Spuria Iris Society

Summer 2004

Single annual.....$ 9.00 Family annual.....$12.00 Single triennial...$20.00 Family triennial...$24.00

Life Membership.....$125.00

Membership Chair & Treasurer

Joanne Lee Miller 14221 S. Stagecoach Rd. Tucson, AZ 85736 520-822-2418 JLeeTheForestal@aol.com

President

Jim Hedgecock 12421 SE State Rt. 116 Gower, MO 64454 816–424–6436 Comanche@ccp.com

Spuria Slide Show

A new & updated presentation is available for rent $10.00 Please contact:

Riley Probst 418 N. Van Buren Ave. Kirkwood, MO 63122 314-822-2485 rprobst02@earthlink.net

Renew It All, In One Place!

Some of our members belong to more than one society and wanted to know if they could just make one payment to one place. Here is the answer.

"All membership fees are payable in U.S. funds. Rates shown above are the new rates that are in effect for any memberships received from October 1, 2001. To become an AIS member please send a check made payable to **American Iris Society** (AIS) or alternatively payment may be made by providing your VISA or MasterCard number, expiration date, and signature. The AIS accepts VISA and MasterCard. You may sign up for an AIS membership directly via e-mail if you include your charge card information. E-mail the information to the AIS Membership Secretary.

So, make it easy on yourself and send your information to:

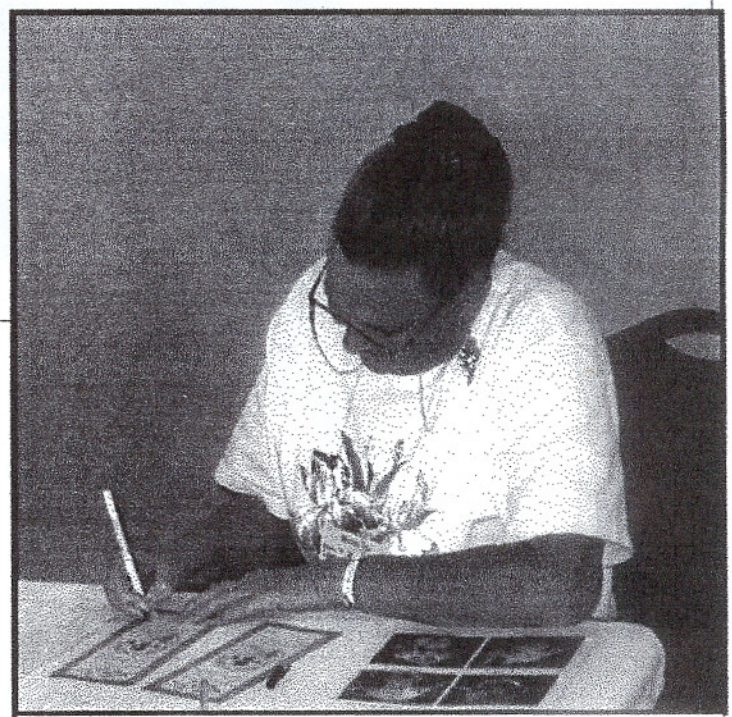
(AIS Membership Secretary)
PO Box 2968
Baltimore MD 21229 USA
410-233-4417 home 410-327-4044 fax
aismemsec@earthlink.net

SIS Salutes the Hybridizer
On the Cover

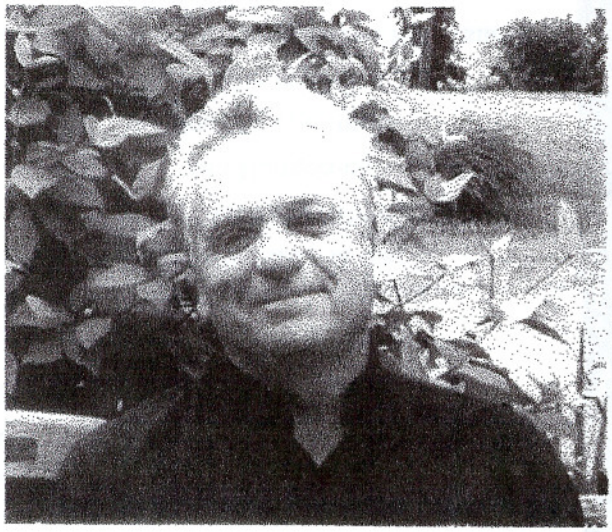
SPURIA IRIS BY FLOYD WICKENKAMP

Top darker flower:
Chico de Sonora '94

Bottom lighter flower:
Sonoran Nightfall '04



Shirley Trio is busy helping new Members at the AIS National Convention



Hedgecock Urges Elmohr To Plant Spuria!

By **Glenn Guenterberg**
(reprinted from AIS Region 20 Newsletter: Fall '03)

So what are spuria and what makes them good for Rocky Mountain gardens?
Jim Hedgecock was welcomed, as guest speaker, to answer that question at the March 8 Elmohr Society meeting. Jim is well known to Elmohr members as recipient of the 2002 Dr. Loomis 3rd. Year TB Award for his introduction, ***Scarlet Arrow***, and , as a spuria evangelist.
After an iris-decorated cake topped off lunch, Jim enthusiastically launched his slide show to demonstrate the spectrum of blossom colors available in this elegant but neglected species. Photos from Jim's collection are shown in the picture section of this issue.
In the 1960's, spuria were second only to TB's in popularity. An informal review of AIS Bulletins published since 1979 shows a decline in the number of articles featuring spuria; none have appeared in at least the past nine issues.

