

THE REBLOOMING IRIS RECORDER

2024 Spring Edition

Journal of the Reblooming Iris Society

Vol. 103



Open Ocean

38"/Schreiners, 2016

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Offspring

35"/Lauer, 2018

Rebloomer in Zone 9 Photo Credit: D. Langton

Table of Contents

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. RIS Officers | 26. Yes, More Cold Country Rebloomers |
| 3. Map of RIS Areas | 27. Winter's Extraordinary Rebloom Season |
| 4. Directory of Area Directors | 30. Horton Iris Garden |
| 5. Editor's Note | 31. Jim Hedgecock |
| 6. Data Collection Form
(Please help w/ data collection.) | 32. USDA 2022 Plant Zones |
| 7. The 2022 Checklist of
Reblooming Irises | 36. An Array of Colorful Rebloomers |
| 8. Are USDA hardiness zones changing? | 37. Updated Observations |
| 9. 2025 AIS National Convention
In Big Sky Montana | 39. Iris That Bloom in The Fall |
| 10. Thank You, Ella McLeester! | |
| 11. COLD Country Rebloomers | |
| 12. North Central Area Director's Report | |
| 13. Northeastern Area Director's Report | |
| 15. Southwestern Area Director's Report | |
| 17. More Cold Country Rebloomers | |
| 18. Northwest Area Director's Report | |
| 20. Central Area Director's Report | |
| 21. Southern Area Director's Report | |
| 22. Even More Cold Country Rebloomers | |
| 23. Southeast Area Director's Report | |
| 24. Good Culture Ensures Rebloom | |



Amelia's Magic

35"/G. Spoon, 2023

Photo Credit: G. Spoon

Map of Areas and Area Directors' Names

NW
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fpedersen@neo.rr.com

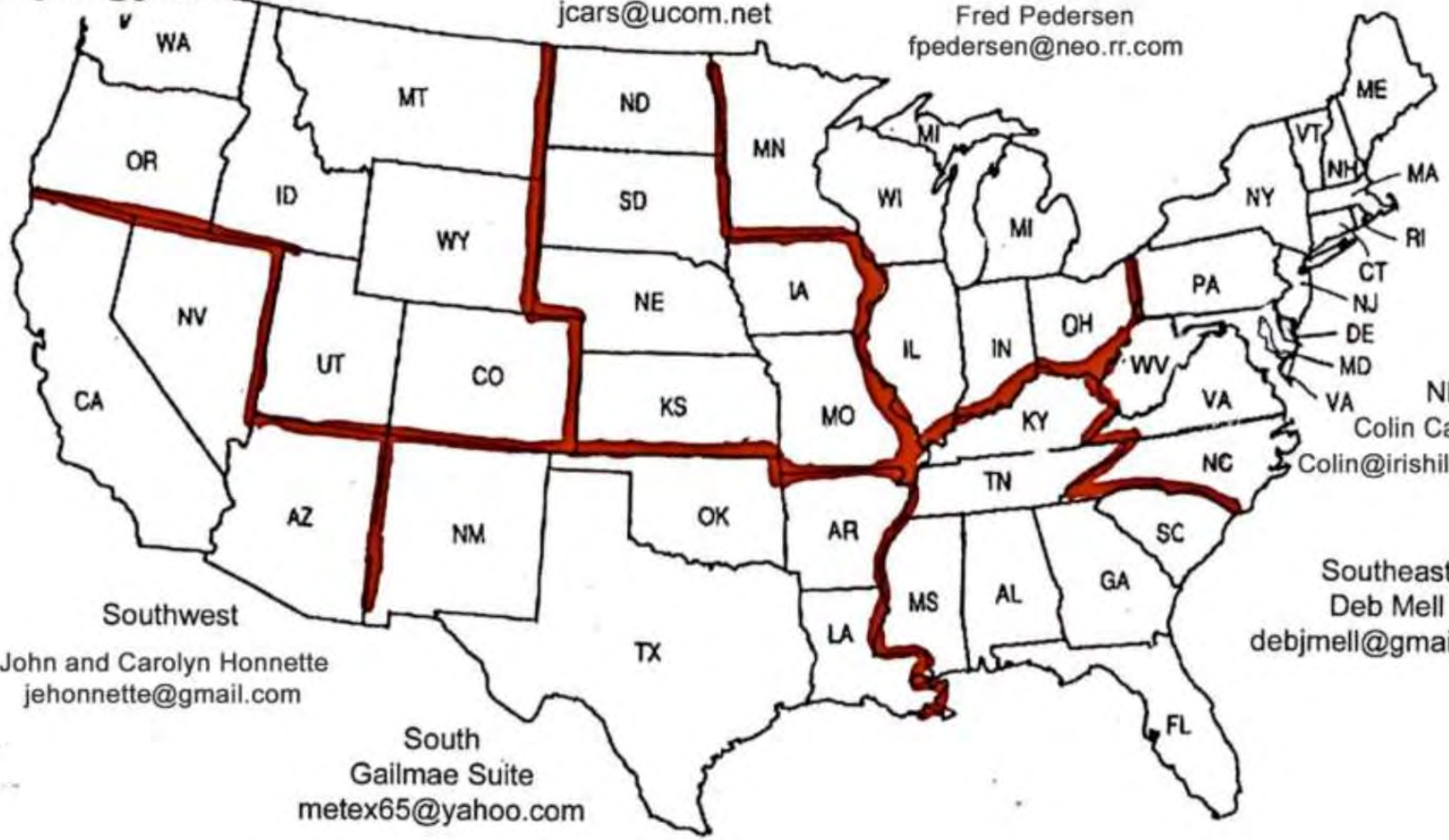
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States: Pennsylvania, New York, Washington, D.C., Delaware, Virginia, West Virginia, North Carolina, Maryland north through Maine
AIS Regions: 3, 4, and Parts of Regions 1 and 2

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AIS Regions: 5, 7, 10, and 24

North Central

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AIS Regions: 6, 8, and 9

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States: Arkansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Texas
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AIS Regions: 14 and 15

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Editor's Note

First, a huge THANK YOU to everyone who shared their rebloom experiences for the 72-page 2023 Rebloom Report. Dozens of folks from across the US, Canada, and even Australia sent their charts, paragraphs, even a single sentence to document the rebloom in their gardens. Again, your contributions are much appreciated by all.

Many rebloom reports reflected the craziness of climate change. . From unseasonably warm temperatures during the winter to a sudden hard freeze. The rebloomers were teased into sending up bloomstalks, whose buds were getting ready to open, only to have them frozen. Some folks were able to take the bloomstalks into their homes before the freeze and then watch the buds slowly open over the course of a couple of weeks.

Some members recently told me that with the unusually warm periods, their spring bloom occurred a couple of weeks earlier than usual. One of the fallouts from that was fewer flowers to take to their iris shows.

Others reported poor rebloom because of summer drought. Some supplemented the watering; others didn't.

The bottom line for most of us, the regular seasons of the year are no longer "regular."

As you can see in the Table of Contents, this issue includes info on the 2023 Plant Zone charts plus area directors' reports. Delane Langton details his experiences with growing irises in Billings, MT. Yes, his Eagle Ridge Iris Garden, definitely Plant Zone 4b, presents challenges other of us don't experience.

On another note, I feel like a nag by continuing to promote rebloomers for Plant Zone 4b, which is much of the US/Canadian border. But I continue to hear, "I can't grow them because of the cold." **To encourage Northerners to experiment with rebloomers, there are pages that showcase some of the 4b rebloomers that are actually grown in 4b territory and where to buy them.**

The Recorder has also been featuring "oldies but goodies" articles in each newsletter. There is always something to gleam from these articles from the pass.

Please welcome our three new area directors. For the North Central area, Fred Pederson replaces Bill Turner, who retired after many years. Thank you, Bill! Colin Campbell, who collected rebloom info for Region 4, is expanding his territory to cover the Northeast area. Claire Schneider, both the AIS and RIS secretary, is grateful that John and Carolyn Honnette are taking over Claire's responsibility for the Southwest Area.

And last but certainly not least, Les Burgard is our new treasurer after the unexpected death of Ella McLeester.

Happy gardening this summer! May you get enough rain but not too much to cause rot!

Mary P.

maryplatner@msn.com



Name:		City, State:		Year: 202__		2023 Plant Zone:										
Email:		E (1-10 of the month) / M (11-20) / L (21-31 of the month)														
All TBs unless noted		Date of Freeze:		July		Aug.		Sept.		Oct.		Nov.		Dec.		
All are rebloomers.			Hybridizer	Year	E	M	L	E	M	L	E	M	L	E	M	L
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Ok, I could write a long, hairy rationale for why you should order the 2022 Checklist for Rebloomers with over 4,200 varieties (349 pages) listed. If you don't have it already, this is a perfect time to do so. You can double-check to see if what you want to order is truly a rebloomer AND if it reblooms in your neck of the woods.

Please go to

<https://www.irises.org/aismembers/ais-storefront/>

It is \$35/\$20 well spent to get what you want for your plant zone.

