

SPURIA IRIS SOCIETY
SPURIA SECTION OF THE AMERICAN IRIS SOCIETY
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Test Gardens
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Mrs. J. H. Richardson, 6402 Wakeforest

Editor

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NEW MEMBERS -

The Spuria Iris Society adds with pleasure to its growing roster the following new members:

Mr. R. E. Moss, Box 508, Vinita, Okla.
Mr. F. A. Ogren, 4603 Shetland Lane, Houston, Tex.
Mrs. W. J. Rave, Box 484, Lake Jackson, Tex.
Mrs. Ben W. Smith, 2307 South Blvd., Houston, Tex.
Mrs. R. J. Wakefield, 5920 N. W. 43rd, Oklahoma City, Okla.
Mrs. F. W. Warburton, East Main St., Westboro, Mass.

We are very happy to welcome you to our spuria society and trust you will write us your problems and experiences in your garden.

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NOTES TAKEN FROM THE AMERICAN IRIS SOCIETY BULLETIN NO. 148 --

George R. Leach, Jr., Lake Forest, Illinois, grows spurias easily but is frustrated in hybridizing, as they seem always to self pollinate. On tearing open a bud the pollen is so moist and clinging there is rarely any to wipe off on the stigmatic lip. "Should the pollen bearing anthers be dried out in dessicator before use?"

Mrs. Helen Frey, Belton, Texas, writes "I have always used anthers from a bloom which opened naturally so the pollen would be dry; so I ask "Why should the pollen come from a hand opened bud?"

Ben Hager, Modesto, California, writes "I am most interested in inter-species crosses with spurias and hope such crosses can be made."



PRESIDENT'S POSTSCRIPT

Since the last Newsletter many of you have received the July Bulletin of the American Iris Society, in which, as announced earlier, were several articles on spurias including the Hadley Research Report. The Spuria Iris Society appreciates very much the interest of the American Iris Society in all types of iris that thrive in this country, and research or other activity concerning these.

There can hardly be a line of demarcation between various groups interested in iris, for when one becomes an "irisarian", whether amateur or experienced, the whole realm of iris, bearded and non-bearded, is likely to be the field of interest, no matter what the specialty in the garden may be. To be able to enjoy these many interests in the publications of an all-inclusive and truly American Iris Society is a great privilege.

As announced earlier, the Nominating Committee of the Spuria Iris Society has sought this year a slate of officers for its Executive Committee which will represent the areas where spurias are known to be the subject of serious cultural effort and has made every effort to fulfill this intent. The Committee is to be commended, and to those who have shown their interest and cooperation by accepting as nominees, our thanks and appreciation. All are extremely busy people with many and varied interests and their willingness to serve the Society is very much appreciated.

These nominations will be voted on according to the present by-laws at the fall business and program meeting of the Spuria Iris Society at the Hospitality House, 3005 Kirby Drive, on Wednesday, October 1, at 7:30 p. m.

The report of the Nominating Committee follows:

For President

Mr. Ben Hager, Route 6, Box 424, Modesto, California

For Vice President

Mrs. R. W. Tideman, #6 Chelsea Place, Houston, Texas

For Recording Secretary

Mrs. Thad Hutcheson, 1815 Milford Street, Houston, Texas

For Corresponding Secretary

Mrs. Robert E. Grey, P. O. Box 248, Crescent City, California

For Treasurer

Mrs. C. M. Redford, Route 1, Box 650-E, Yuma, Arizona

For Editor

Mr. Clarke Cosgrove, 8260 Longden Avenue, San Gabriel, Calif.

Mr. Dean Lee will speak at the meeting on the Culture of the Spuria Iris. 1958 slides will be shown by Mr. Stayton Nunn and Mrs. J. H. Richardson. These will include Test Garden views taken during the bloom season and at the "Open Garden" in April this year, a few from the AIS National Meeting in New York, and specimen shots of the newest additions to the collection at the Test Garden.

In spite of records of such crosses there has been no real evidence that such have been TRUE crosses.

"Remember this in observing seedlings from interspecies crosses: any true seedling from such a cross will show characteristics of BOTH parents, usually in about equal ratio.

"We made quite a lot of crosses between the spurias and Louisianas this year. None with Louisianas as pod parents gave any pods, (all flowers in all crosses were emasculated while still in bud.) We got several pods with the spurias as pod parents. Those seeds have germinated and we are already quite sure that they are not true crosses but open spuria crosses in spite of emasculation. The seedlings look like other pure spuria seedlings.

"If you are interested in true crosses with the spurias, there is only one way to get them and it is a lot of work. First spray the plants with chlordane to keep away the ants and other insects which are probably the worst pollenizers of spurias, because of the excessive nectar they produce. Then choose buds that are beginning to swell and open them, tearing off at least the falls, probably all petals would be better removed. Slip a polyethylene bag over the remains of the flower and secure at the bottom so no insects can crawl up the stem. Next day the stigmas should be receptive and pollenization can be made. Replace the bag and leave for at least 3 days before removing. The pollen of spurias is so fine that I think it quite likely that airborne pollenization could take place without using the bags. Self-pollenization is almost assured if the flower opens, as the anthers dehisce even before the bud releases the petals.

"We had very good success this year with picking the pods just as they began to split and planting the seed immediately. All seed were up by fall.

