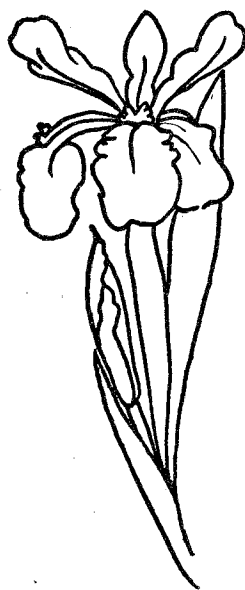


# **SPURIA IRIS SOCIETY**



## **NEWSLETTER**

**VOL. 8**

**JANUARY 1964**

**NO. 20**

# SPURIA IRIS SOCIETY

## SECTION OF THE AMERICAN IRIS SOCIETY

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### - SPURIA IRIS SOCIETY INFORMATION -

Membership:	Section of the American Iris Society under Approved By-Laws
Dues:	American Members of SIS must be members of AIS.
	Annual: Individual - \$1.00, Family - \$1.50, Sustaining - \$3.00
	Notice of dues payable are included with January and July issues of your Newsletter. Please inform Editor or Secy. of change of address immediately.
Newsletter:	Published Quarterly - July, October, January, April.
	Deadline for all articles and news items, 1st of June, September, December, and March. If possible, all material for the Newsletter should be typed and double spaced. Send all communications regarding Newsletter to the Editor.

Rental slides are available for clubs and individuals from Library Chairman, Mrs. Lura Roach.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE - January 1964

The New Year of 1964 has rolled around. May I wish you all the most prosperous New Year possible and that your iris experiences during this season will be most thrilling.

There are two basic problems that spuria enthusiasts seem to be having. The first is the lack of pictures and information relative the varieties of spurias now available. The second is the unavailability of plants through regular commercial channels.

In my last message to you I called attention to the fact that we need more pictures. May I urge you to start making preparations right now to take pictures this coming season at every opportunity. The Society needs more color slides and good black and white shots of standard varieties for publications. Requests are always coming for good pictures from National Publications and very few are available. Will you help us?

A great interest is developing across the country in the color slide sets that are available through AIS and SIS. We need more slides if we are not to disappoint our public. If you have slides that are available will you please contact Lura Roach, our librarian, and inform her of their availability.

We also have a responsibility to produce more plants for distribution. The requests are numerous for plants but in many cases they are not available. I have drained my own garden to the point of being perilously low on many of the standard varieties. Many requests must now be turned down because of lack of material.

There are a very few Commercial Growers who have spurias listed. Will you that plan on having plants for sale this next season please send a note to the Editor informing him of this fact? This will give the membership the opportunity to contact you relative to expanding their collection.

The requests for gifts to display gardens are becoming numerous also. If any of the membership has surplus material that they are willing to contribute for this purpose will you kindly let me know.

There is a vibrant growing interest in spurias spreading across the country. The frustrating part about it is finding the materials to supply the requests. This appears to me to be our main task for 1964. Will you join with me to meet the need?

MARION R. WALKER, President

EDITOR'S NOTES -

The delay in your January Newsletter has been caused by a number of circumstances but fortunately resulted in some additional and interesting material. It is hoped you will accept my humble apologies for being so late and can assure you that it will not happen again...Our sincere thanks to Ben Hager for his fine article which came with some splendid drawings which we have as yet been unable to reproduce for the Newsletter, but will appear in the April issue... if at all possible...

At the November 1963 meeting of the AIS Directors collection of membership dues of members of the AIS Sections with AIS dues was authorized...The Board of Directors decided to change the membership dues to two groups, one expiring on June 30th and the other on December 31st of each year. This will aid in AIS and the Sections dues being on a common expiration date...However, for those having triennial memberships dues will be collected by the section. Further details on this will be included in the April issue. If there is any question about your SIS dues, please write the Secy-Treas., Mrs. Marilyn Holloway.

The Editor's mail bag has been a bit light since our last Newsletter and again we solicit your help in sending in your comments and experiences.

## EDITOR'S NOTES (continued)

It soon will be a busy time for spuria gardeners in the warmer climates and let us know your results by keeping a few notes during your blooming season. Best wishes for a wonderful season.

A recent article by Dr. Clarke Cosgrove in the AIS Bulletin, January 1964, No. 172, raises a few questions namely the hybridizing of winter hardy varieties. I am sure that many of the so-called species especially Ochroleuca is most winter hardy as it is widely and successfully grown in many colder climates...Homer Metcalf reported it in colder Montana and Ochroleuca is also grown easily in Illinois and other cold midwest states. Nies used Ochroleuca in his strains and these varieties have the genes for cold hardiness. A large number of California varieties chiefly some of Marion Walker's have proven winter hardy in Illinois and Walker Ferguson reports Wakerobin and Thrush Song successfully grown in New Hampshire...Bro. Charles reported on several of M. Walker's varieties which your Editor sent two and three years ago. Sunlit Sea and Morningtide bloomed first year following one of their coldest winters...White Heron is reported as a favorite in most colder climates altho in some areas does not winter too well. But California plants were also shipped by your Editor to Maine two years ago and Arthur Clayton and Howard Brooks reported their hardiness...One question may be on their winter care as related to time of planting the spurias in colder climates...There is no question that the hybridizing of spurias leaves unlimited possibilities using not only the older varieties but the newer plants based on their growing experience in so many varied climates. Soil and water along with temperatures must also be considered for adaptation of varieties... There is much to learn. Walker Ferguson has several plants in a strain of new color breaks which appear to like both the dry, hot climate and the cold winter season.

These questions again point out the great importance of all SIS members reporting on their experiences with the various varieties in the many different climatic areas. This information would be of great help to our too few hybridizers of spurias. Send your comments to the Editor.....