What happened? The spuria world lost tow of its leading proponents with the deaths of **Ben Hager** and **Eleanor McCown**, resulting in the loss of valuable seedlings and the momentum of their hybridization programs. As President of the Spuria Iris Society, Jim gives more than lip service to filling the void. His Commanche Acres Iris Garden markets a selection of proven introductions from Hager, Niswonger, McCown, and others plus interesting new introductions each year from B.C. Jenkins. He explained that the gene pool for spuria contains only 675 cultivars and averages three generations from it's species origins, by comparison to about 120 generations for TB's. This means their is a lot of room for cultivation innovation. Jim hopes to increase interest in spuria by introducing new cultivars, perhaps some short ones, and through presentations like the one in Colorado Springs.

Origins– **Ben Hager** wrote in The world of Iris, 1978, that the spuriae series contains about 15 distinct species, of which two 40-chromosome species (I. ochroleuca and I. crocea) plus I. "Turkey Yellow", a possible species, are the dominant parents of today's cultivars. These grow wild in Turkey and eastward, and are dormant in late summer.
A larger group of spuria species stay green through the summer, are winter dormant, but have not been widely introduced into the hybridizing field. Hager said these hold promise for lower growing garden varieties (the unclassified median or short cultivars mentioned by Jim Hedgecock as being on the horizon).

Who named them supria?- This question was asked at the Elmohr meeting. A library search revealed the answer. **Dr. Lee Lenz** wrote, in The world of iris, that the 18th. Century Swedish botanist, **Carl Von Linneaus** (1707-1778), who originated modern botanical nomenclature, named the species, "Spuria" from an erroneous idea that it is a cross-series hybrid of I. graminea, a member of the Spuriae series, and I. foetidissima, a different series. Dictionaries define Spuria as : originating from parents of similar appearance but different structure, of irregular origin, mixed breed. **Brian Mathew**, in his book, The Iris, describes 52 Spuria subspecies; many are synonyms, indicating that this diverse group of iris has not been well studied and botanists are still trying to logically identify the members.

Culture– Botanical uncertainties aside, Spuria deserve more space in Colorado gardens, according to Hedgecock. Blooming one to three weeks after the tall Bearded iris, they extend the iris bloom season into summer. That's why you didn't see the at the Region 20 Iris Show (May 31 and June 1, this year). Some in the audience had never seen one, many have none in their gardens, only a few have many. Perhaps one reason is that Spuria are usually planted in the fall after most of us have turned our thoughts from planting to cleanup. As a result, this beautiful iris finds itself in the shadow of its more popular relatives.

Continued on next page.....

Hedgecock Urges Elmohr To Plant Spuria! Continued.....

Available in sizes from medium (18 to 30 inches) to very tall (60 inches), Spuria are useful as low maintenance landscape elements from foreground to background, since they can remain in one location for up to 10 years without being divided.

The blossoms are similar to those of bulbous Dutch iris and last three or four days, even after cutting to fill a vase. They prefer pH neutral or slightly alkaline soil, a half day of sun, thrive in clay, and tolerate– even benefit from– mulch and lots of fertilizer. A few are evergreen; most are summer dormant – during the heat of summer their leaves die back and they need no water.

Incidentally, you may be able to accelerate Spuria bloom for display at a May iris show by planting them in a hot micro climate a few feet from a south facing wall. Considering the relatively small number of cultivars and the low representation in gardens, you are likely to bring home a blue ribbon when you enter a good one.

What are the negatives? - Mustard seed fungus can be a problem in moist, hot weather and is indicated by leaves that progressively turn brown from tip to base during the growing season, killing the iris. Preventative systemic treatment with Terraclor mixed in the soil or applied to the plants works. Spraying can control ants and the aphids that are attracted to the nectar. Multiple terminal buds sometimes interfere with one another as they open, so selective slipping may be needed.

More information?- Check the Spuria Iris Society Web site at **WWW.SPURIA.ORG** for photos, culture information, and sources. Also, read the sections on Spuria in two excellent books, both in print and available at some libraries. The first is a comprehensive guide to wild iris by **Brian Matthew**, who spent a distinguished career at the Royal Botanic Garden in Kew, England. His book is, The Iris, 1989, Timber Press.

Second, the AIS publication, The World of Irises, 1978, edited by Warburton and Hamblen, contains a chapter on Spuria by **Ben Hager.**

Finally- The Elmohr audience of 34 ranged from experienced hybridizers to interested enthusiasts.

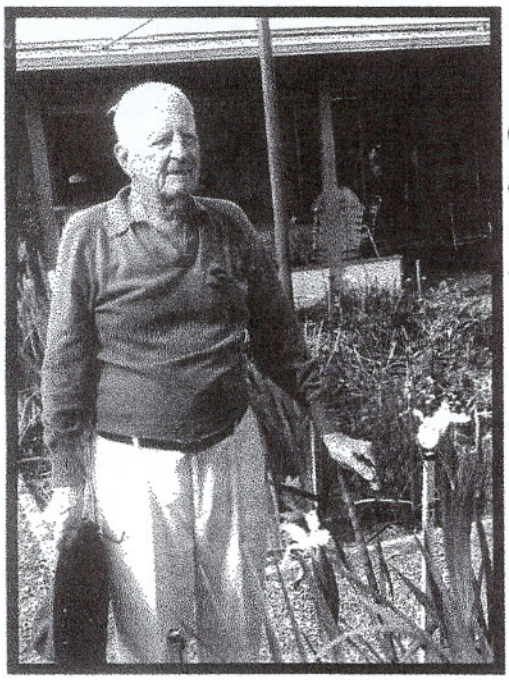
Fourteen members completed the judge's training session that ended an enjoyable, informative afternoon. After seeing Jim's slides, I plan to act on an idea that has been dormant for several years by planting a collection of Spuria this fall.