Mary Platner

Reblooming Iris Society Membership Application or Renewal

We would greatly appreciate your paying with a credit card.
Iris Society's website:

<https://www.irises.org/reblooming-iris-society/>

Otherwise, please send this form along with a check made out to "RIS" to
Reblooming Iris Society
Rose Kinnard
1649 Madison, #504
Fredericktown, MO 63645-8303

Please print:

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Email Required: _____

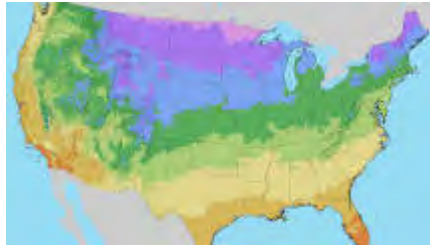
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Digital Membership dues are: _____ 1 yr. for \$12 _____ 3 years for \$25

An Honest Bargain

3 years for \$25: a massive annual
re bloom report and 2 Recorder editions
each year. 60+ color photos each edition.

Are USDA hardiness zones changing?



USDA's plant hardiness zone map shows half the country has shifted. The USDA is updating an important map for gardeners and growers picking plants and flowers. The new map shows the contiguous U.S. is about 2.5 degrees Fahrenheit warmer than the last map 11 years ago. (Nov 17, 2023)

The warmest zone in the 48 contiguous states is the Florida Keys (11b) and the coldest is in north-central Minnesota (2b). A couple of locations on the northern coast of Puerto Rico have the warmest hardiness zone in the United States at 13b.

Source: [USDA Unveils Updated Plant Hardiness Zone Map : USDA ARS](https://www.ars.usda.gov/oc/br/zonemap/zonemap/)

<https://www.ars.usda.gov/oc/br/zonemap/zonemap/>

What is your 2023 Plant Zone? Enter “2023 Plant Zone for zip code or town's name.”



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Dawn of Fall
30"/C. Jensen, 1976



Correction: Roney's Encore
34"/D. Spoon by Shawe, 1997

Photo Credits:
Dawn of Fall – D. Langton
Roney's Encore - Wiki

Eagle Ridge EST. 1989

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We Will Miss Ella's Many Contributions to the Reblooming Iris Society

Wisconsin State Journal



Elladan McLeester

In October we lost former MAIS President and current treasurer Elladan McLeester. Elladan was the heart and soul of our club. She loved running our Iris Show and Iris Sale each year. In addition, Ella was an American Iris Society accredited Judge and the treasurer for the Tall Bearded Iris Society and The Reblooming Iris Society.

Elladan L. McLeester, age 67, died unexpectedly October 12, 2023 at her home in Madison Wisconsin. She is survived by her true love, Rob Meyer, and her brothers Dick (Malycha), Bruce (Christie) and Grant (Jan Sternbach) and numerous friends.

Elladan was always great with numbers. In her first job, at Burger King, she was always assigned to work the register and could calculate the costs and change in her head. Later, this led to her studying accounting at Arizona State University and becoming a Certified Public Accountant. She loved that work, especially the most complicated multi-state, multi-business tax returns. To her, the most daunting returns were just like a wonderful puzzle to be solved.

From her father, Bob, she got her love of botany. Like any good Wisconsinite, she would always plant a vegetable garden, but her passion was iris. With the help of Rob, she planted over 1200 iris varieties in her urban yard. She lovingly tracked their location and progress through Excel spreadsheets, donating thousands of rhizomes annually to the Madison Area Iris Society sale. She was past President and current Treasurer of the society. Additionally, she was Treasurer of two national iris associations, the Tall Bearded Iris Society and the Reblooming Iris Society. In the last few years, she had started hybridizing and had developed some promising seedlings.

She, like her dad and brothers, was an enthusiastic and talented photographer. Her iris photos were widely recognized as exquisite.

From her mother, Carol, she got a love of cooking. Some outstanding creations were her split pea soup, matzoh balls, burrito beef, and chicken salad in which she sauteed the chicken in bacon fat for the smoothest most unctuous mouthfeel.

She had long lasting friendships with coworkers, local and world-wide irisarians, and school friends, particularly from Cherokee Junior High, Madison Community School (MCS) and Malcolm Shabazz High School.

Plant Zone 3. .Chuck Chapman (Chapman Iris Garden, Ontario) ships to the US. He is currently accessing his garden after suffering winter damage to his rhizomes. Please check back at the end of May for 3 and 4b varieties that will be available on his website. These *should* also rebloom in Plant Zones 5, 6, 7, etc.



Blueberry Tart

SDB-Re/11"/Chapman, 2002



Eramosa Peeper

MDB-Re/8"/Chapman, 2020



Many Maholas

IB-Re/24"/Aitken, 2002



Forever Blue

SDB-Re/12"/Chapman, 1997



Forever Royal

SDB-Re/16"/Chapman, 2014



Champagne Encore

IB-Re/24"/Aitken, 1997



Masterwork

TB-Re/39"/Zurbrigg, 2001



Fast Forward

IB-Re/24"/Aitken, 2002



Autumn Tryst

TB- Re/34"/Weiler, 1993

North Central Area Director's Report: Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Ohio, and Wisconsin

Fred Pedersen

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fpederson@neo.rr.com
2023 Plant Zone 6a

Different parts of the Midwest were hit differently by a nasty freeze in March. This apparently affected the lower parts of the Midwest more so than the upper Midwest. Below is a heads-up from Jim Hedgecock at Comanche Acres Garden where he describes what happened in his area and what he does to deal with a sudden deep freeze:

"Here in the Midwest, we had a very bad freeze in March. I am not sure how many Central states were damaged, but it was an extensive event for many Midwest gardeners. This freeze came at the end of quite a few warm temperatures. In my last newsletter, I mentioned the possible damage to iris plants that had experienced those weather conditions. The question was, how much damage would we get? We can assess the damage now. In quite a few instances, it was rather severe. I am getting many calls and emails about damage. Many of the plants you are describing and the photos that have been sent show damage due to frost. The plants have shriveled up and died back to the top of the rhizomes. They resemble burn damage.

To confirm frost damage, dig up the plant and inspect the roots. If the roots are still firm and white, it is frost damage. If the plants have shriveled-up roots and are dead-looking, the problem is probably *scorch*. There is no cure for *scorch* -- throw away the plants. The good news is that *scorch* generally does not affect many plants at one time. It almost always shows up in the spring and early summer.

The question is, what do you want to do with the plants with frost damage? There is some chance they will make it with some extra care. Dig the plants out and soak them in one part bleach to 10 parts water mix for half an hour. Then, reset them."

It is my opinion and it is born out by those I have talked to from Michigan, northern Indiana and here in Ohio, that the further north one goes in the middle of our country, the more hardy are the irises. We, like Jim, have had an exceptionally moderate, warm, winter. I usually go ice fishing with a few of my brothers in late February. This year there was no ice in the upper part of the lower peninsula of Michigan. The microclimate, along the southern shore of Lake Erie has moved up to a 7a, unheard of a few years ago.



Clarence
Wister Medal 2000
35"/Zurbrigg, 1991

What does all of that have to do with our irises? The wet, warm winter has been kind to our irises throughout the upper Midwest. Mine have never looked better, clumps have increased dramatically and the MDBs are blooming full bore now. A few SDBs are also blooming. It looks like our bloom season is 2-3 weeks ahead of whatever normal is. I and those I have talked to, have not seen the freeze damage Jim speaks of. The upper Midwest is experiencing a very early bloom season, 2-3 weeks earlier than normal. The Garden Club of Ohio's convention was last week. I entered a MBD and a SDB, only to be outdone by a club member from Cincinnati who won the iris section with an IB. The Willott Iris Garden here in Cleveland is in close to full bloom mode with MDBs and early SDBs happily blooming away.

Northeastern Area Directors Report: Connecticut, Delaware, District of Columbia, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont, Virginia, West Virginia

Colin Campbell

Middletown, VA
colin@irishillsfarm.com
2023 Plant Zone 7a

Thank you for welcoming me as the new Northeastern Area Director. I am looking forward to reporting on rebloom in this capacity!

Despite severe drought throughout areas of Virginia in the summer of 2023, some reblooming iris still managed to make their appearance in the fall. Shenandoah and Potomac iris society held a fall iris show in Boyce, VA as part of the AIS Region 4 Fall Regional meeting in October 2023. While rebloom was sparse that weekend in the local area, many members from others areas responded to the call to bring entries to the show, transporting bloom stalks from Maryland, North Carolina and other parts of Virginia. One member even brought their irises for the show with them in their airplane!