\* \* \* \* \*

## OKLAHOMA CITY DISPLAY GARDEN . . . Mrs. Joe Crawford

The Spuria Display Garden in Will Rogers Garden Center is in excellent condition. The beds are tiled drained and slightly curved with a background of Hollies. A paved walk separates the bed from the tall bearded on the opposite side. It is easily accessible from our new Garden Exhibition building and should be viewed by all who visit the garden. Mr. Walters, horticulturist, is very pleased with this addition to the garden and certainly gives them proper care.

We should like to acknowledge those who have sent rhizomes this fall and say that they are now sending up growth and looking fine. Mr. Walker Ferguson sent many of his newer cultivars and some seedlings - namely: Banners of Blue, Thrush Song, Dark Silk, Counter Point, Wakerobin, Good Nature, Windfall, Spring Plumb, Shift to Red, and Mr. Walker's Gay Lark. Seedlings: 83-7, 62-11, 62-5. Ben Hager sent seedlings: S 93B, S 93A, and S 41OR. Also Mt. Palomar (Alice White) Morningtide, (Walker) and Windfall (Ferguson). We are very pleased to have these newer varieties growing along with our older varieties and thank these fine hybridizers for their contribution. This planting will give the judges an opportunity to truly evaluate the Spurias in this area and appreciate their garden value. We now have 35 varieties growing and room for seven more at this time.

Mr. Walters has said he will return the increases to the sender any time they make the asking along with their shipment of rhizomes. He files this request and at the proper time they will be returned. We feel this is the fair and correct way to handle the valued seedlings and new varieties that come to the garden.

The Spuria Check List has just arrived and we are very excited about it. The Spuria Society is deeply grateful to this fine committee for their dedicated work that gave us this excellent check list.

## A CRITICAL OBSERVATION OF THE SPURIA IRIS

Ben R. Hager, Stockton, Calif.

The first question to come to mind when we start to set up standards for what we consider to be good and bad points about any certain type of flower is, "Why?" and the next question is, "What are these standards based on?". The answer to the questions is that we feel the need to ferret out the best qualities of a certain flower and set them up as statistics (to be sure, flexible statistics that can progress with the development of that flower) against which we can compare various individuals of that certain flower's family. In so doing, we can gradually work, through breeding and selection, toward varieties that lack the obvious faults which often mar, in one respect or another, these flowers and plants as garden subjects, cut flowers or however we are inclined to use them. These statistics, or "Standards" are based (usually) on those effects that produce the best "display", for that is the purpose of growing any flower or plant. Some qualities of color are more showy or pleasing than others; width of petal and form in the flower gives a larger surface for the presentation of that color; the way the flower is held on the stem gives an awkward or graceful appearance, or hides, or enhances the visual effectiveness of the flower; the foliage can either detract by a messy or ungainly appearance or it can form into a continuity that upholds the floral display. These things, and many more, are considered and applied in the judging of a flower and its plant and these are the things we should look for either as a buyer planning our landscaping or as a breeder choosing varieties from our seedling patch to offer to the gardener for his approval. We may often find a favorite flower that does not rate high against the statistics, but in the long run it is the varieties that stand up to this type of measure that have the longest and most happy careers as joy bringers in our gardens.

I will not try to go far into COLOR in this article as that is often discussed and far too often the only criterion on which people choose a flower. Color is generally a matter of personal taste and can be the cause of a lot of useless controversy. Here let us deal with the less obvious features of FORM and STYLE, PLANT HABIT and STEM STRUCTURE. These are especially important with the Spuria Iris and so far no really definitive statements have been brought together for our consideration. There will always be objections to any such set of standards, but a start must be made and no one statement will ever contain all the answers.

Keeping in mind the reasons behind the "statistics", let us begin by considering each of the main parts of the Spuria Iris flower and gradually build these parts into the whole and "near ideal" flower and plant.

The FALLS and STYLE ARMS usually show up with the most faults in the floral parts of the Spuria Iris. Substance is all important so that the flower can hold throughout its life expectancy the shape that is its very own. First, then, let us consider POSITION. In the illustration of falls - A. Flaring and B. Horizontal - both are quite acceptable and are the norm for good flowers. However, C. Arched, is often just as good and especially so in the profile position of the bloom. It can be in some cases (tall, high carried flower) more effective than, B. Horizontal, where the color visibility is lost in an eye level flower. Spurias do get that tall. But D. Tucked, can never be tolerated in a modern Spuria Iris. Almost as bad is what we call "Gaposis" as in Figure E. When at its worst, this will give the illusion that the flower is falling apart. The style and crest should rest firmly on the fall.

The "claw" which is the petal segment that carries the fall at its end, is sometimes a nuisance in that it can be too long as in Figure F, or too short as in Figure G. Although the latter is not too bad, the ideal is for the style crest to rest just below the shoulders of the fall as in Figures A and H.

The shape of the fall is where we judge toward the largest surface to display the most color. The outline is unimportant so long as continuity is maintained and there is the largest surface practical with that continuity.

## A CRITICAL OBSERVATION OF THE SPURIA IRIS (continued)

Square shoulders as illustrated in Figures H and M are ideal, but orbicular falls, as in Figure J. or the *I. crocea* (*I. aurea*) type fall, Figure K, can be as effective. The sloping shoulders of Figure L seldom will give sufficient area for color display. Another fault not illustrated here is the curling or folding inward of the edges of the petals. The surface of the fall should remain nearly flat. A slightly incurving is acceptable, but don't let it go too far.

Here would be a good point at which to discuss the "Horned" types that intrigue some people. Illustrations of this phenomenon will be found at the bottom of the page illustrating the Standards. Precisely, what happens is that the falls and also sometimes the standards are foreshortened by the horn to the extent that they appear to be cut in half, perhaps deformed, or at least there is just not enough of them there. I doubt that this type will ever give an effective flower in the Spuria Iris, BUT I might be wrong.