Give them a try!

Who is that man in black?
Spuria Iris Society President,
Jim Hedgecock
admires a large clump of
Marilyn Holloway
at the AIS National Convention in Fresno, CA

Spuria Iris Society Salutes the Hybridizer Series

Featuring **Floyd Wickenkamp**



"I was born in Nebraska in 1911. My Father was a Grain Elevator Manager who moved from one area to another until we homesteaded on a ranch in the Sandhills near Casper, Wyoming. One of our biggest sources of funds was growing sweet corn and selling it to the local grocers.

In 1928, I started school at the University of Wyoming, Paying my expenses with selling sweet corn in the summer and clerking at the local Piggly Wiggly Grocery Store. I ended up with two degrees in Electrical Engineering and in 1936, I went to work for the local radio station as announcer and Engineer. I guess I was what they later called a, "Disc Jockey". Records and transcriptions were our sole source of entertainment materials.

In the fall of 1940, I saw a notice that the Federal Communications Commission was searching for people to man their monitoring stations, so I applied and was hired as a member of their Radio Intelligence Division. My first assignment, believe it or not, was in Tucson. We set up our long range direction finder out near what was then the end of Speedway in the open desert. After a year there, I was transferred to the primary monitoring station in Grand Island, Nebraska. In late 1942, I got a direct commission in the U.S. Army Signal Corps and spent the next four years in carious areas in the United States, France, and Germany. In September 1946, I was back with the F.C.C. where I stayed for the next 24 years. I retired in 1970 as Chief of the Engineering and Facilities Division of the Field Engineering Bureau. I lived in Virginia a dozen or so miles from Washington and it was there that I first got interested in Spurias. I had seen them growing in a garden in Oregon and from that time on I grew at least a few of them.

Going back a few years, in 1963, my boss in the F.C.C. was made International Chairman of a Study Group in the International radio Consulting Committee, and Organization in the Untied Nations. He needed an assistant so he requested I take the job. I was already busy with my regular job, but he insisted and won out. So for the next six years I spent a month or two each year at meetings all over the world, including Lisbon, Oslo, Geneva, New Delhi, and our own Boulder, Colorado. One place of special interest was in Monte Carlo and I took my wife, Betty with me. She really enjoyed touring the area while I was in meetings. Our hotel was the same one the Edward the Seventh stayed in during those rare periods when the "Mama" Queen Victoria would let him go!

Continued.....

Floyd Wickenkamp
continued.....

It wasn't until around 1980 that I started making crosses of spurias and my first introduction was, ***Son of Sun*** which proceeded to earn about every award that there was for Spurias. It won the President's Cup and the most popular iris at the 1987 American Iris Society Convention and in 1994, the Nies Medal.

In the meantime, I started making crosses in earnest ending up with a total of 19 introductions in 1995. I was then 84 years old and I decided I wouldn't live much longer so there was no need to make any more crosses.

Then the unexpected happened!

I had an old seedling from 1990 that I entered in the Region 15 Spring Trek held in Phoenix, Arizona. There were so many comments on its beauty, that I decided to go ahead and introduce it.

Jim Hedgecock of Comanche Acres will be introducing it this year and plans to put a photo of this Spuria on the front cover of his catalogue.

I named it,

Sonoran Nightfall.

At the insistence of a number of friends, I made a few crosses last spring and if I live long enough, I'll have a few more to show off in 3 years!"

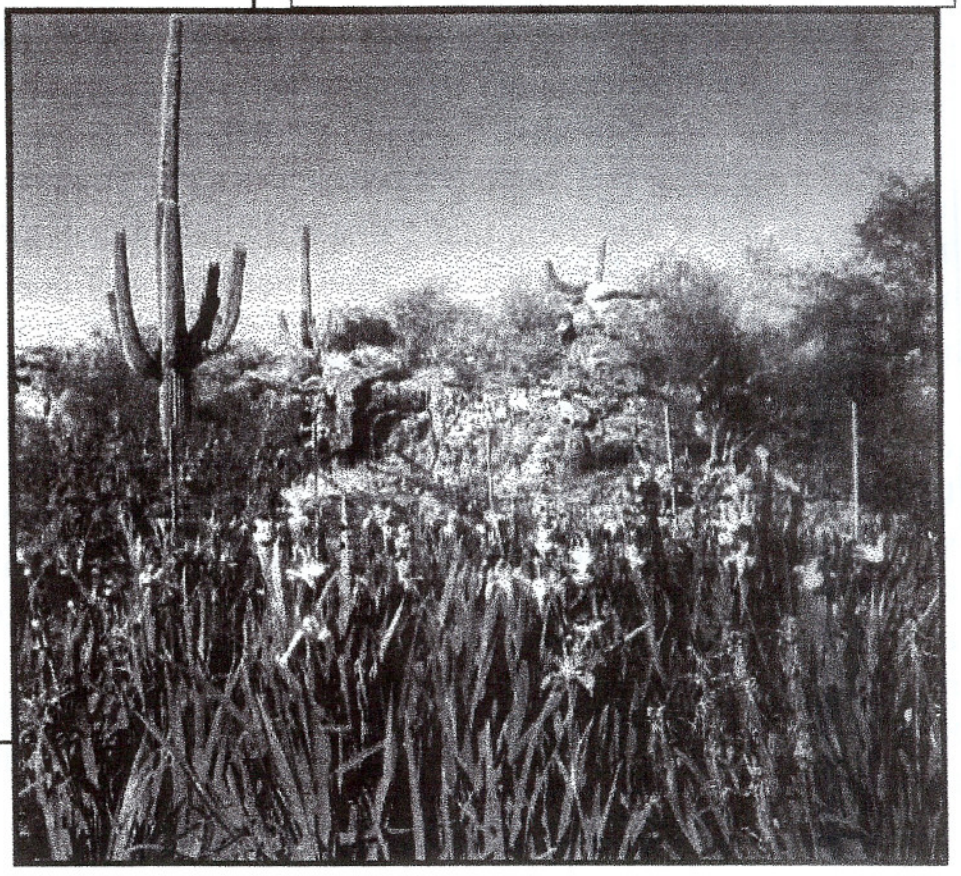
Joanne Lee Miller who takes her shade seriously with un grand sombrero & *Marilyn Holloway*

