

SPURIA IRIS SOCIETY

SPURIA SECTION OF THE AMERICAN IRIS SOCIETY

NEWSLETTER

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VOLUME 11

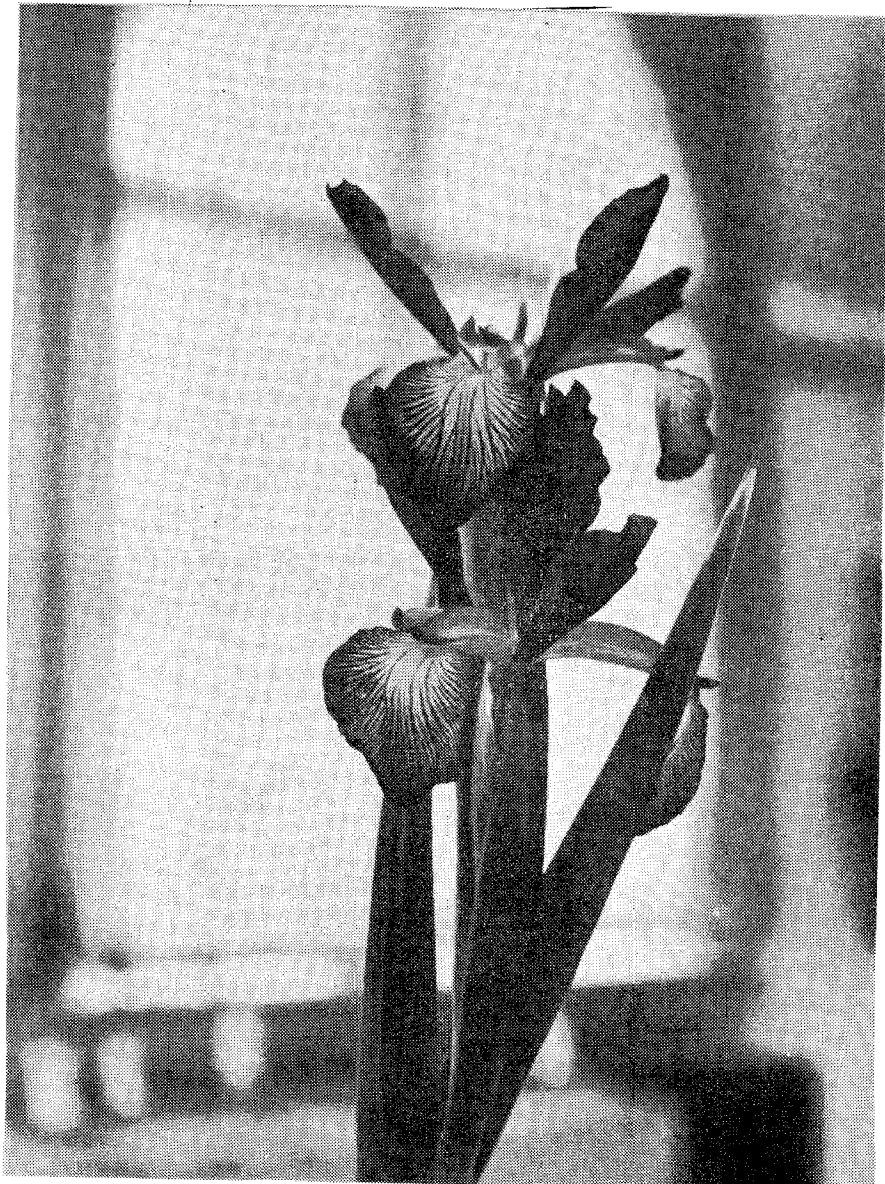
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OCTOBER 1967

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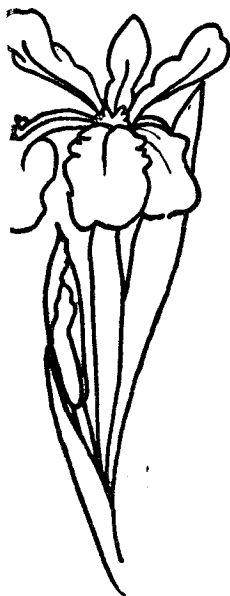
SPURIAS
from
AUSTRALIA

* * * * *



(photo by MACKINTOSH, courtesy of CALIFORNIA GARDEN MAGAZINE)

This intensely-veined spuria was judged BEST SEEDLING OF THE SHOW at the San Diego Fall Iris Show on November 19, 1967. It won a perpetual trophy and an Exhibition Certificate for Dr Gordon Loveridge, of Australia, who sent it via Pan American Airways for the judging. This seedling, number L-3, represents a development on Walker Ferguson's COUNTERPOINT - one of its parents. Dr Loveridge will register and introduce this iris in 1968.



S P U R I A I R I S S O C I E T Y

N E W S L E T T E R

OCTOBER 1967 - VOLUME 11 # 35

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Bulletin

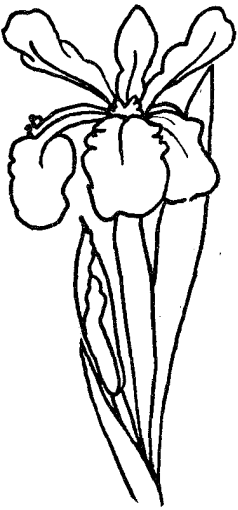
SPURIA IRIS SOCIETY INFORMATION

Membership: A Section of the American Iris Society under approved by-laws.
American members of SIS must be members of AIS.

Dues: Annual: Individual \$1.00 Family \$1.50
 Triennial: Individual \$2.50 Family \$3.50
 Supporting annual membership \$3.00

Notices of dues payable are included with A.I.S. dues notices.
Please inform the Editor or the Secretary of changes of address.