Now, the SDB's and earliest TB's are blooming here in Virginia, and the seeds that I planted last fall from my latest hybridizing efforts are sprouting up in their pots. Many of these crosses have rebloom in their heritage. My goal in a number of these crosses was to produce vibrant reblooming bicolors. One cross I am especially excited about is Love Returns (B. Spoon 2015) X Dad Gum Nice (T. Burseen 2011). Love Returns is a faithful rebloomer for me, in bright tones of pink and purple. Sometimes it even reblooms in the summer and Fall. Dad Gum Nice has similar coloring, with lots of ruffles, and rebloomed for me once a number of years ago. Another reblooming cross I am excited about seeing the results from is I I Stutter (D. Kanarowski 2012) X Sammies Jammies (T. Burseen 2010). I I Stutter is a reblooming luminata, and Sammies Jammies has a light orange ground with raspberry speckles and stripes. Sammies Jammies



Alabanza
30"/B. Spoon, 2013



Mad About Saffron
40"/Price, 2017

blooms very early along with the rebloomers in my garden, making me think that it might be a rebloom carrier. I am hoping for a reblooming seedling with an orange ground, and even wilder speckles and stripes!

While the drought in my area subsided last summer, we still have not caught up to our typical amount of rainfall. In late March, dry weather and high winds caused several large wildfires in the Shenandoah Valley. In late January, the winter temperatures fell to around 10 degrees at night, which is colder than the temperatures have been the last few winters. After that, the mild winter we had been having returned, with periods of warm weather starting in

Photo Credit: Mad About Saffron – M. Platner
Alabanza – G. Spoon

late February. The irises are blooming about two weeks early, and iris enthusiasts in Charlotte, NC have mentioned that their bloom season is also a bit early this year.

In contrast to the dry weather in Virginia, Connecticut has been experiencing unusually high amounts of rain this fall and winter, causing high water levels in streams and the Connecticut River. **Bruce and Ruthy Bennett** mentioned that they have had a very mild winter in Connecticut. The iris foliage in their garden remained exceptionally green over the winter, and the new foliage growth is coming up early.

In southern Massachusetts, **Dave Nitka** reported a winter with little snow cover, and that there have been few warm days yet this Spring. In 2023, spring bloom was interrupted by an unexpected freeze in May. Then the summer of 2023 was exceptionally cool and wet, followed by an autumn with little to no rebloom. He is hoping that the irises will make up for 2023 with strong bloom both spring and fall in 2024.

Thank you, Dave, Bruce, and Ruthy were telling us about your winter experiences!



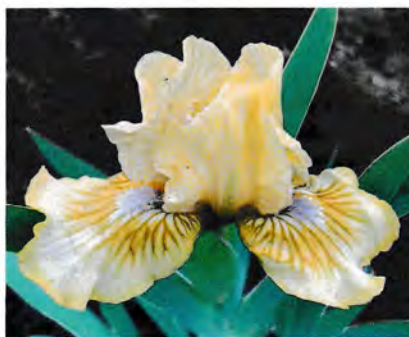
Margaret Wilson Thomas
34"/D. Spoon, 2009



Love Returns
33"/B. Spoon, 2016



Vintage Charm
32"/Schreiners, 2018



Tiger on the Green
12"/A. Moran, 2021



Summer Holidays
36"/Zurbrigg, 1979

Photo Credit: Margaret Wilson Thomas – G. Spoon

Love Returns – D. Langton

Vintage Charm – J. Jordan

Tiger on the Green – A. Moran

Summer Holidays – C. Honnette

Southwest Area Directors' Report

Carolyn and John Honnette

Arizona, California, Hawaii, and Nevada

Editor's Note: Carolyn and John are new directors. I asked them to tell us about themselves.

Bee Haven Iris Gardens are located in the Sierra Nevada Mountain range just a half-hour drive from the southern gate of Yosemite National Park. Bee Haven is located in zone 8 or 9a at 3,400 feet and gets two to three feet of winter snow with hot dry summers. Fortunately, our soil has just the right mixture to bring out the brightest of colors. The slope provides good drainage to avoid standing water. It's amazing how tough irises are. Thank goodness, the deer leave them alone! Last year we enjoyed over 200 reblooming varieties that bloomed in spring, summer, and fall..



Like many iris growers, we were introduced to these lovely long-lasting blooms by our mothers and grandmothers. During the last three years, our modest mountain meadow has expanded to cultivate 1,000 or more varieties of aril-bred, historic, median, rebloomers, and mostly tall bearded irises. How did we end up in this fix? Well, the irises multiplied. Seemingly overnight we had too many and simply couldn't bear to just throw them on the burn pile.

In Chico at the Region 14 Fall Regional in 2022, we were thrilled to win Best of Show with Forever Gold in our second year of competition. And later in Monterrey at the Fall Regional in 2023, we won Best of Show with Amazing With Grace. Thank you to both clubs for their hospitality and the opportunity to learn more about irises.

We belong to the Yosemite Iris Society and the Fresno Iris Society. Carolyn Hoover, a retired teacher, is the club president of the Yosemite Iris Society and has been very helpful in teaching and training our local youth in the love of all things iris. They grow irises at schools. We owe a big thanks to hybridizers, Rick Tasco, Doug Kanarowski, Bill Tyson, Riley Probst, and Shirley Trio, who also live in Region 14, for sharing their expertise and encouragement. We learned even more about different aspects of growing irises while attending our first American Iris Society Convention in Texas in 2023.

It truly is a Divine work of art and an all-consuming passion to grow these marvelous flowers with such a rainbow of colors and styles! It remains exciting to stroll through the garden early or late in the day to see the sun peeking through the petals for that brief twilight of perfect light. Our humble pictures simply do not do justice to the graceful flowers and their glorious sparkling colors. Autumn Twilight is an oldie that blooms again and again with tall cream colored standards and rose pink falls with bright yellow beards. It was created by G. P. Brown the same year I

was born, 1948! It feels so good to be able to brag about it rather than complain about it! The hardy oldies make me feel young! Hi Ho Silver is another rebloomer that just won't quit and it has so many luminous blossoms on each stalk! It too is an oldie by Monty Byers 1989. Double Day, by George Sutton 2001, is a bright yellow that lights up our hillside with multiple stalks of brilliant blossoms. Revitalize is a more modern iris by Michael Sutton 2022 and just look at the lovely form and deep rich purple color with its straight upright ruffles and wide velvety falls. My Friend Jonathan, by Bernice Miller, 1996, is a lovely blend of red that reblooms reliably for us. There are many, many purple white plicatas, but Garden Grace by Lloyd Zurbrig, 1981, is one of our prettiest. I I Stutter, by Doug Kanarowski, 2012, re re repeats with huge purple white blooms!. Superhero, by Joe Ghio, in 2012, is positively luminous with its golden blaze reflecting the sun between white standards, lined with gold and deep red ruffled falls. Last but not least, Golden Panther, by Rick Tasco, introduced in 2,000 won the Dykes Medal in 2009. That golden bronze color lights up like a beacon. Truly it's hard to pick a favorite! They are all so beautiful and they bloom almost year-round that whatever is opening today is my favorite of the moment.

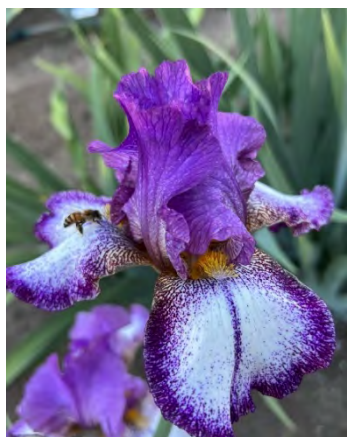


My Friend Jonathan
36"/B. Miller, 1994

Ruth Simons: It was a very strange year...very hot this Summer, and an early frost here in **Show Low, AZ (2023 Plant Zone 6b)**...Oct. 12th....then got warm again, then hard freeze, and had to finish up by taking some bloom stalks inside to finish opening up. I still do have some deep in the stalks outside that have not bloomed, but we are about to get really cold, so I am just finishing it up now. A lot of my normal rebloomers did not bloom this year. We had some irrigation issues, and I was gone to Europe for most of September, and had a neighbor water my gardens...not sure if they got too much water or not enough, but very few reblooms.

Sizzle!

I live in the Phoenix area where the entire month of last July was 110+ degrees. And the "fried egg on the sidewalk" was 17 *consecutive* days of 116+ degrees. Beware of blistering door handles and steering wheels!



Garden Grace
37"/Zurbrigg, 1981

My 2023 Plant Zone is now 10a instead of 9b. I guess that makes my area officially hotter. My Phoenix garden continues to make me rethink how I tend to my irises. A couple of years ago, I determined when to water by sticking a finger a couple inches into the dirt. Big mistake! The dirt surrounding the roots was damp. Many of my rhizomes rotted.

This last summer I armed myself with a moisture meter. But there is always "And then. . ." Even with an inch of dirt covering the rhizomes themselves (to provide a little insulation), they baked in the record-breaking heat. The upside, the roots were doing great! So now in prep for this year's sizzle, I mixed in a little peat moss with the topsoil and topped that off with a couple of inches of potting soil, which has peat moss, too. With our occasional high winds and dust storms, that one-inch of protective topping blows off so I need to be more mindful of occasionally adding more dirt to continue to cover the rhizomes.