In discussing the STANDARDS of the Spuria Iris flower, we again find the biggest stress on Substance. Floppy and falling standards do not make a good flower under any circumstances. There are three positions (with intermediates) that are generally found in the Spuria Iris and all are good if they conform with the rest of the flower into a pleasing whole. The shape of the Standard is often the key to the substance question. Width is necessary, although not infallibly, to a Standard that will maintain its position. The "paddle" shaped Standard as in Figure B will seldom hold up and the "oar" shaped one will hardly ever be strong enough to do so due mostly to the narrowness of the base of the petal. The lack of width of the C. Blade-shaped Standard gives poor color display, so as often as possible we like to see the Spatulate form as in Figure A. Width and substance are the best qualities of an Iris Standard.

When we put these various parts together into a whole flower, we find another effect to make rules about. Here we discover that short segments combine to make compact flowers are far more resplendent than the long spidery outline produced by elongated claws, style arms and standards. Even large falls lose their best effect when held too far apart by the long reaching claws. The brightest color will give a scantier display in this type than will the color reflected from a compact flower. So, in short, what we want to aim for here is the width of parts, and compactness of the flower as a whole.

We now have a flower. Let's put it on a STEM. On the page illustrating the stem and flower, Figure A shows the "classical" placement of the Spuria Iris. Three to five bud placements--and pray for two buds in each plus three in the terminal (it is coming)--spaced far enough apart so that if you get an open flower at each spot they will not crowd each other. Each flower should be held far enough away from the main body of the stem so it will not crowd as in Figure B.

There are those who are casting approving eyes on the wider BRANCHING in the Spuria Iris and there are those who say that the "classical" placement is best. That is for you to decide for yourself, but I might point out a couple of faults in the "branching" ideal. There are two types of such branching as shown in Figures C and D. Both have a tendency when over elongated, to bring the flowers to near the same level and give a group or bunched effect that is often crowded when more than one or two flowers are open. On the plant this also puts the flowers too much to the top of the clump whereas the "classical" placement carries the flowers down into the clump and makes a better overall picture.

Poor FOLIAGE under a good flower and stem can ruin the whole thing. This is especially true in the Spuria Iris as the foliage is quite dominant. Leaves that come up and "break over" at the tips, leaves that arch almost back down to the ground and leaves that are spotted with virus or leaf spot are all possibilities with the Spuria Iris and should be avoided at all cost.

## A CRITICAL OBSERVATION OF THE SPURIA IRIS (continued)

Upright, or slightly arching foliage with good color, whether deep green, grey green, or yellow green, so long as it is clean and of healthy appearance, is to be adjudged as a necessary feature of a good Spuria. All of us do not cut the flowers as soon as they show color and rush them into a vase, ignoring the plant completely. This is a very good way to use the Spuria Iris, however, but there are those who prefer them as garden plants so we should give good garden performance precedence over faulty characteristics.

If all of this has helped you to organize your thoughts concerning "What is a good Spuria?", then it has been successful and I am glad. The one thing we want to do is to keep improving the Spuria Iris so that our interest will be maintained and our enjoyment multiplied. (For illustrations see Pages 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, and 12)

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### NEWS FROM HERE AND THERE -

A fine letter from Jean Tunnicliffe of New Zealand who reported in the October Newsletter on her experience with Spuria seed from Walker Ferguson and Mary Redford. She asks to add to her report the following: "Since my last report I have been to Tauranga and found that twelve more seeds had germinated, three of Ferguson's and nine of Mary Redford's. They are all fine sturdy plants and germinated 15 months after planting. We had forty days without rain from Sept. thru Oct. and then some rain but not enough. You can imagine how our farm pastures are suffering. We hold our Iris Convention at the end of October or early in November. November is a lovely month, full of flowers and the late spring sun. It is also the month for roses and Sam McGredy has just told us he has never seen roses like it anywhere else!."

Another note from our good friend, Dr. G. B. Loveridge of Young, NSW, Australia, giving a report on their last spuria season..."While I myself am still waiting word from the quarantine authorities as to whether or not they are going to release my spurias, which have already been there 2 years, some were released in Victoria and a lot of them bloomed last season. It does seem, however, that some of the relatively newer types will be available here. Those cleared included Fairy Light, Rustic Flame (growth untidy), Golden Lady (strong grower), Orange Delight (not a strong grower); Violet Veil (good growth, untidy foliage), Sunnyside (foliage untidy), Wadi Zem Zem, Big Cloud, White Heron, Ruffled Gold, Canary Island, Hazy Hills, Katrina Nies, and Fairy Wand.

Of my own plants Ochroleuca, Monnieri, Bronzspur, Monspur, and Sintenisii, all bloomed well as usual. I obtained crosses of Sintenisii x Ochroleuca-Bronzspur, Monspur-Ochroleuca x Sintenisii and Monnieri x Bronzspur. A few seedlings bloomed but were nothing startling. The season here is early November but today (Jan. 22, 1964) I discovered Sintenisii re-blooming...

From seeds sent out from the Spuria Society and from Walker Ferguson, I have seedlings of the following which are looking healthy and are increasing:

Subbarbarta (26), Wakerobin x Morningtide (17), Wadi Zem Zem x 55-2 (17);  
Ruth Nies Cabeen x 61-8 Blue (20), Morningtide x (Inflation x 56-5) (22),  
60-Tan x Counterpoint (25), Middle Pink x Counterpoint (10),  
Cast Iron x (Investment x Driftwood) x Thrush Song (24).