NEWSLETTER: Published quarterly: July, October, January, and April.
Deadline for all articles and news items is first day of June,
September, December, and March. If possible, all material for
the newsletter should be typed and double spaced. Send all
communications regarding the newsletter to the editor.



YOUR PRESIDENT REPORTS

First of all, I want to congratulate our outstanding co-editors - Archie Owen and Bill Gunther - for a most wonderful July issue of our SIS Newsletter. It is most gratifying to see so many new names among those who are contributing articles for the publication.

I am happy to report that in AIS Region 22, in Arkansas, Mr Zeh Dennis utilized the SIS slide collection for a showing at the local fall meeting - with excellent results. SIS members in other areas - where the slides have not yet been seen - are urged to initiate action to have them scheduled.

The generosity of Marion Walker and Ben Hager and Walker Ferguson in donating many spurias for the various display gardens has been a very big factor in making those gardens a success. These gardens, in turn, have stimulated much of the presently increasing interest in spurias. No one could ask for more.

Reports from Berkeley, the scene of our 1968 AIS Convention, are most pleasing. There is a reasonable chance that the spurias in that area will be in full bloom for all the convention visitors to see, to judge, and to evaluate. The members of Region 14 are going all out to make the 1968 meeting one of the best, and I can assure you that it will be particularly worthwhile to attend.

It is my pleasure to announce the results of the 1967 Spuria Popularity Poll. The ten most popular spurias, listed in order, are as follows:

- | | |
|----------------|-------------------|
| 1. GOLDEN LADY | 6. MORNINGTIDE |
| 2. BARITONE | 7. DAWN CANDLE |
| 3. DRIFTWOOD | 8. WINDFALL |
| 4. THRUSH SONG | 9. NEOPHYTE |
| 5. ELIXIR | 10. CONTRADICTION |

I extend my personal best wishes for a fine holiday season to you - and to all your iris plants.

Very sincerely,

Ralph A. Johnson

YOUR TREASURER REPORTS

Balance on hand 8/31/66	- - - - -	\$335.41
Receipts: dues and miscellaneous income	- - - - -	\$330.83
donation (San Diego-Imperial Counties)	- - - - -	100.00
		<u>\$430.83</u>
		430.83
		<u>\$766.24</u>
Disbursements: cost of four newsletters	- - - - -	\$256.93
Secretary's supplies & postage	- - - - -	15.00
President's supplies & postage	- - - - -	30.25
		<u>\$302.18</u>
Balance on hand 8/31/67	- - - - -	\$464.06

Respectfully

Marilyn Holloway
Secretary-Treasurer

List of Articles on Spurias and the Spuria Iris Society
 appearing in American Iris Society Bulletins, 1952-1965

(Compiled by Ila Nunn, Houston, Texas, & Mrs W. J. Davis, Anthony, New Mexico.)

- July 1952 Society for Spuria Irises Organized, Mrs. Ellen Wilkerson,
 with picture of the organizer and first President
- April 1953 Spuria Club Progresses.
- Jan. 1954 Spuria Breeding Continues, Marion R. Walker
- April 1955 Spuria Test Garden after Two Years, Mrs. Edward Wilkerson, Texas
- Jan. 1956 1955 Hybridizing Notes, Philip G. Corliss, Somerton, Ariz.
 Cover Picture of Morningtide (Marion Walker '56)
- April 1956 Spurias in Southern California, Clarke Cosgrove, California
 with pictures of Fairy Lantern and Ruth Nies Cabeen.
- April 1957 Notes from the Spuria Iris Society Test Garden in Houston.
- April 1958 Carl Milliken - A History of His Iris, Ben Hager, California
- July 1958 The Washington Spurias, Elizabeth N. Nesmith, Mass.
Spurias in Houston, Ila Nunn, Texas.
On Growing Spurias in Houston, W. D. Lee, Texas
Notes on the Spuria Iris Society, William Wallace, Texas
Complete List of Spurias Grown in Houston Test Garden
Society, Mrs. R. W. Tidemann, Texas
Judging the Spuria Iris, Philip G. Corliss, Ariz.
 with pictures of Lady Burton and Seedling 56-S-19 (Corliss)
Progress in Breeding Spuria Iris, Philip G. Corliss, Ariz.
 with pictures of White Branch and Golden Bath.
Dwarf Spurias, Geddes Douglas, Tenn.
Chromosome Number and Meiotic Behavior in Commercial Varieties
 Henry H. Hadley, Illinois
- 1959 From the pamphlet, WHAT EVERY IRIS GROWER SHOULD KNOW,
Spurias for Every Gardener, Ila Nunn
- Jan. 1960 The Spuria Project, Lee W. Lenz, California
- April 1960 Spuria Iris Activities, Ben R. Hager
- 1960 From Handbook for Judges and Exhibitions, 1960, Spuria Irises.
- April 1961 Wider Horizons for Spuria Irises, Ben Hager, California.
- July 1961 Spurias for Friends and Fun, Walker Ferguson, California
Spuria Iris Society, Mrs. C. M. Redford, Arizona
- October '61 Growing the Spuria Iris, Clarke Cosgrove
- Jan. 1962 Marion Walker's Spurias, Peg Dabagh, California
Spurias in the South, Ila Nunn with picture at Display

(continued)

- April 1962 Spurias in Theory and Practice, Tell Muhlestein, Utah
A Spuria Primer, Mary Redford with picture of Lark Song.
- July 1962 Spurias are Coming of Age, Marion R. Walker
- Jan. 1963 On Storing Pollen, Walker Ferguson with picture of Golden Agate.
- 1963 From the Judges' Handbook, 1963, Irises of the Spuria Sub-Section.
- April 1963 Chromosome Numbers in the Spuria Irises and the Origin of the Garden Varieties, Lee W. Lenz, with three maps.
Spuria Iris Display Gardens, Mary Redford
- July 1963 Spurias Down Under, Gordon Loveridge
- April 1964 Hybridizing and Growing Spurias, Walker Ferguson
- July 1965 Spurias Unlimited, Clarke Cosgrove with picture of Clarke and Marilyn Holloway.
Cover: Chumasch Chief (Walker 1964)