Sonoran Desert Trek 2005

The picture below was taken this past April in the Forestal Gardens. This is Joanne's corral of lost name spurias. Maybe you can help identify a variety. Of course, you get to rope it, stick that label in the ground, & throw your hands in the air.

YEEE HAW!!!!

For more info: www.TucsonIris.org



WWW.SPURIA.ORG

Salute to the Hybridizers: Floyd Wickenkamp……continued……

Notes from the Editor:

Floyd Wickenkamp has been an active member of the Spuria Iris Society for many years. With the incomplete information that I have at this time, I can list Floyd as the Newsletter Editor from 1979 – 1982 and Secretary/ Treasurer from 1983 – 1994.

Recently, he donated several decades worth of past issues of the newsletter to your current editor. I can't begin to express my gratitude for this great resource of vital & historical information.

I remember the first year that I attended Region 15's Spring Trek in Phoenix. One of the gardens on tour belonged to Floyd. It was in his garden that I caught Spuria fever! I entered the landscape and was instantly attracted to his collection of Specialty Cacti. As my eye followed a large Cereus flower bloom up it's trumpet to the petals, something waived at me from behind. It was a large clump of ***Son of Sun*** and the bright yellow of the Spuria demanded my attention. It would be the first Spuria of many that I would grow. Unfortunately, it got toss out of my iris bed one summer by renegade pack rats. They had moved into my messy, neglected iris garden while I was on vacation. After I demolished the rodent metropolis, I learned a very good lesson about keeping my garden cleaned up.

Editor's PS: I must admit to having a weakness for names as a factor when selecting iris to grow. Floyd has used a lot of Southwestern Lingo in the names he selected, so I have collected quite a few. I was not disappointed because along with the cool & groovy names, came some beautiful Spurias. Here are just a few that will be blooming for the Sonoran Desert Trek 2005:

Sonoran Nightfall	*'04*	*see cover picture*	
Sonoran Caballero	*'88*	*EM*	*dark violet blue (navy)*
Sonoran Senorita	*'88*	*EM*	*orange yellow Ruffled*
Sonoran Skies	*'92*	*M*	*sky blue self*
Sonoran Carnival	*'95*	*L*	*violet, yellow stripe orange yellow, brown*
Sonoran Sunset	*'92*	*M*	*red brown self*
Chico de Sonora	*'94*	*L*	*blue violet gold brown, violet rim*
Kaibab Trail	*'85*	*M*	*dark red self*
Kitt Peak	*'86*	*M*	*medium blue violet deep blue violet, brown*
Picacho Peak	*'87*	*M*	*red maroon brown gold yellow, red brown rim*
Betty My Love	*'88*	*M*	*white, yellow center strip gold yellow, white rim*
Wyoming Cowboys	*'93*	*M*	*gold striped brown gold, brown, dark brown Rim*
Love for Leila	*'84*	*M*	*deep violet signal brown & gold*

THREE CHEERS FOR THE NEW R&I BOOKLET

The Spuria Iris Society is fortunate to have **ROBERT PRIES** working on a new, updated version of Spuria Registrations & Introductions. He would like to include as many color photographs as possible. If you have any crisp, clear photos of single spuria flowers that you would be willing to share, please send them to Robert at:
6023 Antire Road High Ridge, MO 63049 or contact him at:
Rpries@sbcglobal.net

AWARD WINNING SPURIA IRIS
By FLOYD WICKENKAMP

Son of Sun '83 Award of Merit (Nies Award) & Eric Nies Medal 1994

Sonoran Senorita '88 HM 1991 & AM 1994

Kitt Peak '86 HM 1989 & AM 1994

Oro de Sonora '90 AM 1997

Sonoran Caballero '88 AM 1995

Sonoran Sunset '92 AM 1998

Sonoran Skies '92 AM 1999

Sunrise in Sonora '93 AM 2000

Wyoming Cowboys '93 AM 2002

Correction

What a pleasant surprise to get the Spuria News in the mail today! I was pleased to see the new format, and surprised to find that so much of it was devoted to me. I thought you might have condensed my biographical sketch, but since you printed it in full, the last line under, 5. HOBBIES, is incorrect in two ways.

I no longer work at LON's since the accident with my truck, and CuMary Garden should read Culinary Garden.

In the `Awards' section, ***Alpha SPU*** should be all one word ***Alphaspu.*** The pictures of my two irises on the cover are fantastic. Now I know where the picture with your E-mail came from. Congratulations! Keep up the good work.