My master plan (yes, you can laugh now) is to keep the rhizomes themselves from drying out so much. Stay tuned for the next gardening adventure. I am sure there will be a Plan C next spring!

Mary Platner

Photo Credits: My Friend Jonathan – F. Cheswick Garden Gace – C. Honnette

Plant Zone 4b. . .Delane H. Langton (Eagle Ridge Iris Garden, Billings Montana) is currently selling these on his website. <https://www.facebook.com/search/top/?q=eagle%20ridge%20rebloomers> lists which are rebloomers for 4b. Others are NOT 4b. These *should* rebloom in Plant Zones 5, 6, 7, etc.



Blatant
36"/M. Byers, 1990



Buckwheat
36"/M. Byers, 1989



Emma's Laughter
33"/Poole, 2008



Paprika Fono's
36"/I. Nelson, 1987



I'm Back
36"/T. Johnson, 2007



Hemstitched
32"/Hager, 1990



Morgan
13"/D. Spoon, 2014



Northward Ho
37"/Hager, 1991



It's Not Over
13"/Black, 2014



Sunbeams Forever
13"/Campbell, 2022

Northwest Area Director: Alaska, Colorado, Idaho, Montana, Oregon, Utah, Washington, and Wyoming Canada: British Columbia and Yukon

Delane H. Langton and Jane Tibbs
Eagle Ridge Iris Gardens
Billings, MT
Plant Zone 4b

2023 REBLOOM AT EAGLE RIDGE IRIS GARDENS

After a tough winter here in our Montana zone 4b, our early bloom started on time and would end up being one of the best bloom years we've had. That being said, our rebloom started earlier than normal. On June 19th, Autumn Jester (Chapman, 00) always first, started the repeat bloom party. We love this one (and all the other Chapman rebloomers) as it just keeps going all summer. Another brand new favorite is Sunbeams Forever (2022 SDB) by Colin Campbell. It also blooms all summer. This one's parentage is from Spoon reblooming SDB's, Ray Jones X Kumquat. I have crossed Autumn Jester X Sunbeams Forever and hope for something besides yellow's and purple's, but want to continue the all summer rebloom. I'll keep working newer SDB's into this mix and see what turns up.



Eternal Summer
SpecX-Re/Chapman, 2012

We did end up with an extraordinary rebloom season with 160 cultivars reblooming. I'll highlight some more that caught our attention for one reason or another, starting with order of rebloom. Dawn Of Fall (Jensen, 1976) bloomed all of July and August. Eternal Summer, a Spec-X by Chuck Chapman, 2012, went all summer and continued until our first freeze. It also produced lots of bee pods. We already have some seedlings in the pipeline and hope they aren't all purple. Frost Echo (Aitken, 95) is also an often rebloomer for us and started the end of July and the first week of August. It then rested two weeks, bloomed for the first two weeks of September, rested 10 days, and bloomed AGAIN the last two weeks of October. Cosmic Delight (Aitken, 13), a wonderful orange, started the end of July and continued straight through the end of September. Peach Echo by Bryan Spoon (15), bloomed all of August, rested September and then bloomed all of October. Autumn Wine (Christopherson, 03. BB) rebloomed all of August and again in September and the middle of October. Pinkness (Byers, 88) and Emma's Laughter (Poole, 06), kept putting up stalk after stalk until an ice storm finished us on October 26th.

Photo Credit: Summerbeams Forever – D. Langton

Eternal Summer – C. Bacskai

Uriah The Hittite is another reliable zone 4 rebloomer from Bernice Miller. After you do this for a while, you start to recognize the hybridizer's names that specialize in rebloom and seek them out. G. P. Brown is one of these hybridizers. His September Sailör (1959) is a favorite for its root beer scent and fantastic rebloom in September and October.

Sailboat Bay by Zurbrigg, 2000 (SDB) is one that Mike Lockatell is a fan of and sent to us. It was noted as zone 6 rebloom, but also performs very well in zone 4b. Reblooming two weeks in September and October.



Cowboy Boots

35"/M. Sutton. 2021

Now for some new talls, Lava Love (Aitken, 2022) was gorgeous in the middle of September, Ocean's Edge (M. Sutton, 2020), Vintage Charm (Schreiner, 2018), Cowboy Boots (M. Sutton, 2021) and Revitalize (M. Sutton, 2022), all looked beautiful and can now boast rebloom in zone 4b.

How about a couple of Miniature Bearded Dwarf (MDB) up to 8" rebloomers? Bright Mite by Aitken, 2019 rebloomed an entire month starting the end of September. This one had only been reported to rebloom in zone 8. Hilda's Gift (D. Spoon, 2002) enjoyed a long rebloom too and had only been reported in its home, Winterberry Garden, zone 6. More newer ones from Winterberry's Don Spoon include, Momma Rosemary (2011), Kind Candice (2011) and Lemon Candy (2022).



Hilda's Gift

6"/D. Spoon, 2002

I'll cap this off with what turned out to be very icy photos. As mentioned before, October 26th brought 1/2 inch of freezing rain just as our rebloom was really, really taking off. It was followed by 7 inches of snow and a week of cold temperatures. That ended our rebloom. It did warm back up and our winter has been very warm (40*-50*) highs as I write this, January 2, 2024. We've done lots of garden cleanup and look forward to a new year.

Central Area Director's Report: Iowa, Kansas, Missouri, Nebraska, N. Dakota, and S. Dakota

Alice Sinclair

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2023 Plant Zone 6b



A miracle has occurred here in the normally dry southwest Kansas! I have had others in this area report that they also have lots of bloom stalks, even though we hadn't begun watering! The only possible reason I can think of for this abundance of stalks, is the "Winter Water" we had! Twice, we had snows of about 2 or 3 inches each, blanketing the ground evenly, with some moisture from the snow melting. At any rate, we are amazed at the irises that are going to bloom, including ones that haven't for several seasons.

Some of the buds appear smaller than usual, but their blossoms are about the same size they usually are, and even very short clumps are showing bloom stalks! The earlier varieties are just beginning to bloom, and yet there are stalks just showing in the fans, so the display should last well into May, barring a destructive storm.

If any of you readers have experienced a similar experience this year, it would be interesting to hear from you.

We have been blessed!

Blatant

36"/Byers, 1990

Alma Rose Kinnard: Fredericktown, MO, 2023

Plant Zone 6b/7a,: Spring bloom here in southern MO has been great. Rebloom clumps are great, good spring growth is important for good fall rebloom. Paul Black's Autumn Jewel is truly beautiful, a nice 3 year clump with promise of rebloom for sure. Spoon's Autumn Sunrise is a little older but really puts on a spring show here, fall rebloom is sporadic. Mike Lockett's Courtney Rucker is a 2 year clump with great bloom this spring, I have hopes to see fall bloom this year.

Lots of older bloomers: I Do, Zurich, Immortality, Golden Immortal looking good this spring and always fall bloom



Autumn Sunrise

34"/G. Spoon,

Photo Credits: Blatant – M. Cobb

Autumn Sunrise – R. Kinnard

Southern Area Director's Report: Arkansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Texas

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2023 Plant Zone 8b

This last winter was nice and mild although we did have a couple of brief, very cold spells. One was in November when we went from a few days in the 60s and 70s to nighttime temperatures in the 20s.

With another predicted freeze in December, I had almost 50 rebloomers, which were blooming or with buds. I brought all the bloom stalks into my house and enjoyed the beautiful large array of flowers. The lovely display of color lasted as the buds slowly opened.

I belong to three iris societies and enjoyed taking several of these bloomstalks to their December meetings. Even though most folks know that I am the Southern Director for our reblooming society, it always amazes me how surprised some people are when I show up with a blooming budstalk in the winter!



Apollo's Robe

35"/Carter, 2003

Photo Credits: Apollo's Robe – Les Burgard



Cantina

35"/M. Byers, 1990

Cantina – R. Probst



Bountiful Harvest

34"/Hager, 1991

Bountiful Harvest – J. Jordan

Plant Zone 4b. . .George Bacon (Breezeway Iris Garden, SE of Madison, WI) is currently selling these "Wisconsin Rebloomers." Others are available on his website. These *should* also rebloom in Plant Zones 5, 6, 7, etc. Note: His website closes on July 15.



Buckwheat
36"/M. Byers, 1989



Constant Companion
18"/C. Marsh, 1995



Forever Blue
12"/Chapman, 1997



Low Ho Silver
19"/M. Byers, 1989



Northward Ho
37"/Zurbrigg, 1991



Ruby Eruption
Cook-Douglas Medal 2006
12"/Chapman, 1997



Ruby Ruby
34"/Worel, 1999



Unbelievable Love
36"/Grise, 1998



Starring Encore
35"/D. Spoon, 2008

Southeast Area Director: Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Mississippi, South Carolina, Tennessee

Deborah Mell

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2023 Plant Zone 7b

Here in west Tennessee, zone 7b, we had the warmest winter in memory for 2023/24. There were fewer hard freezes and they didn't last as long or as late into the season as usual. It was still necessary to bring the late rebloomers into the house in November, and my last to come in were Orange Harvest, Autumn Breeze, Renown, and Total Recall blooming on November 30. Because of the warm winter, spring bloom was earlier than normal, with my first TB blooms coming in early April while the SDBs were in mid-bloom. Stairway to Heaven tied with Orange Harvest for the honor of first named varieties to bloom. A rebloom seedling (Eternal Bliss x Splashacata) was the actual first to bloom in my garden as it does every year.