Spuria Species Seeds

The current listing of the American Iris Society's new SEED EXCHANGE includes the following spurias:

- 67M044 *Iris musulmanica* (a form of *I. spuria*), from Ervan, Armenia
67M045 *Iris sogdiana* (a form of *I. halophila*), from Kirgiz, USSR (blue)
67M046 *Iris demetrii* (collected from the area near Erevan, Armenia)
67M106 *Iris colchica* (this is a form of *Iris graminea*)
67M112 *Iris sintenisii* (the color of the flower is purple)
67M150 *Iris halophila* (a pale blue form of *Iris spuria*)
67M157 *Iris graminea* (this spuria has a very sweet scent & flattened stem)

Price for packets of these spuria seeds is 25¢ per packet, or five packets for a dollar, postpaid. Send orders - including carefully transcribed listing numbers, payment, and your name and complete address with zip, to:

Mrs. John Hardy
296 Hunsaker Lane
Eugene, Oregon

MATERIAL ON THIS AND THE FOLLOWING PAGE HAS BEEN EXTRACTED,
WITH PERMISSION, FROM THE SEPTEMBER 1967 NEWSLETTER OF THE

HOT SPRINGS

IRIS SOCIETY

HOT SPRINGS, ARKANSAS. AIS REGION # 22

LOCAL MEMBERS AFFECTED WITH SPURIAITIS, by Oren E. Campbell

The Regional Vice-President gets blamed for many things, so again it is his responsibility that we are starting to grow the spurias.

Last fall John Humphrey, R.V.P. of Region 22, showed a group of colored slides of the newer spurias to a Little Rock audience. They represented such an improvement over my idea of a spuria that I resolved to grow them.

To make matters worse, Ida Ashford exhibited SUNNY DAY at the Little Rock show, and rumor has it that that iris nearly won Queen of the Show. (It was outstanding in her Hot Springs garden, too.)

In the Will Rogers Park at Oklahoma City I saw the following in bloom under the most unfavorable conditions: ELIXIR (Hager 64) yellow; SUNNY DAY (Sass 31) yellow; WINDFALL (Ferguson 62) yellow & white; NEOPHYTE (Hager 64) violet; PREMIER (Barr 1899) violet; and WHITE HERON (Milliken 58) a white. Several days of heavy rain had damaged most of the tall bearded irises in the garden, but the spurias were unaffected by the elements. "The spurias are for me", was my comment, as too often our TB bloom is destroyed by the weather.

At the National Convention in Denver another slide show featuring spurias was presented. I was sitting beside Marion Walker, a former President of AIS and a spuria hybridizer. I asked him to recommend varieties to buy. I then followed his advice and ordered those which he recommended; this required that I order from three concerns: Schreiners, the Melrose Gardens, and Mr. Walker Ferguson. As my main interest is in hybridizing, Marion Walker also is sending me several numbered seedlings that will help in my breeding plans. Following is a list of the spurias we hope you might see blooming in our garden next year:

FAIRFIELD (Ferguson 67) 48" tall, midseason, standards light lavender blue, falls yellow with a wide border of blue. Standards 2" wide & falls 3" wide.

INDIAN PUEBLO (Walker 67) 34" tall, etched mezzo-tinted rich copper brown, on a metallic gold background.

MOON BY DAY (Ferguson 63) 40", early, standards are blue, falls white but lined and bordered with blue.

YELLOW WINGS (Ferguson 66) 42", early, flower is yellow with much ruffling and flare. It has good substance to withstand heat, rain, and wind.

RUFFLED MOTH (Ferguson 63) this iris is 36" tall; it blooms early to mid-season, it is a ruffled light blue and yellow.

ELIXIR (Hager 64) 38", medium orange-yellow, deepening to true orange in the center of the falls. Medium sized flowers with excellent substance and ruffling. Well branched stems. Eric Nies Award 1967.

DRIFTWOOD (Walker 57) up to 54" tall. Chocolate brown with golden yellow flush at the base of the standards, and a central deep yellow stripe on the falls. Eric Nies Award 1959.

MORNINGTIDE (Walker 1956) 50", white self with faint blue lines running perpendicularly; large yellow signal. Eric Nies Award 1965.

(continued)

WAKEROBIN (Ferguson 59) this spuria is 54" tall, blossom is a white self with yellow signal. Wide ruffled petals. Eric Nies Award 1966.
WINDFALL (Ferguson 63) 48", midseason bloom, color cream and yellow.
GOLDEN LADY (Combs 57) 54", pale yellow self, large ruffled blossom. Spuria popularity poll winner 1966 & 1967. Eric Nies Award 1963.
COLOR GUARD (Nies 51) 40" tall. Blossom is ruffled blue with yellow signal.
SUNNY DAY (Sass 31) Color is a deep yellow self. Eric Nies Award 1957.

Other locations in Hot Springs where additional spurias may be seen this year are the gardens of Ida Ashford, Vay Sargo, and Zeh Dennis. We would like to know which other iris enthusiasts in Hot Springs also are growing spurias.

Before closing I must mention one thing that I did not realize before; = the relatively low cost of spurias. We expect to pay up to \$25 or even \$35 for new introductions of tall bearded irises - in contrast, the entire group of spurias listed cost less than \$50.

s/ Oren E. Campbell

ABOUT SPURIAS

Although Dot and I have been members of the Spuria Section of the American Iris Society for several years, we did not do much with spurias while in New Jersey. Our growing conditions there were not well adapted to this type since the ground was damp almost continually because of a wet clay composition.