Charles Jenkins

Now that your iris bloom is over,
Go and have fun in the meadows

Editor's note: Thanks for the info. I have rounded up a fine herd of your hybrids and they helped me win Artistic Design Awards at your Club's Spring Show! I also roped a few to display in vases around my casa.

AIS National Convention

Extra chairs were needed at the Spuria Iris Society's Thursday night program!

We gained 33 new members that night. & many people were seen the next day wearing Spuria Society Convention Pins.

Treasurer's Report by J. Lee Miller
6/1/03 to 6/1/04

Expenses:	
Bank Charge	$ 28.00
Convention Expense	$1,938.21
Presidential Travel Stipend	$ 500.00
Newsletters & Publishing	$1,562.23
Slide Show Expense	$ 25.12
Income:	
Membership dues	$2,061.00
Convention Pins	$ 457.21
R&I Booklets	$ 168.00
Convention Rhizome Sale	$2,269.00
Slide Show	$ 20.00
Donations	$ 60.00
Convention final distribution	$1,074.00
Current Balance	$6,878.39

Kathy Chilton sent me this photo of a seedling that was entered by **Lee Walker** in the Spring Show at Silverton, OR. As an AIS Judge, she is always looking for the special traits that make an iris unique. She thought the consistent heart shaped standards to be worthy of attention.

I started to look for the history of the Spuria Iris Society and discovered that I had very little information to go on. If any information is incorrect, please contact me so I can update this file. If you have any past newsletters and are willing to part with them, please send them my way. I would like to obtain a complete collection for our reference.

Feel free to also send me stories, myths, or lure, (no matter how expanded from the original). I had the privilege this year, while at the AIS National Convention, of hearing **Pete DeSantis, Virginia Messick,** & **Rick Ernst** weave some tales of days gone by. This form of ethnography is priceless and I would like to see them preserved.

What I do know for sure is that the Spuria Iris Society originated in 1952. From the beginning, the society was called a, "section of the AIS". The Society was started in Houston, Texas with the sanction of the American Iris Society.

Spuria Iris Society Presidents:

Mrs. Willis Slaughter	1952 – 1953	Mrs. Frank McCown (Eleanor)	1972 – 1974
Mrs. John E. Green	1953 – 1955	Mrs. Charles Benson (Barbara)	1974 – 1976
Mrs. R. C. Meysenburg	1955 – 1956	Mrs. Mac Holloway (Marilyn)	1976 – 1979
Mr. J. H. Reese	1956 – 1957	Ruth Wilder	1979 – 1981
Mrs. Stayton Nunn (Ila)	1957 – 1959	Virginia Mathews	1981 – 1983
Ben R. Hager	1959 – 1961	O. David Niswonger	1983 – 1986
Mr. C. M. Redford	1961 – 1963	Ray M. John	1986 – 1989
Marion Walker	1963 – 1964	Maxine Perkins	1989 – 1993
Dr. Clarke Cosgrove	1964 – 1967	Ruth Wilder	1993 – 1994
Ralph Johnson	1967 – 1968	Tom Abrego	1994 – 2000
Mrs. Joe P. Crawford (Ila)	1968 – 1970	Everette Lineberger	2000 – 2001
Mrs. Edward Owen (Archie)	1970 – 1972	Jim Hedgecock	2001 – current

Spuria National Convention Pins for Sale !

What a great gift for your iris friends.
If you missed the convention, this is a way you can share in the fun & support your society.
They are going fast and the supply is limited!

$5.00

Contact
Joanne Lee Miller
for more info

Jim Hedgecock & Dave Niswonger Answer questions at the Spuria Iris Society's Program (AIS National Convention)

My Experiences Germinating Spuria Iris Seeds

by Charles Jenkins, Arizona

When I was picking out seedlings during March 2003 from 85 crosses made in 2002, before transferring them to the field, the germination percentages presented a dismal picture. Of the 85 populations sown in pots the previous November, 71 showed no sign of germination and for the other 14 the average range was from 2.6 to 35.7 percent! This caused me to reflect on the University course in plant adaptation I had taken 57 years ago. Some plants have a built in survival mechanism to prevent all of the seeds from germinating during the first year. If some disaster struck, there would still be a generation to carry on. I think spuria irises represent this kind of plant!

Beginning about 1968 in Salinas, CA, when I really started to become involved with spurias, I visited Ben Hager at Melrose Gardens in Stockton, CA. He told me that he plants his seeds as soon as they are mature, and before they become dry in the pod. This caused me to try an experiment with 13 different crosses. I divided the populations so that half of the seeds for each cross was planted when they matured in late July or early August, and the other half in November. Using Hager's method, average germination was 40.0% while for the dry seeds planted in November it was 38.6%. One surprising observation was made at that time, in that in a population of 30 seeds held over from the previous year and planted with the others in November, all 30 germinated!

That should have told me something back then, but I have followed the practice of usually planting up to 25 seeds in a 4" pot or 50 in a 1-gallon pot during November. By February, the seedlings are ready to be pricked out, bare root, into individual 2 x 2 x 5" plant bands before transferring them to the field once they have become well established. If only a few seeds germinate, the remaining seeds and soil are left in the pot and permitted to dry out. Of course, where there is no germination, those pots are left dry over the summer and re-watered in late fall for a second year of germination. There has been a consistent higher germination percentage in the second year!

You might think that I should have acted on this knowledge much earlier, but instead I followed along conventional lines. I have known breeders who discard crosses where the seeds do not germinate during the first year after planting. With my training in Genetics, I could not bring myself to do this because it skews the population. In the beginning, where only one seed germinated in a 4" pot, I set the entire contents of the pot in the ground. Next year, there were many more seedlings around the original one. Also in some cases, after picking out the few seedlings into plant bands, the remaining contents of several pots were bulked together and held over for a second year. Naturally, the pedigrees were lost but I reasoned that this was better than losing some genotypes altogether. My introduction *CALIZONA* '96 was from a seed that did not germinate until the fourth year after it was planted.