In East Tennessee, Linda Mann reported that the summer and fall were very dry, causing reduced rebloom. Her introduction 'Remembering Lloyd' was the best performer, with rebloom from late August until the hard freeze in early November.

In SW Tennessee, Scott Hall reported that he had dug all of his TB, so no rebloom there, but he had four SDB with fall and winter bloom, with 'Eric Simpson', 'Blue Hues', and 'Repeat the Blues' all blooming through late December.

The Region 7 spring conference was held at the Hilton in Brentwood, Tennessee, the last weekend in April. Because of the early spring bloom we were all crossing our fingers hoping we would still have blooms for the show, and fortunately, there were enough left and enough people with entries that we had a beautiful show. The Jackson Area Iris Society had our show the following weekend and good TB stalks were hard to find. The Queen of Show was a Spuria.



Orange Harvest

32"/B. Jones, 1988

Photo Credits: Orange Harvest – D. Mell



Eric Simpson

12"/D. Spoon, 2011

Eric Simpson – S. Hall

Good Culture Ensures Rebloom

Mike Lockatell

Encore Reblooming Azaleas debuted with considerable fanfare. Spring flowering hybrids were cross pollinated with a rare summer blooming variety to create hybrids capable of reblooming each fall in Hardiness Zones 7-10. Mid-Atlantic gardeners piled into local nurseries to try the latest flowering shrub innovation. The Encore lineup's fall flowering intensity varied according to variety. Selection and culture drove performance.

The late Dr. Lloyd Zurbrigg helped lead early bearded iris rebloom development. Twenty years would elapse before he released his widely grown tall bearded remontant, Immortality (Zurbrigg, 1982), a novel advance for its time. Gardeners sometimes struggled to find the right spot for it to flourish. Random planting was **NOT** a guarantee for success.

Later reblooming bearded iris introductions have shown marked improvement in flower and reliability. If colleagues used Zurbrigg's remontants in their lines their releases seem to overcome fickle weather conditions. Like the Encore Azaleas, rebloom activation in some selections was hard to pinpoint. Fall garden results are starting to reveal common denominators for some recent releases.

One major advantage with rebloomers is continuous growth. Unlike once only bloomers, remontants will continue to grow and increase through the summer. Mature rhizomes are therefore achieved for fall flowering. Supplemental fertilization and periodic watering after spring bloom help trigger rebloom.

The best fall rebloom in Central Virginia seems to occur after a few summer nights with temperatures shy of 60°F. After brutal heat in July and early August, cold relief fronts from Canada provide daily lows to help initiate eventual bloomstalk formation. Some past and recent introductions have exhibited the ability to rebloom without the above factor being present. The confusion can be very frustrating for novice gardeners trying reblooming iris for the first time. What is an iris fancier to do?

One valuable piece of advice is to select the best varieties to try. As AIS Region 4 (West Virginia, North Carolina, Virginia and Maryland) Reblooming Iris Chairman, I tabulate and report results each fall. AIS members can also take out a membership in the Reblooming Iris Society. Their newsletter, "The Rebloom Recorder", features yearly reporting from RIS Directors around the U.S. and Canada. Common threads in the tallies do appear to guide selection. Findings have unearthed a number of exciting possibilities.

Eastern cool season remontants seem to do a good job growing in varied microclimates. The Mid-Atlantic's climate features extreme heat, suffocating humidity and freak freezes. Cultivars surviving these wretched growing conditions will likely adapt anywhere. Here are a few additional culture tips to aide success.

Modern bearded irises prefer well-drained soils. Heavy clay horizons should be modified with coarse grade builder's sand. Wet areas should always be avoided. Hard rock phosphate and green sand are dynamite organic fertilizer amendments for use at planting time. Unlike commercial fertilizers these organic formulations can persist in soils for years. Soil pH should

range between 6.5-7.0. Mid-Atlantic soils tend to be acidic, so calcitic lime works well to correct this problem. Acceptable pH readings can also prevent bacterial soft rot outbreaks.

Texas has experienced a gut-wrenching drought over the past year. I, unfortunately, faced similar circumstances in my native New Jersey and now in Virginia. Poor civic planning has lead to mandatory water restrictions in some locales during each emergency. Lack of moisture can severely delay rebloom. I recommend once to twice a week waterings on reblooming iris plantings to aid fall flowering. Rhizomes can therefore mature to support bloom. Varieties with a mix of cool and warm season remontant parents may require sunlight change to fall flower. So results do vary by variety.

Rebloom breeding has now progressed to the point of obtaining performance despite any summer growing condition. Choices will be severely limited in the interim. If more AIS members try the best bearded iris rebloomers currently available and report results, there is still a good chance remontancy will continue to grow in popularity. Take the plunge and enjoy the fun!



Double Your Fun
21"/Aitken, 2000



Wizard's Return
12"/Tasco, 1999



High Ho Silver
36"/M. Byers, 1989

Photo Credits: Double Your Fun – Ruth Simons
High Ho Silver –C. Honnette

Wizard's Return – Jane Jordan

Plant Zone 4. Tina Muller (Tina and Daughters Iris Garden, Billings, Montana) is currently selling these Montana rebloomers. These should also rebloom in other plant zones. More rebloomers for zone 4 are available at www.tinaanddaughtersiris.com. Tina's website closes on August 1, 2024.



Autumn Rose
34"/G Spoon, 2006



Bolder Boulder
30"/Magee, 2000



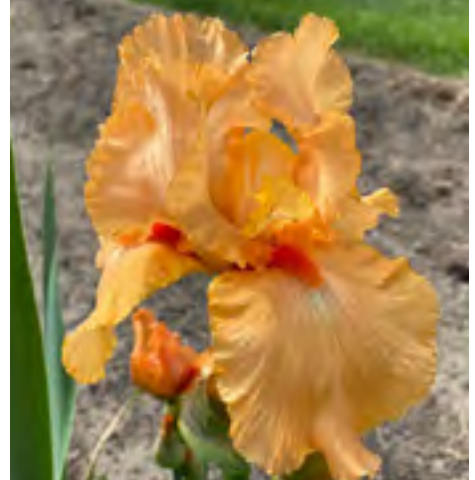
Double Day
35"/G Sutton, 2001



Immortality
29"/Zurbrigg, 1982



Oh Carol
36"/Lauer, 2012



Orange Harvest
32"/B Jones, 1988



Ozark Rebounder
34"/Nicodemus, 2003



Sky King Returns
39"/Lauer, 2003



Summer Tsunami
29"/Nicholson, 2002

Winter's Extraordinary Rebloom Season

Delane Langton and Jane Tibbs

Eagle Ridge Iris Gardens

Billings, MT

Plant Zone 4b

Winter came early for us at the peak of our extraordinary rebloom season. We had 162 cultivars work their magic, the best year yet! We grow approximately 768 rebloomers to achieve those results. This is the third year in a row that we've had continuous iris in bloom from early spring (*reticulata* iris) until freeze up.

On October 23rd we had a hard freeze after 1/4" freezing rain which turned to 7 inches of snow. That's a certain final way to end rebloom. It was beautiful, and we have many gorgeous photos of iris encased in ice. Normally we would get a skiff of snow on Halloween and rebloom would continue into November. The snow did melt pretty soon and then our winter was open and mild with very little snow. Not ideal for iris in zone 4b. We did have one week of -25, as usual, hence the zone 4b designation. I took full advantage of a warmer than normal November and December to cut back and clean up the foliage, which gave us a tremendous head start on 2024.

In Montana, we don't have leaf spot, iris borers, or summer rot. What we do have is winter rot and botrytis fungus which is also called gray snow mold. That's when we lose a lot of iris in early spring to the freeze/thaw cycles which cause the rotting process. This happens when the temps are hitting the 40s. The iris aren't growing; they are still sleeping/dormant and can't fight the rot off.

The last two years we've had a tremendous loss of entire 2–3-year clumps of rebloomers. I'd like to think we are figuring out a few things about this and how to prevent it. I think the first solution is to divide rebloomers every two years as they are growing twice as fast. This will also increase rebloom. One should also improve /amend the soil when doing this. We use compost and fertilizer 14-14-14 tilled in before replanting. I divided 100 clumps of rebloomers and will report back on the results.

Masterworks by Zurbrigg had 6 stalks reblooming when the ice and snow came. We lost the entire clump to rot. The rebloomers are just growing too vigorously, too late into fall for us. I get lulled into complacency by their fantastic appearance in late fall. I quit watering after Labor Day to try and signal them to slow down for the fall/winter.