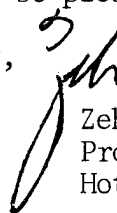
With our great interest in irises we wish we had a place where all types could be grown. At our present location this is impossible; we have no shade, and it is hot and dry.

My interest in spurias was increased by an article by John Humphrey, our congenial RVP, which article was published in the March 1967 issue of the Hot Springs Iris Society Newsletter. It was further advanced when I attended the slide program put on by the spuria group at the recent Denver Convention. I was greatly impressed by the strides that have been made in spuria breeding, especially regarding the amazing colors of the newer introductions. I firmly believe that anyone who plants a few spurias will eventually add to his or her collection.

To further what little knowledge we have on these interesting flowers we held a spuria slide program at our September 24th meeting. The slides were furnished by the spuria section of the AIS. The program was very well received and was of interest to all.

Mr Ralph Johnson, President of the Spuria Section, has unofficially designated me the spuria membership chairman for Arkansas. If anyone is interested in joining this group, or desires any information about spuria irises, please let me know. I will be pleased to help.

Sincerely,



Zeh Dennis
Program Chairman
Hot Springs Iris Society

Irises

by Bill Van Valkenberg

San Diego - Imperial Counties Iris Society

THE IRIS portion of this issue will be about spuria irises because now is the time to order spurias and to plant them in your garden.

Many gardeners who are very familiar with the common bearded irises have never seen spuria irises. The reason for this is that the bearded irises have been domesticated for hundreds of years, but development of spuria irises into garden varieties is a relatively new hybridizing accomplishment.

Spurias are true irises, but they are derived from a different group of species than are the bearded garden varieties. The two types are so unlike that they are genetically incompatible; no one yet has been able to make a cross between the two. Spurias differ from bearded irises in that they are taller (up to 5 feet or more), more tolerant of heat and wind, less vulnerable to diseases, and generally "tougher." Because they are derived from species which grow wild in the Mediterranean area they do particularly well in Southern California—which has climate similar to that of their homeland.

Spurias come in the same range of colors as do the bearded irises, and the size of the flowers is about the same. Nonetheless, the flowers can be distinguished at a glance by the fact that the petals of the spuria flower are more slender and more rigid than those of a bearded iris. Also, every bearded iris has a row of whiskers—the "beard"—along the top center of each lower petal; no spuria has a beard. (A spuria blossom more closely resembles an enlarged Dutch iris, but the Dutch irises which are sold by commercial florists in the springtime are neither spurias nor bearded irises.)

Most gardeners and iris hobbyists who have become acquainted with spurias are convinced that spurias are better as garden plants, and more beautiful as cut flowers, than the bearded varieties. Consequently, the Spuria Iris Society is one of the fastest growing components of the American Iris Society.

Garden varieties of spurias, as well as garden varieties of bearded irises, can be propagated only by cutting off and replanting divisions of the fleshy root—properly called a "rhizome." A spuria rhizome somewhat resembles a small sweet potato; these rhizomes are shipped by commercial growers to mail-order customers during that season when spurias are dormant—which is now. The mail order price for a modern variety of spuria averages about three dollars; some older varieties cost less. The latest 1967 introductions cost up to fifteen dollars each.

These rhizomes are relatively easy to grow. They should be planted promptly after receipt. Procedure is to bury them in a horizontal position, under about two inches of rich soil in an area of full sunlight, then water them frequently. The plant will sprout late in the fall, and the young spuria plant quickly becomes an eye catcher because of its fine vertical form and because of its rigid dark-green leaves which often assume an attractive spiral twist. The rate of growth during the period before blooming is directly dependent on the amount of water and the amount of fertilizer applied; any kind of fertilizer is O.K. for spurias. In any area which has plenty of warm sunshine a new spuria, well cared for is likely to send up at least one bloomstalk during the springtime following planting. A light dusting of chlordane around the plants is recommended just before the first buds open; this keeps away ants which otherwise may come in great numbers to get the fragrant nectar from the spuria blossoms.

The tall graceful bloomstalks can be admired and enjoyed in the garden, or can be cut before opening (like glads) and allowed to open indoors, in water. Floral arrangements made with spurias are very beautiful and also very long-lasting; when an individual blossom wilts it can be removed from the bloomstalk, after which a second blossom usually will open on the same area of the bloomstalk. A single spuria blossom also may be used very effec-

tively in place of an orchid for making a corsage.

When the blooming season of any plant is over, the gardener's natural inclination is to lose interest in that plant for a while. In the case of spuria irises, this inclination beautifully fits the plant's natural cycle. The spuria, after blooming, can be utterly neglected for about five months—during which time it gradually will go dormant. When the tops turn brown and unsightly all the foliage may be cut off at ground level and removed. The rhizome, left completely unattended in the ground, will increase and send up several bloomstalks the next season. With each passing year the clump will increase in size; more rhizomes, more fans of foliage and more bloomstalks and blossoms. By the third year a typical spuria has become so well established that many rhizomes may be dug up from the outside perimeter of the plant—during the dormant season—without noticeably disturbing the performance of the main clump.

Garden spurias come in a variety of solid colors and color combinations, with white, yellow, brown, blue, and purple predominating. A color description of each variety is included in the listings which are distributed by commercial growers. Spurias can be obtained by mail order from two Southern California growers: these are Walker Ferguson, 1160 North Broadway, Escondido; and the Van Dusen Iris Gardens, Descanso, 92016. Either of these growers will send a listing free of charge in response to a postcard request.