Dr. George Rodionenko, writing about *I. songarica* in the Spring 2003 issue of SIGNA No. 70, says, "seeds germinate gradually, with this process taking place over 5-7 years." Don Spoon, writing in the April 2003 AIS Bulletin, mentions plant hormones as germination inhibitors, and suggests that soaking the seeds and refreshing the water periodically washes them out. In a personal conversation with Virginia (Mathews) Keyser, when I lived in Salinas, CA, she told me about a one-time experience she had germinating spuria iris seeds. She found several very dry spuria stalks in February, with seeds in pods that had not been planted in the fall. She shelled them out, put each cross in a container, covered them with tap water, and placed them in a cupboard to soak for a while. She forgot about them until they fermented, and the smell was awful! Her first thought was that they were ruined, but she rinsed them off and planted them outside with the ones previously planted in the fall. They came up at the usual time, with much better germination than the others, some of which had been there for two years. This experience was never confirmed!

I like to have crosses with a common parent grouped together for selection, and also have reciprocal crosses next to each other. Now, after 35 years of frustration by having lost pedigrees, keeping complex bookkeeping with the increased potential for errors by having seedlings from the same cross of two different ages in different parts of the field, and just plain inefficiency; together with the fact that, on four different occasions, over the years when seeds were not planted until at least one year after harvest, the germination percentage was much increased, (100, 76, 85, and 100), I have designed four germination experiments as follows:

Continued.....

I: Comparing Germination Percentages in 2002 and 2003 of seeds from crosses made in 2002:
As mentioned above, there were 85 populations involved. Germination took place in only 14 of them with a range of 2.6 to 35.7 %, and an average of 15.1 for 2002. Since it was noted that two of the populations had very shriveled seeds, they were eliminated from calculations in 2003. Of the 66 populations re-watered in November, 2003, 39 germinated with a range of 5.8 to 100 %, and an average of 38.8. One population of 38 seeds was interesting. Only one seed germinated in 2002, but 19 more germinated in 2003. Considering the 27 populations that did not germinate out of the 66 re-watered, the loss of genotypes is significant!

II: Comparing Germination Percentages of seeds harvested from the same F1 plants taken in two different years involving *lactea/spuria* crosses:
I had the opportunity to harvest seeds from the same plants in 2002 and 2003 involving 3 *lactea* populations and 22 *lactea/spuria* crosses. Twenty seeds from each population for each year were planted in 4" pots on October 9, 2003. Emergence began on November 6, and it soon became apparent that more plants were coming up from two year old seeds.
The germination percentage for the three *lactea* populations harvested in 2002 ranged from 35 to 85 with an average of 66.7. The 22 *lactea/spuria* F2 populations harvested at the same time germinated with a range of 5 to 65 with an average of 19.2%. Three populations did not germinate. For the comparable populations harvested in 2003, the *lacteas* ranged from 10 to 50% with an average of 31.7%, while the *lactea/spurias* ranged from 10 to 65% with an average of 21.4%. Eight of the populations did not germinate. If all of the 22 *lactea/spuria* populations were considered in the average, the germination percentage for 2002 would be 17.0 while for 2003 it would be 13.6. It is noteworthy that for one plant of a *lactea/spuria* cross I had missed a pod in the 2002 harvest. Since *lactea* seed pods are indehiscent, it was still intact when I harvested seeds in 2003. The germination percentage for that pod was 25, and 20 for seeds from the same plant harvested in 2002, but none germinated from the 2003 harvest. Another interesting observation was that dry seeds from spuria X spuria crosses planted at the same time in October were slower to emerge, the first plants appearing December 10, 2003. Details are given in the description of Experiment III, but I got the idea that perhaps in the *lactea/spuria* crosses we may be dealing with segregation for delayed germination as in spurias. The *lactea* populations certainly germinated quicker with a higher percentage rate!

III: Comparing germination of pre-soaked with dry planted seeds from 2003 spuria crosses:
Based on Virginia Kaiser's experience, and on others who have pre-soaked iris seeds, I divided the seeds from 24 spuria crosses in half. The dry seeds were planted in pots on October 9, 2003, and emergence started December 10, 2003. Soaking of the other half was started on that same date together with an additional 15 populations. The soaked seeds were kept at a temperature which was fairly constant at 80 degrees F, and the water was exchanged at least once a week until the seeds were planted November 20, 2003. During the early water exchanges, it was noticed that the water being replaced had taken on a distinct brown appearance. There was no germination in two of the dry planted population, but for the other 22 the range was from 5 to 100 with an average of 47.0%. A completely unexpected, and as yet unexplained result, has occurred with the pre-soaked seeds.
At this time of writing in mid-February, 2004, there is no germination among any of the soaked populations.

IV: Comparing germination of pre-soaked with dry planted seeds from *lactea/spuria* F1's harvested in 2002 and 2003:
In this experiment, seeds of three populations harvested in 2002 and eight in 2003 were allotted 20 to each treatment for each plant. The idea was that pre-soaking the seeds might enhance the germination percentage. Pre-soaking started on October 9, 2003 but the dry seeds were not planted until the soaked seeds were planted November 20, 2003. To this date there has been no germination with either treatment!