Photo Credit: Priscilla of Corinth – J. Jordan
Masterworks - Sutton's Iris Garden



Priscilla of Corinth
37"/B. Miller, 1994



Masterworks
39"/Zurbrigg, 2001

This year I will apply systemic fungicide when temps get down to the 40s. I want to get the fungicide into the plants to provide some resistance to rot over the winter. It also needs to be reapplied early in the spring when temps are approaching the 40s and before the iris begin to grow again. I think this early application helped slow the rot, so we didn't lose so many this spring.

Another tip is to cut through the clumps with a butcher knife and then cut the rhizomes apart to minimize rot spread. Ideally, we divide every two years. Next, we cut back leaves to 4-6 inches and clean out foliage in late October/ November (Plant Zone 4) so the dead foliage doesn't trap moisture on top of the rhizomes. Lastly, we top-dressed a ten-year-old bed with 2" of compost over the rhizomes for winter protection. In mid-September, I also divided some very new Cayeux iris. Normally we wouldn't divide later than Labor Day, so the rhizomes are in the ground for six weeks before winter. The Cayeux bed is then covered with 2" of compost.



Mad About Saffron
40"/Price, 2017

Do you remember my saying the first freeze was October 25th? So after less than 6 weeks, we rudely had winter arrive. These were high-value new Cayeux iris that I felt had to be moved or we might lose them. This was wildly successful so our new standard procedure is putting 2" compost or dirt over the clumps during the late fall cleanup. Things are hectic since we ship throughout August leaving no extra time to divide clumps. I have now started dividing in June and July, and then we continue to push our luck and divide into early September. We schedule a mid-September escape to Glacier National Park purely to get me out of the garden. This forces me to quit!

We received a very late shipment of Cayeux iris from France on October 7th. Our import permit allows us to receive Cayeux's US orders and forward them to customers. I couldn't resist adding a few for us, hoping they would arrive earlier. I planted these with big rocks on them to heat/protect them from heaving out of the ground. This "iris incubation" usually works fantastically, but at other times we still lose them. With the October 25th arrival of winter less than two weeks after planting, we only lost about 30% on these, I'd call that a great success.



Oxmoor Hills
30"/Ennenga, 2004

Photo Credits: Cloud of Heaven – D. Langton

Mad About Saffron – J. Tibb

Oxmoor Hills – D. Mell

So the bottom line is our mild winter was tough on our iris. As I write this on April 15th, our iris are up 12 inches. Reticulata iris have been blooming more than five weeks and the MDBs/pumila have been blooming for a week. So we are already off to a 2-plus week earlier bloom start-in 2024.

Tammie Clark from North Logan Utah zone 6a responded to our inquiry about her winter 23/24. We had a really decent winter this year. Plenty of moisture and no sub-zero temperatures like last year. I've got excellent growth coming on with my iris and looking forward to a very abundant bloom season. I also live on the bench and everything tends to do a little bit better up here. For example, I have nectarine trees and no one in the valley has those so I'm in a bit of microclimate.



Sky King Returns
39"/Lauer, 2003



Skyward Bound
30"/Jarrett, 2016

Berserk
30"/T. Jekfferson, 2014



City Lights
37"/Dunn, 1991



Summer Fantasy
36"/G. P. Brown, 1963

Photo Credits: Sky King Returns – D. Langton
Berserk – M. Platner
Skyward Bound – M. Platner
City Lights - Unknown
Summer Fantasy – G. Spoon

John Honnette, Southwest Area Director

Rebloom Report from Horton Iris Garden



Horton Iris Garden is located in Loomis, CA, about 20 miles from Sacramento. It is in the 2023 Plant Zone 9b.

Mary Ann Horton began collecting local unnamed historic irises in 1990 as a hobby to line her driveway. Once she discovered sources for newer hybridized irises, she couldn't clear the weeds fast enough! In 1999 she opened the garden to the public. Today it offers more than 1300 varieties of iris, including many rebloomers

Horton turns the irrigation water off for about 6-8 weeks to fill orders and to replant. The sandy loam is very sticky and hard to clean, but the dry soil just brushes off easily. Once replanting of an area is finished, the water is turned on again. Therefore, she has very few blooms during the early fall period.



Some of the early blooming irises included Loop the Loop with many stalks while planted near large boulders, Rosalie Figge, Echo Location, Cozy Cotton, Iceland, and Raspberry Frost which had numerous stalks in October. Irises that bloomed in November and December were not noted this year.



January blooms were Dashing, Rosalie Figge, Frances Iva, Cozy Cotton, Billionaire, Feedback, Inner Space, and Constant Companion. Irises blooming in February were Feedback, Billionaire, Lady Jean, Inner Space, Maui Moonlight, Time of Magic, Tropical Delight, Cozy Cotton, Echo Location, Lacy, Dashing, and Constant Companion. The irises that like to bloom all fall and winter for us are Feedback, Constant Companion, Loop the Loop, and Billionaire.

Maryann cut all the irises back to 3-4 inches in December, which she is sure affects the reblooming qualities of the plant. But this trimming allows her to completely clean the garden very quickly in preparation for later rebloom and the spring bloom.



All photos by Maryann Horton

Commanche Acres Iris Garden | 2023 Newsletter No. 7

Jim Hedgecock

With Jim's Permission

If I were to list the top question we always get on culture, it is when do I cut my irises back for the summer? I put this in print several times a year. NEVER!! I wish I could discover who started this terrible, wrong iris culture practice. As long as those leaves are green, they are feeding your plants. If you cut part of the leaves back, you are starving the plants of some of their food. I hear the rumblings. The leaves on my plants have dry-looking ends on those leaves, and I don't like them; they are unsightly. Okay, if you have lots of time and want to cut the ends off, go ahead, but do not cut into the green. That means in all months of the year. Not in the summer or fall; just think of how much you like to eat, and remember, your irises want to eat, too.



Again and Again

36"/Innerst, 1999



Bandwidth

36"/M. Sutton, 2010



Eternal Waltz

36"/Danielson x 2, 1989



Doodle Strudel

36"/Ensminger, 1977



Double Shot

36"/M. Sutton, 2010

Photo Credits:

Again and Again - C.Honnette

Bandwidth – Addison

Double Shot – Delane

Eternal Waltz – C. Honnette

Doodle Strudel – A. Brownfield

USDA Unveils Updated Plant Hardiness Zone Map

Contact: Jan Suszkiw

Email: Jan.Suszkiw@usda.gov

WASHINGTON, DC, Nov. 15, 2023—The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) today released a new version of its Plant Hardiness Zone Map (PHZM), updating this valuable tool for gardeners and researchers for the first time since 2012. USDA's Plant Hardiness Zone Map is the standard by which gardeners and growers can determine which plants are most likely to thrive at a location. The new map—jointly developed by USDA's Agricultural Research Service (ARS) and Oregon State University's (OSU) PRISM Climate Group—is more accurate and contains greater detail than prior versions.

It is available online at <https://planthardiness.ars.usda.gov/>. In addition to the map updates, the Plant Hardiness Zone Map website was expanded in 2023 to include a “Tips for Growers” section, which provides information about USDA ARS research programs of interest to gardeners and others who grow and breed plants.

The 2023 map is based on 30-year averages of the lowest annual winter temperatures at specific locations, is divided into 10-degree Fahrenheit zones and further divided into 5-degree Fahrenheit half-zones. Like the 2012 map, the 2023 web version offers a Geographic Information System (GIS)-based interactive format and is specifically designed to be user-friendly. Notably, the 2023 map delivers to users several new, significant features and advances. The 2023 map incorporates data from 13,412 weather stations compared to the 7,983 that were used for the 2012 map.

Furthermore, the new map's rendering for Alaska is now at a much more detailed resolution (down from a 6 ¼ -square-mile area of detail to a ¼ square mile). "These updates reflect our ongoing commitment to ensuring the Plant Hardiness Zone Map remains a premier source of information that gardeners, growers and researchers alike can use, whether they're located in the continental United States, Alaska, Hawaii or Puerto Rico," said ARS Administrator Dr. Simon Liu.

Approximately 80 million American gardeners and growers represent the most frequent users of the USDA Plant Hardiness Zone Map. However, they're not the

only ones with a need for this hardiness information. For example, the USDA Risk Management Agency refers to the map's plant hardiness zone designations to set certain crop insurance standards. Additionally, scientists incorporate the plant hardiness zones as a data layer in many research models, such as those modeling the spread of exotic weeds and insects.



The 2023 Plant Hardiness Map is now available as a premier source of information that gardeners, growers and researchers alike can use. (Image courtesy of Getty Images)

Plant hardiness zone designations represent what's known as the "average annual extreme minimum temperature" at a given location during a particular time period (30 years, in this instance). Put another way, the designations do not reflect the coldest it has ever been or ever will be at a specific location, but simply the average lowest winter temperature for the location over a specified time. Low temperature during the winter is a crucial factor in the survival of plants at specific locations.