Wishing you all a good season to come!..Gordon Loveridge

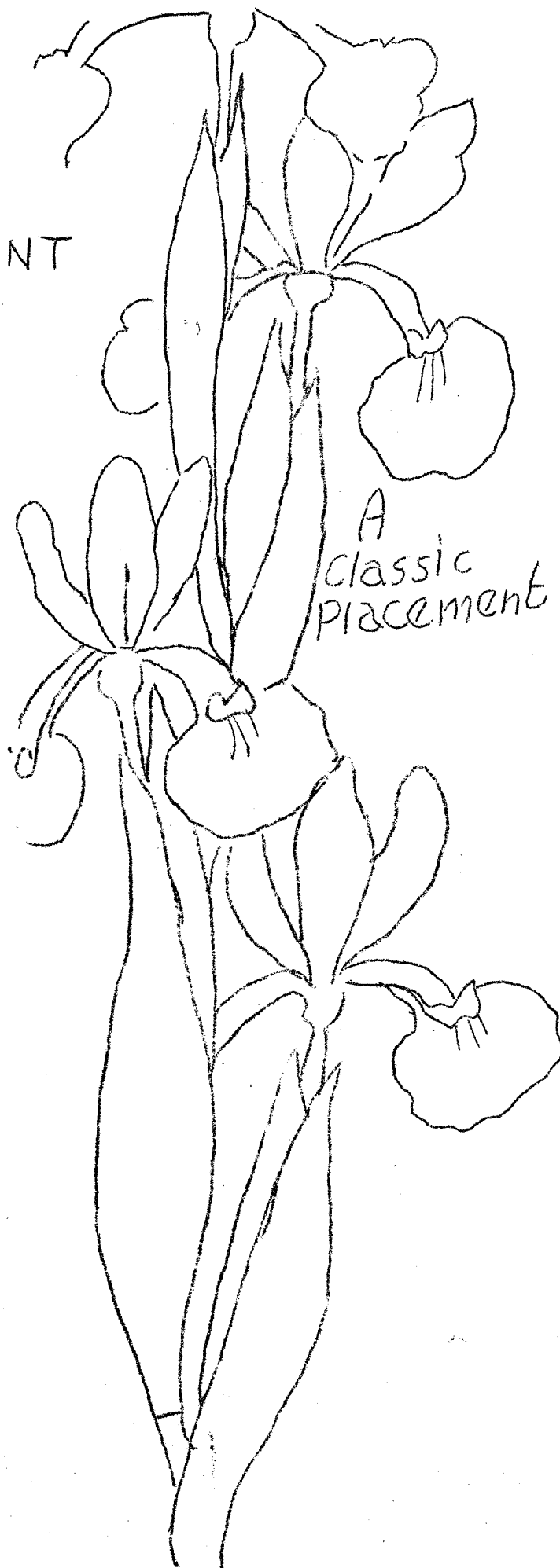
### EDITOR'S MAIL BAG --

Greetings received from Ila Nunn who with her husband enjoyed a two months trip in Europe. Reports seeing irises in many places but not any spurias...

Several requests have been received for copies of the SIS Check List. We hope that these interested persons will become SIS members...Copies of the Check List are available at 50¢ per copy... Just send request to your Editor...

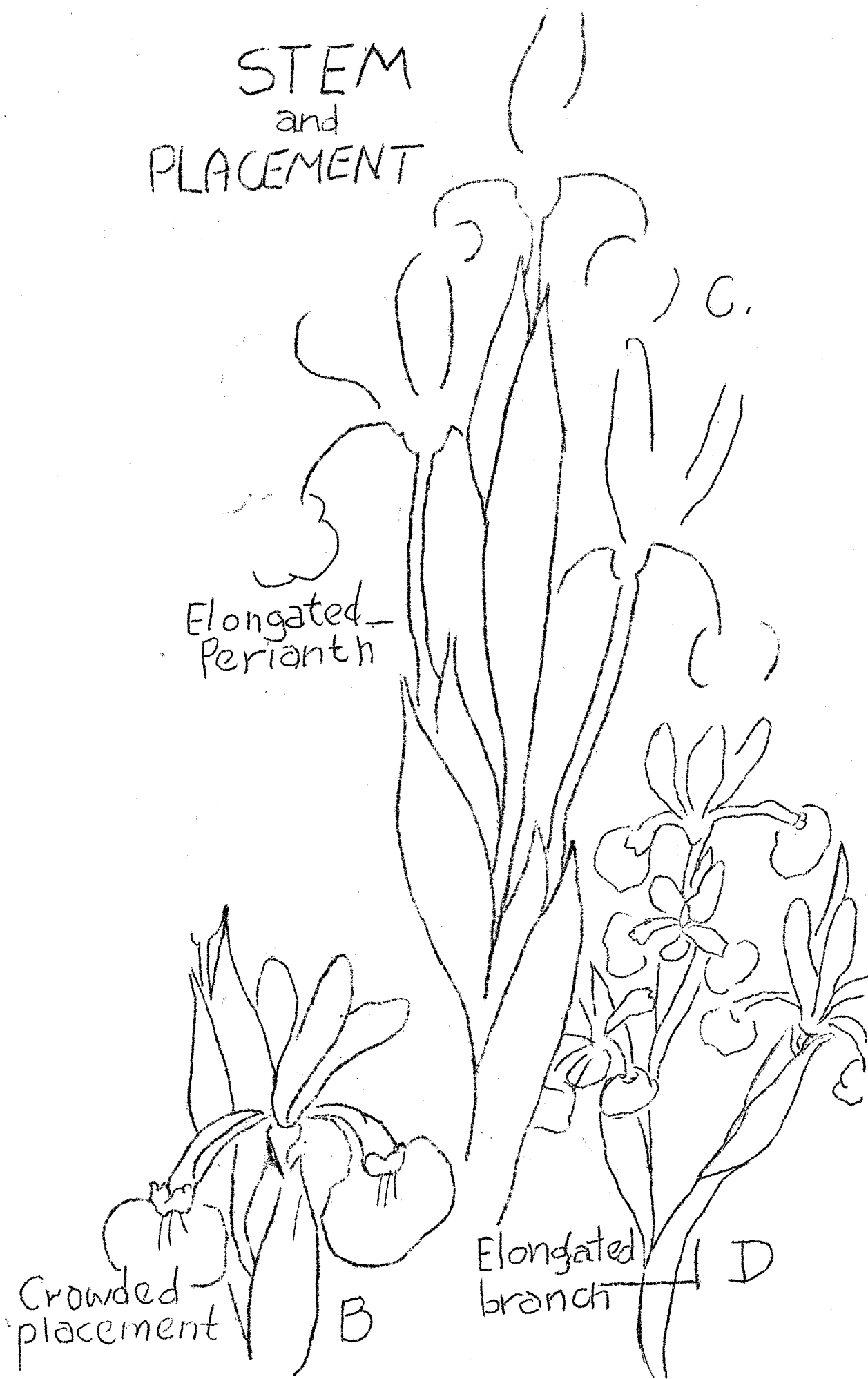
Another new member, Mr. Crane, of Kenton, Ohio says he worked with Iris years ago but has caught the fever again, has started planting more iris and will be getting more spurias. Glad to hear from you nice folks....