What conclusions can be drawn from these long years of experience? First, if I were starting with a spuria breeding program, I would hold the seeds in pods until the second year before planting them. This would save an immense amount of bookkeeping together with the ability to retain pedigrees, and would give the breeder a good chance of assessing a much greater range of genotypes. I know that one is always anxious to see the results of his endeavors immediately, but with spurias you have to be patient anyway. Once the system is adopted, there would be a steady flow as in any other program.

Continued.....

Nominations for the Executive Board 2004-2006

Pursuant to the By – laws of the Spuria Iris Society, the nominating committee consists of:

Joanne Lee Miller B. Charles Jenkins
Kathy Chilton

The committee presents the following slate of officers to be considered for two year terms:

President……..Jim Hedgecock
1st. Vice President……Shirley Trio
2nd. Vice President…..Keith Smith
Secretary……..Len Suchy
Treasurer……Joanne Lee Miller

Additional nominations must be submitted before August 15, 2004 and have written recommendations from 5 members of the Spuria Iris Society.
Additional nominations may be mailed to the Chairperson of the nominating committee:

Joanne Lee Miller
14221 S. Stagecoach Rd. Tucson, AZ 85736
JLeeTheForestal@aol.com

If there are no further nominations, the slate as presented will be elected and begin to serve on September 1st, 2004. In the event of additional nominations, a paper ballot will be mailed to members. Elections results will be published in the January issue of the Spuria News.

New Member, Paul Duchheim & Hybridizer, Lowell Baumunk Discuss the genetic possibilities of exon shuffle At the AIS National Convention In Fresno, CA

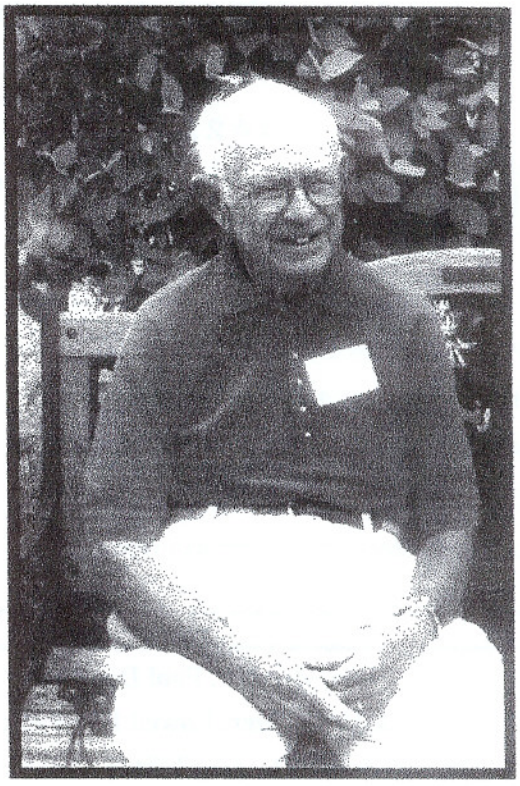
Next, perhaps Arizona is unique and spurias would germinate better in a colder climate. When I was involved in wheat breeding, a Russian scientist told me about a relationship between vernalization time and winter hardiness. The longer it took to vernalize a variety, the hardier it was. We confirmed that in Salinas, CA and learned something else. We had kept several moistened cereal grains in the refrigerator for periods up to six weeks, but on the day they were planted in the field the temperature was above 80 degrees F. The benefits of vernalization were completely reversed! I am wondering if this is what happened with my pre-soaked spuria seeds? Maybe they should have been refrigerated during the soaking period? It does not explain why the dry spuria seeds planted in November (Experiment IV) did not germinate, while those planted in October (Experiment III) germinated as expected. Furthermore, I seem to detect a relationship between the time it takes a spuria seed to germinate and its potential hardiness. I suspect that the genetic base has been skewed by plant breeders who are more often looking at seedlings that have germinated quickly. In my discussions with Bob Schreiner, several years ago, this appeared to be the case in TB irises, when the family business was moved from Minnesota to Oregon. It is curious to me that the seeds of crosses involving both *ELEVEN POINT RIVER* and *LENKORAN* with several other spurias made in 2002 failed to germinate, but in 2003 (the second year) were among those with the highest germination percentage. Could it be that those seedlings may posses more hardiness since they are closer to the native type? Vernalization may not be related to the time it takes for a seed to germinate, but I believe that a plant has built in complex mechanisms to respond to environmental influences.

I know that plant breeders purposely make selections with one object in mind, but I would make the plea that in doing so they make every effort to not skew the population unfavorably. This could be done with spurias by insuring that maximum seed germination is obtained for every cross made, even if it means employing methods as yet not known.

Addendum:
I had not yet submitted this article for publication when on February 20, I noticed seedling emergence starting where germination had not taken place in Experiments III and IV. Now, by mid-March I have assessed the germination percentages where germination had not previously taken place as follows:

In **Experiment III** where soaking was begun on October 9, 2003 and the 39 populations planted November 20, only 12 of them showed any sign of germinating with a range of 2.2 to 17.2 with an average of 7.2 percent. No germination was seen in 27 populations!

In **Experiment IV** where both soaked and dry seeds were planted November 20, 2003, all 11 populations germinated for each treatment with the dry seeds ranging from 20 to 100 with an average of 54.1%, while the soaked seeds ranged from 10 to 80 with an average of 41.4%. I expected a better germination percentage for the soaked seeds!