But be warned: if you join the expanding group of gardeners who are growing spurias, you are very likely to become another typical enthusiast who proclaims to everyone that spurias are the most rewarding of all perennials.

Bill Van Valkenberg is a newcomer from the East, but he brought his interest in Spurias with him and is already at home in the local Iris Society, thanks to Bill Gunther. He is enrolled as a student at Palomar College.

This
Spuria
grows
wild.



An unattended spuria iris clump (like a clump of any other type of iris) will grow outward in an ever-expanding circle around the spot where a seed sprouted into the seedling plant which became the clump. The center of any large iris clump usually is sparse of growth - because most of the soil nutrients which support growth have been used up in that area. Most of the vigorous new growth is around the outside perimeter of the clump, where the roots are reaching into soil which contains nutrients not already absorbed by the roots of the smaller clump of previous years.

The photo on this page was taken in October of 1967; the location is in the upper Sorrento Valley, in Southern California. In the foreground is a large spuria clump which has grown, completely unattended, for many years. It is apparent that the tallest and most vigorous growth is around the outside edge of the clump. Bill Van Valkenberg, a member of the Spuria Iris Society, stands in the center to give perspective to the height and size of the clump.

No one in the Sorrento area seems to know for how many years this spuria has been growing wild in the valley, or where it first originated. Some experts who examined the plant during the last blooming season think that it is the spuria species *Iris ochroleuca*; others think that it is the spuria cultivar "SHELFORD GIANT" (which is a hybrid between *Iris ochroleuca* and *Iris aurea* (or *Iris crocea*)).

What we know for certain is that the plant is very vigorous, very tall, and very fertile. The color of the blossom is white, with a yellow signal. Size of the blossom is normal for spurias; the falls "tuck under" in a manner which is very attractive - but which is not at all fashionable among modern spuria cultivars. The seeds are glossy brown; they sprout vigorously and grow rapidly. Van collected a pocket full of seeds from the clump; they are available for free distribution; anyone who is interested is invited to send a stamped self-addressed envelope to the Spuria Iris Society Newsletter with a note requesting some of the seeds. The seeds will be enroute by return mail.

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P.S. Send your requests to the Editor. (We hope that you also will include news items and/or black & white photos suitable for publication in future issues of the Newsletter.)

GOLDEN GATE IN 68

The American Iris Society's National Convention in 1968 will be held from April 29 thru May 2; the headquarters will be the Hotel Claremont in Berkeley, California; the convention will be hosted by AIS Region 14.

The purpose of this article is to let spuria fanciers know that some particular preparations have been made with a view toward satisfying their special interests. Plans include at least one meeting conducted for and by the Spuria Iris Society itself. And a very large collection of the newest spuria cultivars - and of the oldest spuria species - will be on display in increments during each day of the garden tours.

The largest display of spurias will be at the Melrose Gardens, in Stockton. That commercial garden boasts a complete collection of Ben Hager's spuria introductions - plus a large assortment - in well established clumps - of spuria introductions of Ferguson, Walker, McCown, Muhlestein, and Craig. A review of the spuria listings in the latest Melrose catalogue will give a fair idea of what may be seen there.

Many of the same spurias which are grown for commercial purposes at the Melrose Gardens also are being grown - for other purposes - at the test garden at the University of California at Berkeley. This test garden - which also will be "on tour" - is a component of the University's botanic garden. It is located in a picturesque "canyon" setting to the east of the main part of the campus.

Still another locale for spurias will be provided at most of the home gardens scheduled to be on tour. Most notable among these are the Carnahan and the Dunn gardens in Sacramento, and the Foster garden in Walnut Creek. These home gardens are beautifully landscaped; they feature spurias in many situations designed to provide a beautiful setting for a beautiful plant.

We of Region 14 are looking forward to seeing you on next April 29.

Marilyn Holloway

MILWAUKEE IN 69

A unique opportunity to interest others in spurias has been offered by the Wisconsin Iris Society as an event of the 1969 AIS National Convention in Milwaukee. This opportunity can be utilized only through the united effort of the members of the Spuria Iris Society.

As part of the annual meeting, special art and educational exhibits will be on display. Each section and region of the AIS has been invited to submit art and art-craft objects for the exhibits. Suggestions and a full list of the requirements are given in detail in the July 1967 Bulletin of the AIS.

The Spuria Iris Society is making an urgent appeal to all members to help with this project. Members talented in any of the artistic areas are requested and urged to submit descriptions of any appropriate art work which they have done - or which they can complete by January 1969 - to either one of the co-chairmen for the Spuria Iris Society. The co-chairmen are Clarke Cosgrove, 8260 Longden, San Gabriel, California 91775 - and Ben Hager, Route #1, Box 466, Stockton, California 95205.

Clarke Cosgrove

* * SPURIA REGISTRATIONS FOR 1967 * *

by
hybridizers

Walker Ferguson
1160 North Broadway
Escondido, California 92025

and

Eleanor McCown
P.O. Box 176
Holtville, California 92250



* * * * *

CANARY CAPRICE-----Eleanor McCown / seedling 67-11 / 40" / E / W4Ycm
Standards creamy white with wide heavy substance.
Falls deep yellow with a narrow white border and
heavy substance. Lark Song x unknown .

FAIRFIELD-----Walker Ferguson / seedling 66-9 / 46" / M / VB4Ycm
Standards pale lavender-blue, two inches wide.
Falls yellow with wide bluish border, almost 3"
wide. (Investment x Driftwood) X Windfall.

FIREPLACE-----Walker Ferguson / seedling 65-16 / 46" / M / V3VR
Standards are a rich dark purple with a sheen.
Falls are a red-purple with red highlights.
Parentage is 62-4 X Shift to Red.

FROST-----Walker Ferguson / seedling 66-3 / 40" / E / W1cm
Standards are white self; Falls are white with
small yellow signal. Size, flare, ruffling, and
substance are all good. Windfall X Yellow Wings.