As with the 2012 map, the new version has 13 zones across the United States and its territories. Each zone is broken into half zones, designated as "A" and "B." For example, zone 7 is divided into 7a and 7b half zones. When compared to the 2012 map, the 2023 version reveals that about half of the country shifted to the next warmer half zone, and the other half of the country remained in the same half zone. That shift to the next warmer half zone means those areas warmed somewhere in the range of 0-5 degrees Fahrenheit; however, some locations experienced warming in the range of 0-5 degrees Fahrenheit without moving to another half zone.

The annual extreme minimum temperature represents the coldest night of the year, which can be highly variable from year to year, depending on local weather patterns. Some changes in zonal boundaries are also the result of using increasingly sophisticated mapping methods and the inclusion of data from more weather stations.

Temperature updates to plant hardiness zones are not necessarily reflective of global climate change because of the highly variable nature of the extreme minimum temperature of the year, as well as the use of increasingly sophisticated mapping methods and the inclusion of data from more weather stations. Consequently, map developers involved in the project cautioned against attributing temperature updates made to some zones as reliable and accurate indicators of global climate change (which is usually based on trends in overall average temperatures recorded over long time periods).

Although a paper version of the 2023 map will not be available for purchase from the government, anyone may download the new map free of charge and print copies as needed.

The [Agricultural Research Service](#) is the U.S. Department of Agriculture's chief scientific in-house research agency. Daily, ARS focuses on solutions to agricultural problems affecting America. Each dollar invested in U.S. agricultural research results in \$20 of economic impact.



Soda Fountain Shuffle

34"/ Lockatell, I. 2015



Double Dare

26"/ Lockatell, I. 2014



Edged Out

34"/M. Sutton, 2021



Alessandra's Gift

36"/Byran by Don Spoon, 2011



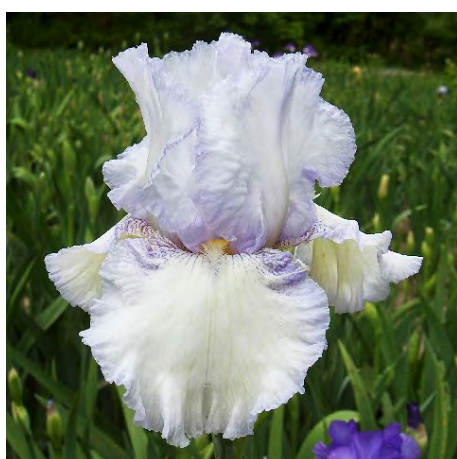
Apollo's Robe

35"/Carter, 2003



Lilac Stitching

33"/ K. Jensen, 1989



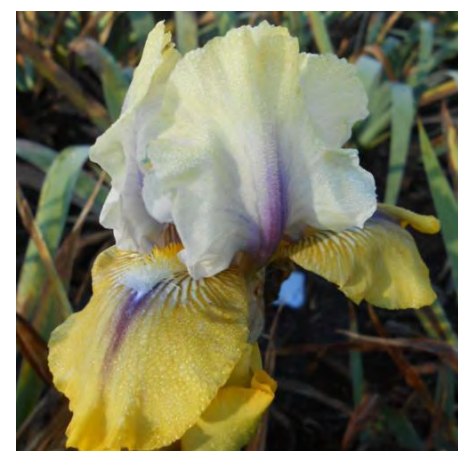
Vanishing Act

36"/Wilkerson, 2004



Seasons of Mist

36"/Zurbrigg, 2002



Double Your Fun

21"/Aitken, 2000

UPDATED OBSERVATIONS

Delane H. Langton
Eagle Ridge Iris Gardens

The winter of 2021 I went through the AIS Bulletins from the Wiki that were more than 10 years old and printed all that had anything to do with reblooming iris. One day on a -20 degree Montana winter day, I randomly opened my 3" binder to a July 1933 article from the AIS Bulletin # 48. It was written by Clint McDade, not someone I was I was even aware of. I underlined things that caught my attention and I will draw your attention to them as well. As Clint said, "The suggestions I am giving are based partly on experience, partly on guess work, and partly on hearsay". Clint suggests best possible culture, full sun and great drainage as the rebloomers are blooming early, then growing fast to do it again. He also suggests a thorough soaking August 1st and 15th to start fall growth (notice he did not mention extra water all summer). I am deciding the same is true for us in our Montana zone 4b. The iris here only need the water Mother Nature provides, so no extra during a quick summer semi dormancy (they are still green). We water in August and then stop September 1st as our fall rains usually start then. For us, we need to be very careful not to get the iris growing too crazily as winter can come mid October, but more generally, November 1st. If our iris are super green and really growing when that first winter blast comes (and if it stays), it can and will kill entire clumps.

I love his quote, "Anywhere in this broad land of ours one may experience irises in bloom before winter sets in". Lots of folk in zones 3, 4, 5, and 6 are still hesitant to try rebloomers, but we are living proof you can enjoy them in northern zones. We had 160 cultivars rebloom in our gardens this year (zone 4b). You can find many likely varieties in the reports contained elsewhere in this recorder. Even in 1933, fall blooming irises were considered, "The greatest horticultural advancement we have had in years. Iris basks in hot sunshine and laughs in dry weather. When fall rains come, they are in fine form to do their thing".

Next, he talks about three things to bring the joy of reblooming iris to the greatest number of people.

#1 Hybridizers working on them and that is definitely happening.

#2 Determining some way to force the active growth (by fertilizing) without producing rot. This is the only mention of extra fertilizer. Personally, I'm coming around to the idea that great soil culture is the key. When replanting iris, I'm improving the soil by digging, putting 15-15-15 in the bottom, then compost, tiling thoroughly and planting back. I also think division should be done every 2 years because of their rapid growth.

#3 We must learn to appreciate slightly different form in fall bloomers. We often notice clumped bloom at the top of the stalks. Shorter stalks too.

The Tennessee author also states, "There is never a month in the years when I do not have irises in bloom sometime in the month". We can now take this one huge step further and state that we (MT, z4b) have irises in bloom continually (the last three years) from the reticulata bulb type iris in March, until we get a hard freeze, usually the beginning of November.

Who hasn't heard people say, "The iris is a lovely flower, but it only blooms for 10 days or two weeks and then it's gone."? We know now that can be remedied by growing MANY iris. We grow approximately 7,000 cultivars (763 rebloomers) to achieve our results.

The author, Clint McDade, received permission directly from President and Mrs. Roosevelt to name two in their honor. Eleanor Roosevelt (H.P. Sass/McDade, 1933) is still widely in circulation and easily obtained. At the time it was introduced, it was thought to be one of the best and worth the price! Franklin Roosevelt (Jacob Sass/McDade, 1933), an IB was said to increase slowly and McDade advised waiting for a cheaper price before purchasing. I wasn't even aware of this one. There is not a photo on the WIKI and I'd say it did not stand the test of time. Often, you will find the difficult, slow growers disappear.

I especially enjoyed seeing which cultivars Mr. McDade talked about are still around. We are growing and selling many of them. Autumn King, Autumn Queen, Golden Harvest, Crimson King, Gold Imperial, Caterina, Cecil Minturn, Chalice, Lent A. Williamson, Polar King and Rhein Nixe.

McDade included the list for, "those who may live in favored conditions and those who have an experimental turn of mind and wish to attempt special cultural methods to persuade the temperamental irises to give an encore before retiring for the winter". I believe everyone with good garden culture can indeed have many reblooming iris in their gardens All that is required is to add many good candidates to your collection.

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LOWLY IRISES

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IRIS THAT BLOOM IN THE FALL

CLINT McDADE

The culture of the fall blooming Iris is as yet in the experimental stages. No one really knows much about it. The suggestions I am giving are based partly on experience, partly on guess work, and partly on hear-say.

The first step is to choose a location and conditions that will bring the buds into bloom as early in the spring as possible. This will give a long period of time for the new rhizomes to develop into blooming size by fall. In my opinion such a location should be on a sunny southwest slope of a hill or on the southwest side of a house. A rock garden with protection from the north and east, and open from the south would be ideal.

Drainage should be perfect, and the soil should be as rich as possible without endangering the life of the plants from root rot. Coal ashes or sand should be used freely in heavy soil. About August 1st and August 15th give the plants a thorough soaking to start fall growth.

The grower who lives south of Philadelphia or along the sea coast has a decided advantage over those who live inland in the north. This, I believe to be largely due to the fact that the nature of the Iris plant is such that a long period of time must elapse between the spring blooming of the parent rhizome and the second flowering to permit the developing of the little side shoots into blooming size rhizomes.

However, it is my firm conviction that given a certain flair for growing plants and a willingness to spend a little money for the varieties known to be reliable fall bloomers, that any Iris enthusiast

almost anywhere in this broad land of ours may experience the joy of seeing Irises in bloom before winter sets in. In extreme northern states, like Maine and Minnesota, it may be necessary to aid nature a little with a cold frame to hold off early frosts. South of New York City and along the east and west coast they will need no protection.

In perhaps twelve states in the extreme north the culture of fall blooming Irises may always remain something of an uncertain quantity for the casual gardener, but perhaps no more so than many other choice plants now cultivated.