I recently found an "Encyclopedia of Seed Germination" on the Internet.
The line item for iris reads as follows:
Iris, HP, 30-545 days, 60-70 degrees F, ¼" deep, peaty medium, (see No. 6). It was further explained that you should sow fresh or soak old seed, and pre-chill for four weeks, then bring indoors to avoid temperature shock, and transplant at the 4-leaf stage. Further, it was suggested that most germination occurs in the second year.

As I reflect on the three factors that must be satisfied (air, moisture and temperature), for any seed to germinate; I am now aware that I have made mistakes in handling spurias over the years. First, I routinely planted the seeds up to 1" deep, and they may not have had enough air. Second, the Arizona climate is not conducive to the requisite amount of pre-chilling and, finally, the soaking was done at a temperature far too high for any germination to take place. I leave it to others now to work out a schedule to obtain the best germination for this specifically evolved, but very interesting plant.

2004 AIS National Convention: Spuria Iris Society Executive Board Meeting
Minutes presented by Joanne Lee Miller (acting Secretary)

The annual meeting of the Spuria Iris Society was called to order at 6:00 pm, Tuesday, April 20, 2004. Members in attendance: Jim Hedgecock, Joanne Lee Miller, Shirley Trio, Riley Probst, Keith McNames, Jay & Teri Hudson, Dave Niswonger

No previous Report from Secretary was available
Secretary, Carole Breedlove gave President, Jim Hedgecock her proxy for votes at this meeting

The Executive Board may conduct business by e-mail, US mail, or phone when required – passed

President, Jim Hedgecock will contact the appropriate AIS Board member 6 months in advance in order to conduct Spuria Iris Society business at the AIS National Board meetings.

President, Jim Hedgecock will investigate the current Articles of Incorporation for the Spuria Iris Society in order to make changes or update if needed.

1. **Membership Report**
   a) 209 members plus 31 new members who joined at this convention
      1) 87 Members belong to AIS
      2) 64 Life Members plus one new member who joined at this National Convention
   b) A Membership list will be provided to Board Members

2. **Treasurer's Report**
   a) (Report attached and will be presented in the July issue of the Spuria News)
      1) PEIS – St. Joseph, MO Convention
      2) Regular Spuria Iris Society report

3. **Election Committee**
   a) motion to bypass By-Laws date for exception due to problems (see by-laws)- passed
   b) Shirley Trio appointed acting Vice President by President, Jim Hedgecock
   c) Shirley Trio will pick a nominee for 2nd. VP to serve on SIS Board
   d) Slate for elections will be presented in the July issue of Spuria News

4. **Presidential Trek Funds**
   a) A $500 stipend will be issued on Jan. 31 of each year, retroactive starting this at this convention – passed (By-laws Article II: Object, Section 6 Inurement of income)

5. **Promotion of Spuria Society**
   a) Website needs update – Current Webmaster, Bob Dickow will be contacted to see if he wants to continue to serve in this capacity. If he declines, Nancy Price will be asked & the possible cost investigated by Joanne Lee Miller.
   b) Convention: when & where for the next one? Tabled for now and discussion will be ongoing through e-mail or other forms of communication by Board members. Decisions will be published in the Spuria News as they become available.
   c) AIS Bulletin: more photos & articles are needed by Editor, Bruce Filardi. A request to members through the Spuria Newsletter will be made.

d) A new color photo R&I is currently in production by Robert Pries. A copy of the original proposal is on file with the Society.
   1) President, Jim Hedgecock will investigate cost & discuss the proposal in order to make this publication the domain of the Spuria Iris Society.
   2) Shirley Trio will edit the final copy
   3) An ad will be purchased in the AIS Bulletin to promote the sale of the new R&I
   4) All information will be presented to President, Jim Hedgecock for final approval

6. Society By-laws Update

A) Article III: Membership And Dues, Section 1 – Life memberships:
   1) Increased to $125.00 – passed
   2) A Certificate of Deposit will be opened with $740. This represents the number of life members already present in the Society plus one new member who joined at the convention. All future life memberships will be deposited into this fund – passed
   3) A life membership will be automatically granted to each President of SIS - passed

B) Article III: Membership And Dues , Section 3 – Spuria News:
   1) The name of the newsletter will be changed to, Spuria News - passed

C) Article(s) IV: Elected Officers, Section 2 – take office at AIS National:
   1) Elected Board Members will take office at the AIS National Convention - passed

D) Article VI: Nominations & Elections, Section 2 – (Election delayed this year)
   1) Further nominations date (temporary change to Aug. 15th) - passed
   2) Ballots returned (temporary change to Sept. 15th.) - passed

E) Article VIII: Standing Committees, Section 1 & 2 –
   1) Display Garden deleted - passed
   2) Library deleted – passed (note: AIS maintains a library for future reference)
   3) Publicity & Ways and Means deleted – passed
   4) The above committees will be replaced with the following:
      a) Slide Show Chair
      b) Membership Chair
      c) Newsletter Editor (Publications)

F) Article X: Dissolution
   1) Remaining funds to go to the AIS – passed

Membership pamphlets and Spuria Iris Society Convention pins are available for sale at the convention. A slide show program on spuria iris will be presented by President, Jim Hedgecock on Thursday night, April 22nd. O. D. Niswonger will be present to answer questions. Hedgecock & Niswonger agreed to provide a $20.00 credit to anyone who joined SIS as a triennial member. The $20.00 credit will apply at this convention and be used towards the purchase of iris through their commercial gardens. An outline of these minutes will be read by Joanne Lee Miller, (acting Secretary) to those who attend the program.
The annual meeting of the Spuria Iris Society was adjourned at 8:30pm. The minutes and Treasurer's Report will be published in the July issue of the Spuria News.