IMPERIAL BURGUNDY---Eleanor McCown / seedling 67-1 / 50" / E / VR1Dcm
Falls and standards both are a deep purplish-red;
very small yellow signal on the falls. (Nickerson
10RP 3/10) Perky Maid X Banners of Blue.

QUIET CREAM-----Walker Ferguson / seedling 67-10 / 50" / M / Y1P
The standards and the falls of this flower are a
constant light cream self; no apparent signal. A
robust plant. Windfall X Yellow Wings.

WESTERN LARK-----Walker Ferguson / seedling 67-1 / 42" / EE-M / Y3cm
Standards are creamy white; the falls are yellow
bordered with white. Floral parts are wide and
ruffled. Very early. Windfall X Yellow Wings.

* * * * *

Dr. Currier McEwen
5441 Palisade Avenue
New York, New York 10471

14 November 1967

Dear Mr. Gunther,

This is a brief report on the spuria iris seeds you so kindly sent me this past year.

You had mentioned that they might be slow in germinating. Therefore I did not rely solely on my usual method with daylily and Siberian seeds which is to place the seeds in a sterile Petri dish on moist filter paper. None germinated that way. The bulk of the seeds I placed with moist vermiculite in small plastic bags. Twenty four germinated- only a small fraction of what you sent - after one to three months. These I injected with 0.025 % colchicine solution and planted them in flats. Some died as is expected but fewer than I thought would do so on the basis of experience with other species. It may be that spurias are tougher so far as colchicine is concerned. Indeed I injected four of them by mistake with 0.25% solution I use for the "clonal" method. Two died but two have survived which is most surprising.

Here is the list of what I had alive in Maine on October 27th.

Orange Maid x Golden Lady - treatment hypo. .025%

1 that looked affected but has died since

9 that did not look affected

Golden Lady x Investment .025 %

2 that looked slightly affected

2 " did not

Dark and Handsome x Red Oak

1 treated by hypo.method with .25 % and has lived. It did not look affected which is surprising also.

Golden Lady x (RAJ) YXX

1 not treated

66-9 x Dawn Candle

1 treated with 0.025% and didn't look affected

58 - 8 x 62 vivid

1 treated with .25% and looked affected

Thus I have 18 still alive of which 17 were treated with colchicine and three looked affected at time of planting(if they survive and grow they resume a normal appearance after a month or two although the affected ones are apt to be smaller).

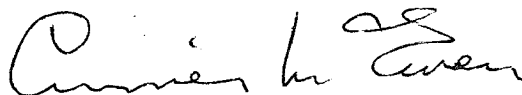
I will mulch them well against freezing and thawing as soon as all growth stops and pray that they survive. I'll not know what success I have had until they bloom.

I could not plant any new mature plants this year as all my available space went for the large number of TB irises and Siberians I brought up from New York. Next year I'll hope to make space for spurias too

If there are any more seeds from good spuria crosses to spare I would be most grateful for them since, of course, I have none yet of my own to work with. As I said before, I'll gladly share with the donor any tetraploids I may succeed in obtaining.

If you should have any please send them to me in New York.

Sincerely yours,



P.S. Last year Mr. Walker Ferguson and Mr. Ralph Johnson provided the seeds you sent me. I am, therefore, sending them a copy of this letter also.

Some Delightful Iris Are Rather Hard To Find

By ADA PERRY

Iris figure prominently in fall planting but there are three kinds which people may want, and not get, unless they make special efforts.

These three kinds all have flower forms which look like the popular Dutch iris. But they do not come from bulbs like those agreeable "Dutchmen."

They come from roots or divisions and these don't usually appear in our local nurseries. If ever you want to send for plants by mail, I'd say the spuria, Louisiana and Siberian iris divisions would be among the best excuses.

Distance often lends enchantment to garden plants but you won't need that for these iris. I'm not in the business of writing advertising here, but cards of inquiry to Walker Ferguson of Escondido, The Van Dusens of Descanso and Eleanor McCown of Holtville will all bring helpful information.

One big reason is they are all members of that big, thriving, full-of-beans San Diego-Imperial Counties Iris Society. (This statement shall be taken to include other garden clubs in this area.)

Naturally the organization is part of the American Iris Society. Walker Ferguson of Escondido is famous for his work in hybridizing and registering spurias. Eleanor McCown of Holtville introduces new spurias and Louisianas and grows some Siberians. The Van Dusens of Descanso feature McCown spuria introductions in their free catalogue and Ferguson invites you to write for his listings.

I have no information on whether Mrs. McCown offers a listing or a catalogue but I know she is very good about giving information. If you're not familiar with Holtville, it's in Imperial Valley.



It's not the hottest spot in that electric blanket of horticulture but it's temperatures don't disgrace the Valley's reputation either. Eleanor slooshes fertilized irrigation water on her iris and manages to fill lovely tables of them at the spring iris shows here.

She is careful to point out that the fertilizer she uses contains nitrogen, phosphorous, trace elements and the sulphur-type of soil penetrant. She believes a similar dosage applies to many gardens in San Diego County, and has great faith in dusting sulphur for red spider control.

Some of you have heard of the iris we're discussing and even grow them. Others really believe they are Dutch or bulb iris, so we'd better do some explaining. You will find them clearly listed under BEARDLESS IRIS in the new edition of Sunset's Western Garden Book.

It's a little unnerving to look them up in plant cyclopedias because these tell everything. However, if "everything" doesn't shake you up and the phone doesn't ring you'll appreciate the research.

I've seen all of them in flower (and have some Sibericas) and find them endowed with a heavenly fascination. Walker Ferguson's names on his spurias do not hinder their appeal: Ruffled Moth, Moon-by-Day, and Western Lark as instances.