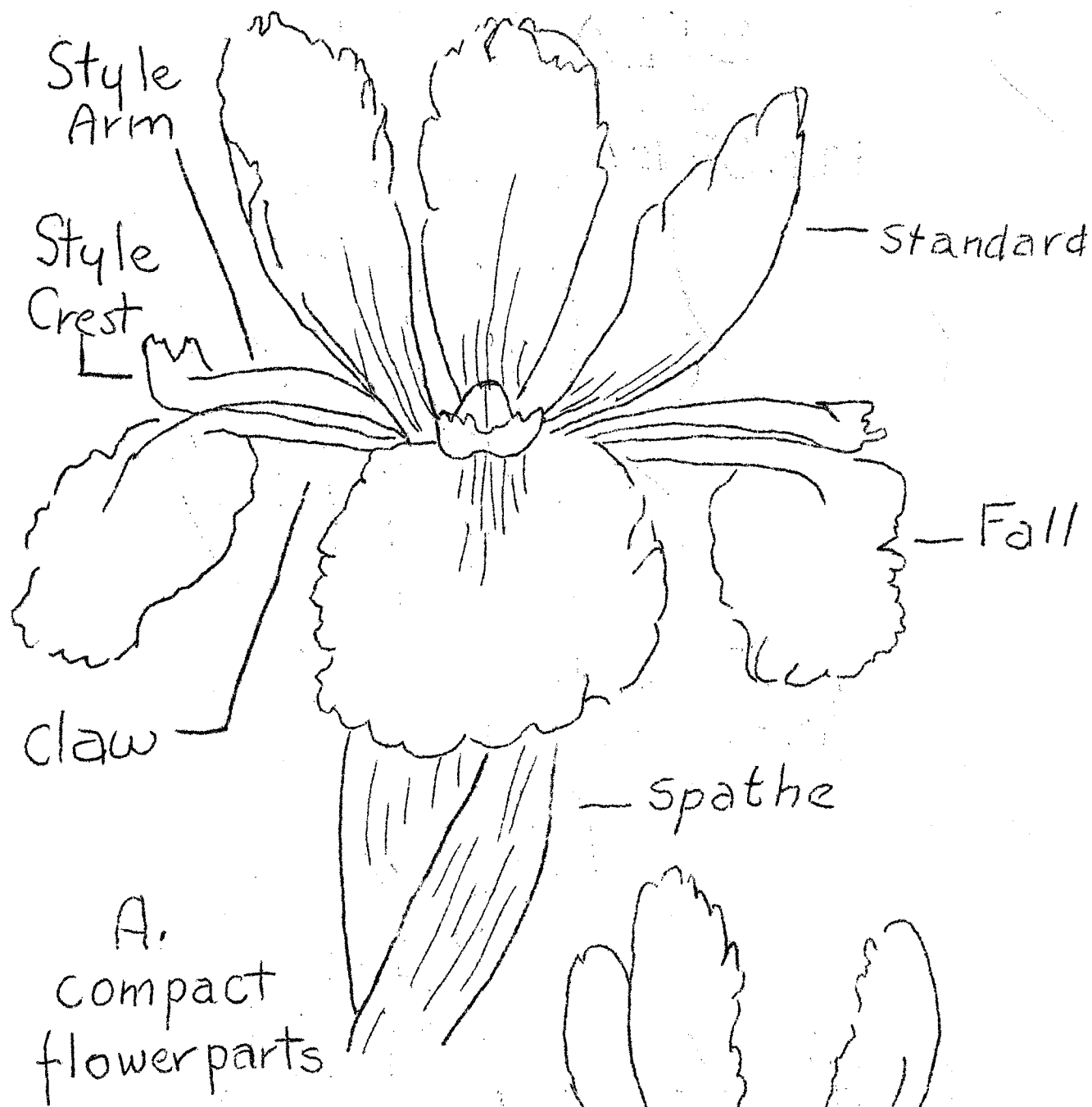
STEM  
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PLACEMENT



