, brown and black, with signal or without, self, bi-colors or plicatas. They are excellent for cut flowers, as a blossom can last two or three days.

Spurias are very easy to grow, preferring a slightly alkali soil and twice a year fertilizing. Because not a lot of work was done with hybridizing Spurias, today’s hybrids are only several generations away from the species. The potential is enormous. Think about shorter, three-to-four feet tall plants, with pink or red flowers, with new color combinations, ruffles, lace with big, round flowers, evergreen varieties in the garden, and maybe re-bloomers.

It’s time to prepare the tweezers and hybridizer’s tags, folks!!!

AIS National

Rooms are still available at Oxford Suites, (800) 548-7848. If you would like to share a room, contact Char Holte: cholte@wi.rr.com, or (262) 641-2895 or 17308 W. Observatory Rd., New Berlin, WI 53146.



Elena’s seeding IN205

photo by Elena Laborde



DOOR PRIZES

1. **ALL NIGHT LONG**, Duncan, black-purple
2. **ANGEL WINGS**, Miller, bubbly white, blue horn
3. **BLAZING BEACON**, Tasco, S. gold, F. ochre-bronze
4. **BRAGGIN RIGHTS**, Burseen, white, blue edge of F., purple horns
5. **BRILLIANCE**, Painter, bright Spanish orange
6. **CHAMPAGNE BUBBLES**, Ghio, S. pink-violet, F. silver
7. **CHEERFUL DOLL**, Miller, MTB, orchid pink
8. **CLOTHED IN GLORY**, Kerr, yellow, brown band on F.
9. **DISCOVERED TREASURE**, Johnson, S. buff pink; F. orchid-violet
10. **DRIFTING BUBBLES**, Ghio, lacy light pink
11. **GOSSIP COLUMN**, Sutton, S. pink, F. white, lavender horns
12. **HEAVEN AND EARTH**, Lauer, pink amoena
13. **LOVE IS ALL AROUND**, Aitken, S. lavender, F. red purple, lighter edges
14. **PARTY'S OVER**, Meek, S. lavender, F. ochre-cream
15. **PASSION PLAY**, Lauer, pink, S. lighter
16. **ROYAL STERLING**, Keppel, clear lavender, white beards
17. **SARAH SUNSHINE**, Burseen, orange, spoons beards
18. **STRANGE SENSATION**, Ernst, S. grey-violet, F. peach
19. **THAT'S ALL FOLKS**, Maryott, huge gold, white spray pattern
20. **TOM CAT**, Lauer, S. cream, F. cream & blue



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