In about twelve states where the winters are no colder than in southern Connecticut, they should give reasonable satisfaction without special attention.

In perhaps twenty-two southern and coast states I believe the development of the fall blooming Irises will be the greatest horticultural advancement we have had in years. Generally speaking, our summers are long and hot and dry. In the fall we usually have a fine season of fall rains and lovely weather. But the flowers that should bloom have long since passed on to their reward because of the blasting heat and dry weather. If ever there was a perfect solution to our problem, it is the fall blooming Iris. It basks in hot sunshine and laughs at dry weather. When the fall rains come it is in fine form to do its stuff.

A planting of these new fall blooming Irises has been made around the "Little White House" at Warm Springs, Georgia, under the personal supervision of Mr. Fred Botts, business manager of the Warm Springs Foundation. The President and Mrs. Roosevelt have graciously permitted me to name two seedlings in their honor.

To bring the joy of growing fall blooming Irises to the greatest number of people, three things would be helpful. First: the hybridizers should concentrate on breeding a type of Iris that will develop side shoots more rapidly. Second: we should determine some way by which the plant can be forced into active growth by fertilizing without producing root rot. Third: we should learn to appreciate a slightly different form in fall bloomers. Four foot widely branched stems take too long to develop and flower. Jack Frost is sure to cut them down except in favored locations.

It is my guess that the fall blooming type in general cultivation ten years hence will be a large flowered plant about 25 inches high

with the stems partially sheathed as is the pumila of today. In sections like mine where killing frosts do not usually come before November 10th, practically all types and colors that are now seen in the spring should then be blooming in the fall.

The average Iris enthusiast has boasted so long that the Iris is the one fine flower that can be grown to perfection without petting, that he is unwilling to put a little special thought on fall bloomers and is, therefore, doomed to disappointment. Such a one brushes aside the rising tide of interest in the fall bloomers as a passing fad. He has tried them and hasn't even seen a bud—therefore, he consigns them to oblivion. Not so the discriminating gardener who is always seeking something just a bit out of the ordinary! He will give fall blooming Irises the same careful study that he gives to any other rare and unusual plant. In my section of the country the delphinium is somewhat difficult. After much painstaking effort and many failures I have at last succeeded in growing what would be considered very mediocre delphiniums in more favored sections—yet people come for miles to see them!

Certain garden aristocrats, such as the androsaces, the saxifrages, and the gentians, yet remain a closed book to me. Still, I do not dismiss them as passing fads. Instead, I hope to live to see them blooming happily in my garden. Naturally, I shall try to select those that seem best suited to my soil and climate, and that come within the range of my limited pocketbook.

I am favored with a mild climate, the thermometer seldom dropping below 10 and going below zero only on the rarest occasions. There is never a month in the year when I do not have Irises in bloom sometime during the month. My friends farther north simply sigh and envy me my climate. Yet I have never seen an Iris bloom in the fall in any garden except my own. This is somewhat significant since Tennessee is known all over the Iris world as an Iris growing state. All other Tennessee Iris enthusiasts think of fall bloomers being practical only in semi-tropical climates. They envy the grower in south Texas or California his fall bloomers as something beyond their reach, just as my friends in Michigan and Indiana envy me my twelve months of bloom. How many times have I heard the expression, "The Iris is a lovely flower, but it blooms for only ten days or two weeks and then it is gone." This from Tennessee neighbors, not from Montana or Maine gardeners!

The newer fall blooming varieties that have proved dependable over a wide range of territory are:

Frost Queen (H. P. Sass-H. M. Hill '33)

A dependable fall bloomer with white flowers about the size of the old Fairy. Has a tendency to bunch—otherwise very attractive. 22 inches.

Autumn King, Junior (H. P. Sass-H. M. Hill '33)

Similar to Autumn King in color but a much more prolific fall bloomer in some sections. Stems inclined to be weak with me. 28 inches.

Laura Hutcheson (H. P. Sass-H. M. Hill '33)

Another Iris somewhat similar to Autumn King but slightly smaller.

September Skies (H. P. Sass-H. M. Hill '33)

A deep purple. 16 inches. Increases rapidly.

Olive White (H. P. Sass-H. M. Hill '32)

This is a cream colored Iris with green gold veining. Except for color it is much like Doxa.

October Opera (H. P. Sass-H. M. Hill '32)

24 inch stems. The color is similar to Opera. It is perhaps the most attractive flower among all the fall bloomers, but is a slow grower. It comes a little late in the fall.

Doreas Hutcheson (H. P. Sass-McDade '33)

A violet colored self. 18 inches. Slightly fragrant. Worth more than the quoted price.

Eleanor Roosevelt (H. P. Sass-McDade '33)

Slightly fragrant. 26 inch stem. A Fluorite purple self. One of the best. Worth the price.

Franklin Roosevelt (Jacob Sass-McDade '33)

Reddish purple with blue blotch on falls. Intermediate. 30 inch stems. Slightly fragrant. Increases slowly. I advise waiting for a cheaper price before purchasing.

Equinox (Auten '32)

Perhaps the most dependable of all fall bloomers. 26 inch stems. Reddish purple standards with slightly darker falls. Blooms rather late in the spring and suffers in comparison with the larger, more graceful modern Iris.

The older dependable fall bloomers are:

Autumn King (H. P. Sass '24)

A fairly attractive blue purple Iris even in the spring. A clump blooming in September is the cynosure of all eyes. 30 inches.

Autumn Queen (H. P. Sass '26)

A small white flower of good form. Fragrant. 18 inches.

Golden Harvest (J. Sass '29)

An early yellow somewhat like Doxa in form. The flowers are large and veined with gold. In the fall it comes a little late with the frost at its heels.

Jean Siret (Andre '26)

12 inches. A pretty yellow dwarf slightly veined with purple. Given a warm sunny location, it will reward you with a wealth of bloom. With me it persisted through a week of snow and a drop in the mercury to sixteen degrees.

Souv. de Lieut. de Chavagnac (Andre '26)

13 inches. Violet dwarf. This gives me more fall bloom than Jean Siret.

Ultra (H. P. Sass '30)

Ultramarine blue. This is worth while for its early spring bloom, even if it did not bloom a second time.

When planted in protected locations lazica and the several variations of unguicularis often produce flowers for me in winter during any prolonged period of mild weather. In the far south and west they bloom all winter long. Alas, these are not for gardeners in the colder sections.

Other varieties that have been reported to me as blooming occasionally in the fall in various sections are:

Allies, Apache, *aphylla*, Crimson King, Diogenes, Jane Krey, John Foster, *kochii*, Leopold, Moa, Mrs. Alan Gray, Neola, Nyx, Peggy Babbington, Purple King, September Morn.

Reports on these varieties come from both north and south and indicate that the tendency to bloom a second time under ideal conditions is not confined to the south and sea coast. It has not been my privilege to see any of this group in bloom in the fall.

The varieties that follow have been reported to me as blooming occasionally in the fall in the far south or along the Pacific coast:

Dora Longdon, Georgia, Gold Imperial, Ivorine, Koya, Le Correge, Querida, Sikh, Sir Michael, Soledad.

Reports on these are general enough to indicate definite fall blooming tendencies in favored climates. Of this group I have flowered only Sikh. It bloomed on November 8 and was cut down by frost while at its best. Entirely too late for northern gardeners. Le Correge, Sir Michael, and Querida have also started to form buds in the fall, but they were too late for development.

I have also heard of isolated instances where the following have bloomed in the fall. Reports not sufficient to indicate any established tendency:

Albicans, Archeveque, Azurite, Bluestone, Caterina, Ceeile Minturn, Chalice, Coppersmith, Fluospar, Fritjof, Her Majesty, Lent A. Williamson, Polar King, Rhein Nixe, Sindjkha, and W. C. Terry.

I have never flowered any of this last group.

Alcazar, Leonato and Ute Chief (very close to Alcazar. Ed.) have occasionally showed signs of forming buds in the fall in my garden. So far as I know these three have never actually flowered in the fall anywhere.

Except in the far south and along the sea coast the average gardener will probably never get much satisfaction from varieties that throw only occasional fall bloom. I have made this list more for the benefit of those who may live in favored locations and those who have an experimental turn of mind and wish to attempt special cultural methods to persuade these temperamental Irises to give an encore before retiring for the winter. Instead, the average gardener should stick to those varieties known to be dependable.

Visitors to my garden around October 20th will usually find all of the varieties blooming that are mentioned here as being dependable, and in addition, they will find in bloom many seedlings from various hybridizers that are being tested for dependability. I am always glad to receive new information and comments about fall blooming Irises from other sections of the country.

INTERMEDIATES

SHERMAN R. DUFFY

Intermediates bulk more importantly upon the Iris horizon with each season as more and better varieties are developed by breeders. This season an unusually high class lot of newcomers have been shown.

There was much complaint and criticism voiced by breeders and dealers at Freeport during the annual meeting concerning a proposed reclassification of Irises published in previous issues of THE BULLETIN which in effect abolishes the intermediate class just at a time when it is becoming clearly defined and well developed. As

[42]