The spurias are more prominent and generally grown than the Louisianas and Sibericas. They make big clumps of narrow, tough foliage and don't have to be divided often.

Like the other two the spurias have no "beards" (hairy brushes) on the turned down petals. These beardless petals of the "falls" make them resemble the Dutch iris which are also beardless but come from bulbs, remember.

Narrow petals used to make the spurias resemble Dutch iris, too. But Ferguson is working to change that, striving to make the petals "fill a sphere."

The colors range through white, cream, yellow, gold, lavender, blue, purple, brown and iris browns and reds. Colors on upper and lower sets of petals can differ.

Ferguson doesn't worry much about fertilizer on his loamy Escondido plot. He even lets his spurias go dormant by withholding water in the summer then starts watering in September and October.

He says to plant the spuria divisions (tough and rooty) an inch deeper than bearded iris. This will be around two inches. Make a basin and water them twice a week. The new growth won't come until the old tops die down.

To prepare his own plantings, Ferguson rototills the entire new plot then spades the rows.

Mrs. McCown's Louisiana iris are her pride and joy even if a lot of us can't tell them from the spurias. She says they have the same colors but come nearer to reds.

Her cultural directions included the remarks that Louisianas like soil not too much on the acid side, that they like irrigation in the winter and spring and can dry off in summer, but not in Holtville, if I understood her correctly.

The spurias, she admits, cut and travel better than Louisianas, which tend to break petals. This she has solved enough to show them in San Diego.

Louisianas "travel" in a different way — in the garden. They send up a shoot away from the main clump and then fill in, she said.

Sibericas or Siberian iris are liked by florists Mrs. McCown reported, meaning that they cut well. The colors are mostly deep blues and purples with whites and purple reds mentioned. They grow well where bearded iris can be planted and are divided in fall if the clumps have thinned out in the middle.

I've met Mrs. McCown and Mr. Ferguson and then picked up information at the Iris Society meeting here when they were the speakers.

Iris Society president Art Day announced at the meeting that the Fall Iris Show will be held in the Floral Association Building in Balboa Park Nov. 19. But you may not see any of the three iris we've featured there. Spring and early summer are their times for bloom. The good old bearded iris are the best for reblooming in the fall.

By the way, there is a Spuria section of the American Iris Society and it puts out a good fat newsletter with spuria articles from all over the country (spurias can be grown in colder sections). The editor is right up the road, Mrs. Archie Owen, 1748 Noma Lane, Leucadia.

I should give the Louisianas and Sibericas equal billing in that they can be grown in colder sections too.

EDITOR'S NOTES

Through unintentional errors, our last issue gave one hybridizer credit for two irises which weren't his. Readers who still have the July 1967 Spuria Newsletter should correct page 6 to show that Marion Walker is the hybridizer of ANACAPA, and should correct page 15 to show that Ben Hager is hybridizer of ELIXIR. (The number of readers who noticed these mistakes - and who called our attention to them - is testimony to the fact that members of this society definitely DO associate hybridizers with their irises. That is good !)

We held up this issue in order to be able to include photos of the spurias from Australia which were exhibited at the Fall Iris Show in San Diego. One photograph from that show was developed, delivered, and captioned promptly; it appears as the COVER PHOTO for this issue. The additional photos, which have been delayed in processing, will be published in our next issue.

Southern California hybridizers have requested more information on the performance of individual cultivars in the northwest, in the midwest, and in the northeast parts of this country. Please help the hybridizers to determine which strains stand up best and perform best where the wet and cold conditions prevail. What do you do about summer dormancy ?? When is the best time to transplant in cold-weather areas ?? If new growth starts in the fall, does it completely die back during the winter freeze ??

We have a fine collection of slides showing spurias at their best. The collection includes standard varieties, many of the newer introductions, and some very new seedlings under number. If you haven't seen the spuria slide collection, do so soon; you will enjoy them. You can note the improvements which are being made by contrasting LORD WOOLSEY with any of the newer introductions. Send your request for the slides to the Editor, 1748 Noma Lane, Leucadia, California 92024. Specify dates desired and include an advance deposit of \$5 ; the deposit will be returned when the slides are returned.

The results of the 1967 Spuria Popularity Poll, as announced on page 3 of this issue, shows that most members of the Spuria Iris Society are growing the newer varieties. Of the ten most popular spurias, five were introduced within the last five years, and all ten were introduced within the last ten years.

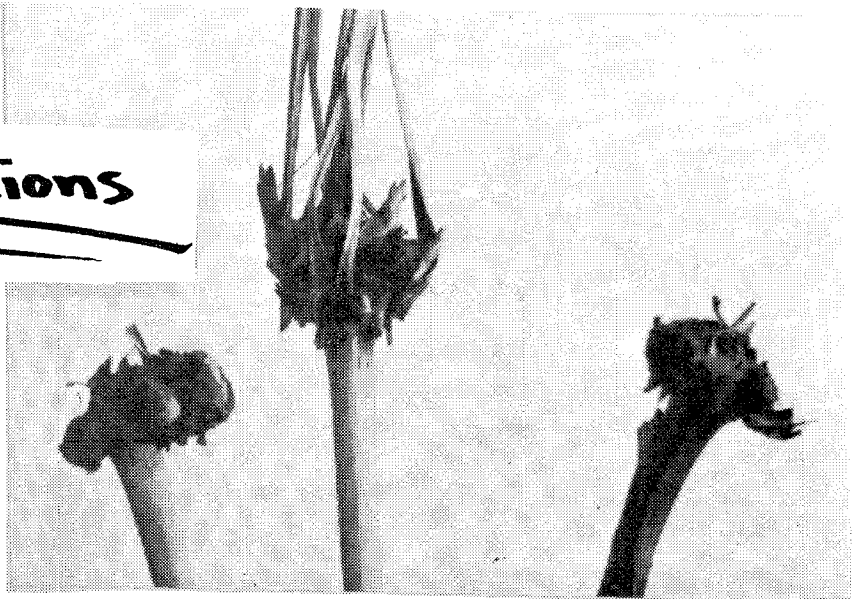
We hope that you have added at least one of the newer spuria cultivars to your garden this year, and that you also have added at least one spuria species this year. If not, we urge you to turn back to page 5 and order some species seeds NOW. Then refer back to page 11, or refer to your favorite commercial catalogue, and select a cultivar to be #1 on your want-list for 1968.