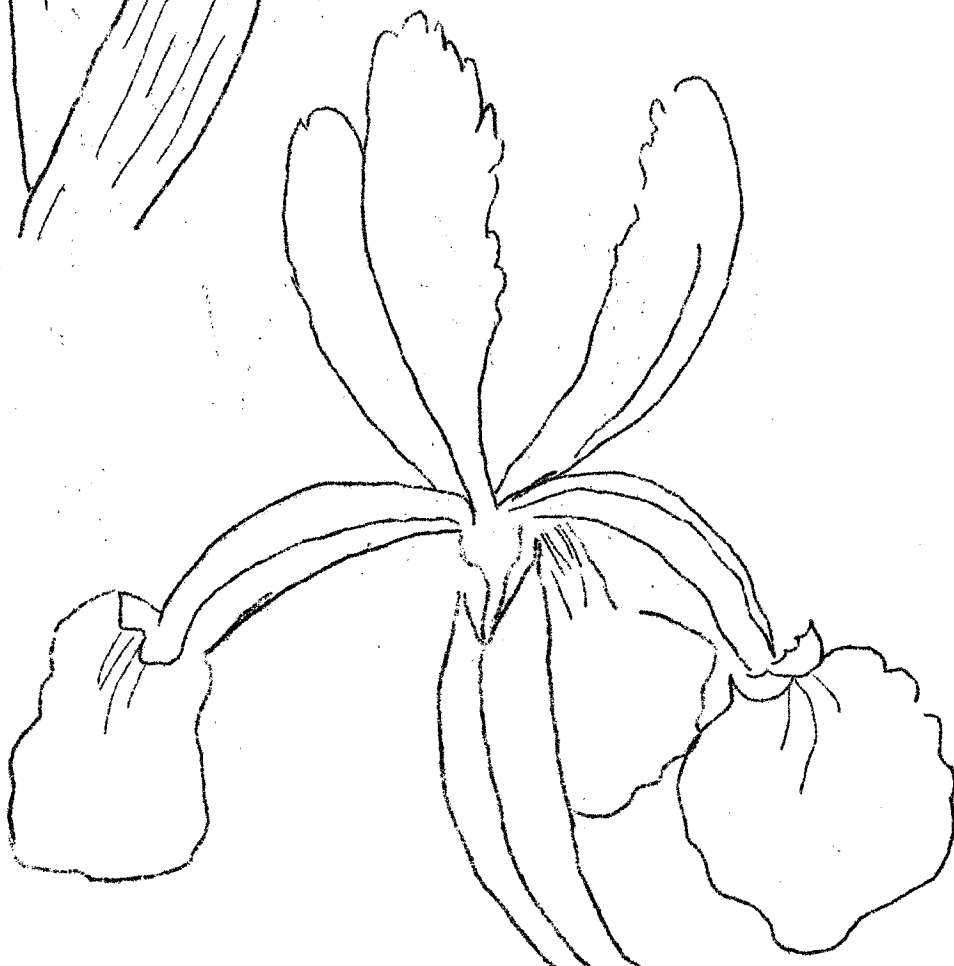


# STEM and PLACEMENT

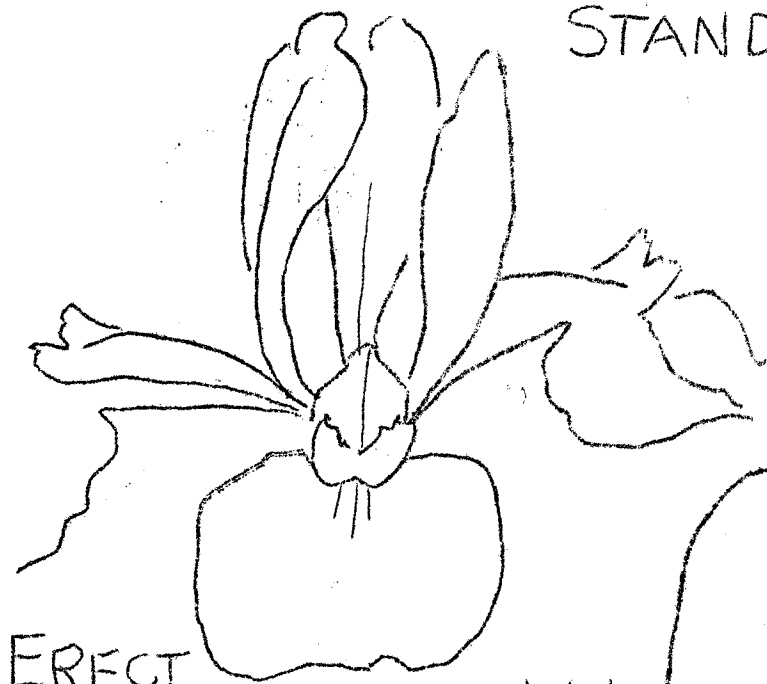




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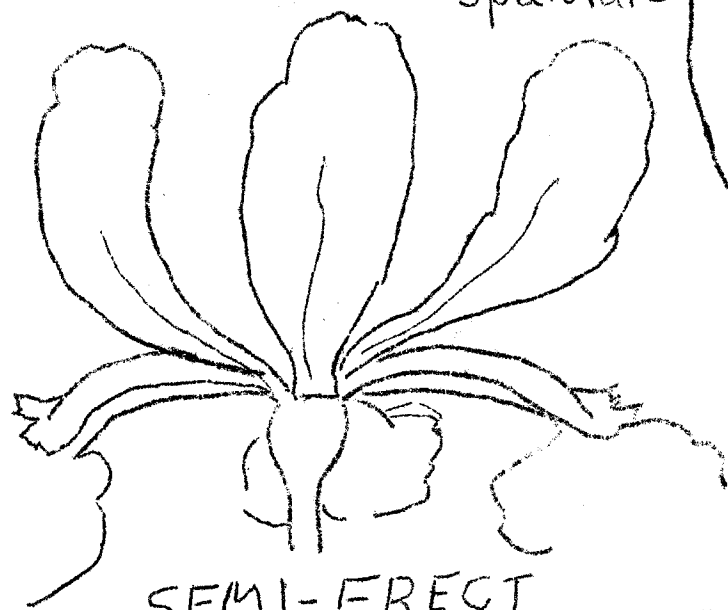


STANDARDS

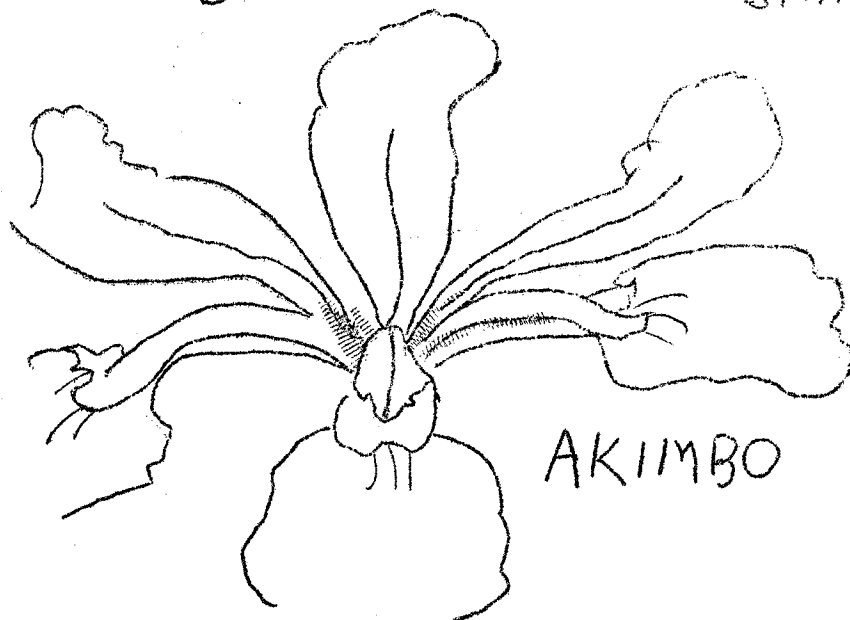


ERECT

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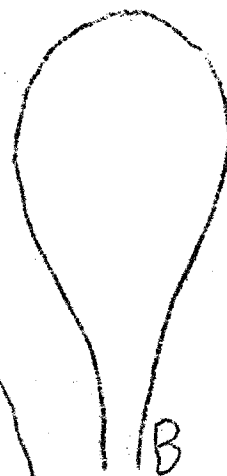


SEMI-ERECT

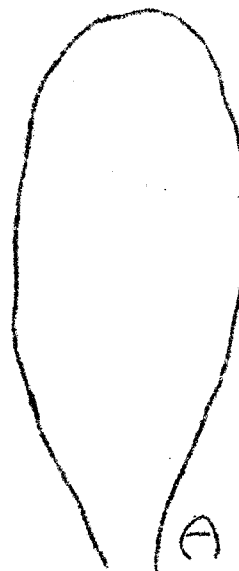


AKIMBO

STANDARD



Paddle



A



D



C  
Blade



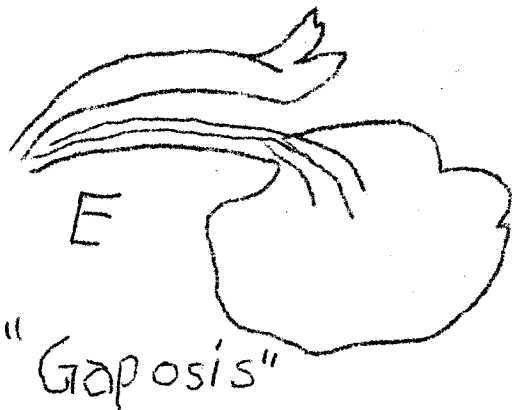
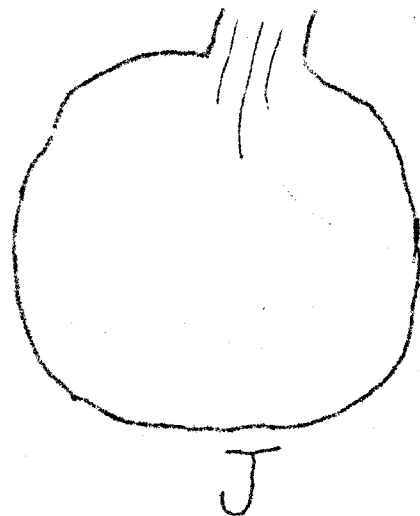
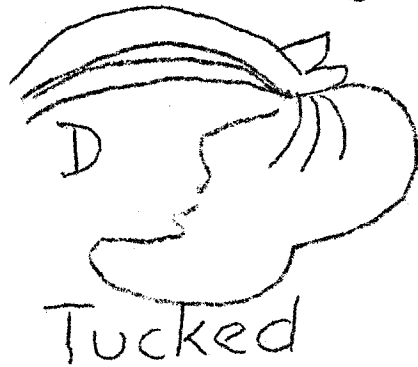
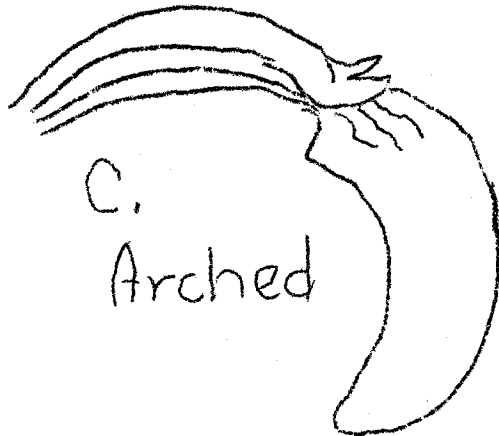
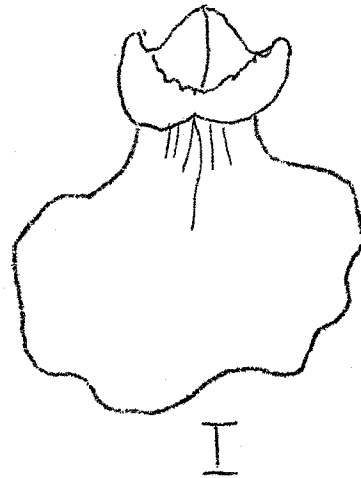
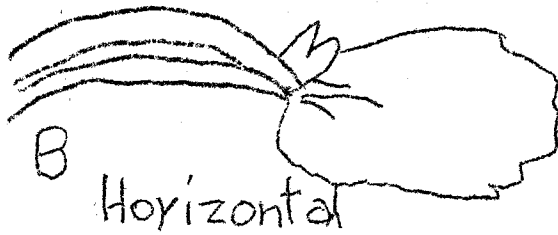
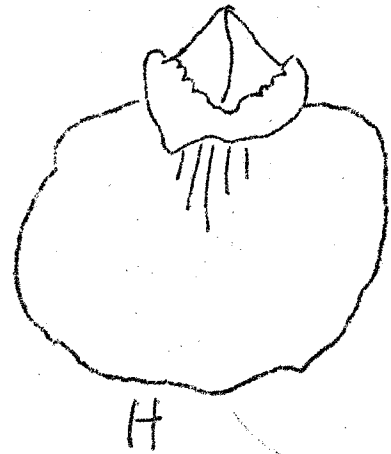
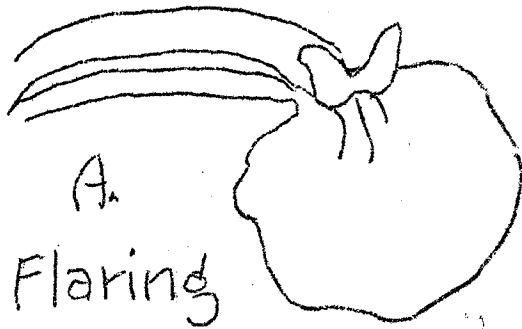
FALLS