Archie Owen

Biel Zentgraf

Proliferations

THE THREE WARTY-LOOKING GROWTHS WHICH ARE SHOWN IN THIS PHOTOGRAPH ARE "PROLIFERATIONS". EACH HAS GROWN AT THE TOP OF A SPURIA STUMP; EACH OF THE STUMPS WAS LEFT IN THE GARDEN LAST SPRING WHEN BLOOMSTALKS WERE CUT FOR THE IRIS SHOWS.



(photo by Thurmond)

PROLIFERATIONS FORM ON ONLY A SMALL PERCENTAGE OF STUMPS FROM WHICH THE BLOOMSTALKS HAVE BEEN CUT; WE CAN NOT PREDICT ON WHICH STUMPS THEY WILL FORM. PROLIFERATIONS SOMETIMES ALSO FORM ON STALKS FROM WHICH THE BLOOMS HAVE NOT BEEN REMOVED. WE DO NOT REALLY KNOW WHAT CAUSES PROLIFERATIONS TO FORM - BUT WE WOULD LIKE TO FIND OUT.

IF WE COULD DETERMINE WHAT CAUSES PROLIFERATIONS, WE THEN PROBABLY COULD STIMULATE THEIR FORMATION ON ANY SPURIA PLANT WHERE WE DESIRED THEM. IF WE COULD DO THIS, THEN PROLIFERATIONS QUICKLY WOULD REPLACE RHIZOMES AS THE COMMERCIAL MEANS FOR VEGETATIVELY MULTIPLYING & DISTRIBUTING SPURIA CULTIVARS. THE REASONS FOR THIS ARE:

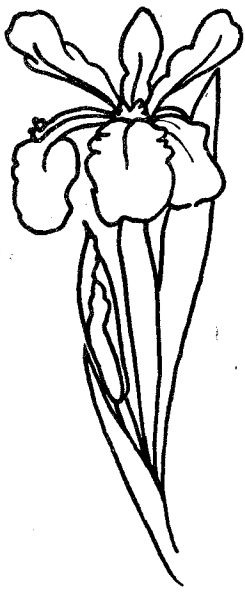
1. Rhizomes must be kept moist to remain healthy; a rhizome which is all dried out will not grow. But a proliferation can remain exposed to air and drought for months - then will quickly spring to life when set in moist earth.
2. A typical spuria rhizome during its first season will sprout only one fan of foliage, and very often will not bloom that first season. A typical spuria proliferation will sprout half a dozen fans of foliage the first season, and about half these are likely to bloom during that first season.
3. A rhizome is relatively heavy and bulky to mail. A proliferation is only a fraction of the weight and the bulk of a rhizome, yet in one year will generate about four times the number of fans and bloomstalks as will a rhizome.

WITH ALL THIS IN MIND, IT IS APPARENT THAT THERE IS REASON AND PURPOSE IN POOLING ALL THE AVAILABLE INFORMATION ABOUT THESE "AIR RHIZOMES". YOU CAN CONTRIBUTE BY SETTING UP YOUR OWN TEST PROGRAM AND BY REPORTING YOUR RESULTS. YOUR OWN EMPIRICAL TESTING MIGHT PROVIDE THE SOLUTION OF HOW TO STIMULATE FORMATION OF PROLIFERATIONS. IF IT DOES, YOUR CONTRIBUTION TO THE FUTURE OF SPURIA IRISES MIGHT BE AS SIGNIFICANT AS THAT OF ANY MAN NOW LIVING.

WE WISH YOU GOOD LUCK.

 *
 * SPURIA IRISES *
 * Write for listing *
 *
 * WALKER FERGUSON *
 * 1160 North Broadway *
 * Escondido, California *
 *
 * *****
 * MELROSE GARDENS *
 * Rt. 1 Box 466 Dept. S *
 * Stockton, California 95205 *
 *
 * 1967 Introductions: *
 * BELISE and SUSPENSE *
 *
 * *****
 * TELL'S IRIS GARDENS *
 * 425 North Fourth West *
 * Orem, Utah 84057 *
 *
 * "BEST IN THE WEST" *
 *
 * *****

 *
 * SPURIA IRISES *
 * PEONIES - DAFFODILS *
 * "bigger bulbs" *
 * MYRON D. BIGGER *
 * 201 North Rice Road *
 * Topeka, Kansas, 66616 *
 *
 * *****
 * MARION WALKER SPURIA IRISES *
 * introductions *
 * by *
 * SCHREINER'S GARDENS *
 * Rt. 2 Box 279-K *
 * Salem, Oregon *
 *
 * *****
 * VAN DUSEN IRIS GARDENS *
 * featuring *
 * 1967 spuria introductions of *
 * ELEANOR McCOWN *
 * write for free catalogue *
 * Descanso, California 92016 *
 *
 * *****



SPURIA IRIS SOCIETY

SPURIA SECTION OF THE AMERICAN IRIS SOCIETY

Mrs Archie Owen, Editor
 1748 Noma Lane
 Leucadia, California, 92024



THIRD CLASS MAIL