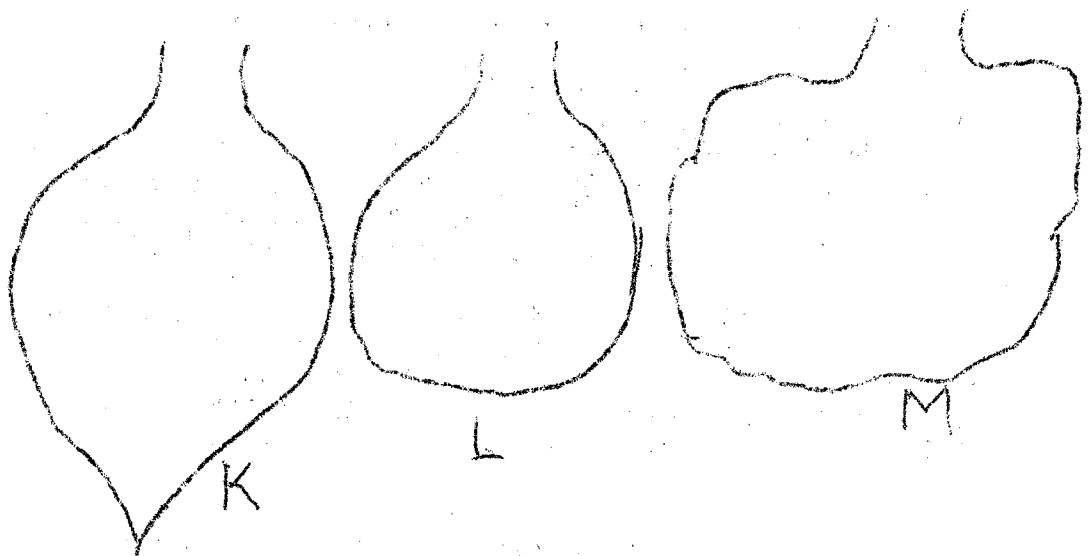
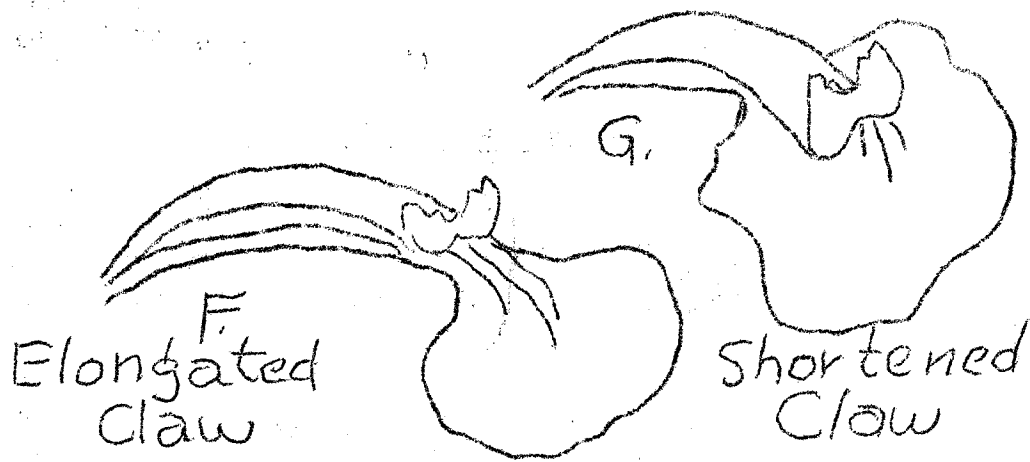
EFFECT  
of  
HORNS



# FALLS and STYLE ARMS



# FALLS AND STYLE ARMS



DIRECTORY OF SPURIA GROWERS

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SPURIA IRIS

Write for Listing  
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SPURIA IRIS

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"BIGGER BULBS"  
MYRON D. BIGGER  
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- WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS -

Membership data intentionally redacted

FAMILY MEMBERSHIPS

Membership data intentionally redacted

NEW SUSTAINING MEMBERS

Membership data intentionally redacted

CORRECTIONS FOR THE SPURIA CHECK LIST -

Your Check List of Spuria Cultivars, mailed to all SIS members with the last issue of the Newsletter credits Carl Milliken as the breeder of the unregistered variety White Crane. Our apologies to Tom Craig--White Crane is his. To correct your check list, note that this error occurs in two places: first in the alphabetical list of varieties by name, and again under Milliken's name in the list of breeders.

Also Ferguson's Wakerobin is credited with the Nies Award 1962 which is correctly given to Cherokee Chief on Page 3... The HM for Banners of Blue should be 1963 instead of 1961.

A belated acknowledgment to Editor "Johnny" Johnson and his wife, "Tex", for the assembling and distribution of the check-list....

Peg Grey, Calistoga, Calif.

EDITOR'S NOTE: The drawings which accompanied Ben Hager's fine article were traced as best possible on mimeo stencils and we hope that the diagrams are self-explanatory as related to the article. It was a bit difficult to crowd the drawings on these stencils.....Editor.