"In collecting spurias, first on the list should be Wadi Zem Zem and White Heron, Morningtide when you can afford it; Lark Song and Dutch Defiance. The Washington varieties, Monteagle and Ben Lommond, then Premier, A. J. Balfour and Lord Wolsey and Cambridge Blue, Walker's Canary Island, Yellow Swallowtail, Craig's Investment, and Sunnyside.

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LOUISIANA IRIS -

On April 12-13, Society for Louisiana Iris held their annual meeting and flower show. The weather was unsettled and some scarcity of bloom, but what they did have was very excellent. Mr. C. W. Army exhibited a beautiful new iris 'Mistis', a W. B. MacMillan original and won the award for the best registered iris. Mr. W. B. MacMillan won the award for the best un-registered seedling in the show. Other show winners were in the White classes, Barbara Elaine, Blue, Storm Signal, Purple, Seedling of Mr. & Mrs. G. W. Holleyman, Magenta, Wheelhorse, Yellow, Strutting Canary, Novelties. Gee Whiz, Iris for Corsages, Puttytat, Iris virginica collect by Miss Marie Gaillet.

The banquet speaker was Miss Caroline Dormon. She spoke on native Louisiana iris. Miss Dormon's new book "Flowers Native to the Deep South" is now on the market and a very excellent book. Miss Dormon's previous books are now out of print and collectors items.

In this beautiful city of Lafayette, the creole country, beautiful oaks, lovely large homes, you see not only iris, but huge azaleas, amaryllis, roses, hemerocallis and many other flowers that do well in the deep southland.

1958 TEST GARDEN NOTES

Another blooming season has come and gone. We looked forward to it with a bit of trepidation because we had suffered so much loss from mustard seed last year and did not know how it would have affected the rhisomes, as to this year's bloom. Then we had a long late spring, with very cool nights, which, of course, retarded the bloom, - but, when the blossoms finally came, we were well rewarded. The garden was lovely. Last year we had bud stems on March 6th but this year it was the 3rd of April before I found any buds in the Test Garden.

Of course it is natural for everyone to be most interested in the new varieties which they have not seen before - but some of our older clumps really put on a show. April the 13th there were eleven stems of Canary Island, with its beautifully ruffled falls and standards, and thirty-six stems of Royal Toga - blooming in the same bed - every stem with some blossoms open. An average height of 42". WHAT A SIGHT! Sunny Day puts on a mighty good show for us regularly. It makes a good compact clump - the bloom stems are stiff and the foliage also. This year we had 11 stems, 42" tall, and all open at once. It never fails.

We had to postpone our "Open Garden" because the bloom was so late, but finally had it the afternoons of April 19th and 20th, and felt very proud of our showing. In spite of clouds and rain we must have had nearly 200 visitors - and very interested, enthusiastic visitors - several of whom became members of the Spuria Society.

As I said, what we really looked forward to was seeing the new ones bloom. Of the eight which Mr. Walker so kindly sent us in 1956, only four had bloomed in 1957, so we were very excited to have six stems of very beautiful blossoms on Fairy Lantern and five stems on Morningtide. Also stem on Orange Delight - but Katrina Neis still has not bloomed for us, tho it has increased nicely and looks fine. ORANGE DELIGHT did not increase but its one stem of bloom was simply breath-taking. I am now torn between it and Driftwood and Mr. Ferguson's Wakerobin (55-1-A) for my "first love". Orange Delight has a very orange center to the falls, with a 1/8" deep cream ruffled edge. The falls are 2" both ways. The style-arms are $\frac{3}{4}$ " wide and 2" long - cream in color with a ridge of orange half way up the center. The standards, $1\frac{1}{2}$ " wide and $2\frac{3}{4}$ " long, stand straight up - the color the same deep cream as the edge of the falls, with orange and green at the base. A stunning sight when two or three are open on one stem.

Driftwood bloomed for us last year and we still all think it the top brown. It did not increase as we wished but we did have one stem of bloom. Mr. Walker Ferguson sent us Wakerobin (55-1-A) last fall, which he said was better than his 55-1, over which we had been so enthusiastic the spring of 1957. He was right. Our visitors at the Test Garden were drawn to it like bees to honey and wanted to know how to get it. It is very white, a large flower with beautiful form, a stiff stem, stiff foliage, good branching - what more can one ask?

Mrs. Combs had sent us her Gold Lady and Grey Lady last fall. Gold Lady did not bloom for us but increased nicely. We had one stem of a couple of blooms on Grey Lady - a small flower, very gray and very different and attractive. We look forward to seeing them to better advantage next year.

Blue Zephyr is one that blooms late and always does well for us. On May 7th, when most things were bloomed out, just one or two stray flowers left on Blue Valentine; Wadi; Gold Nugget; Monneiri; Michigan State; and Ferguson 57-17, there was Blue Zephyr at its best with many stems in full bloom.

Continued

Of the Louisianas I believe that Miss Caroline Dorman's Persian Pink attracted the most attention, though her Rose Bells and Mr. Army's Louisa and Butter Brickle were great favorites. Anyone interested in Louisianas should never overlook Chowning's Dixie Deb which never fails to be a mass of lovely yellow bloom.

Too bad the blooming period is so short - one does not get to study them as much as one would wish - but there is always the joy of anticipation for what there will be next year.

Ilse Richardson

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SPURIAS - OUR MOST DURABLE IRISES
Fran Martz, Millport, N. Y.

For the irisarian with the objective of continuous iris bloom for as long a period as possible, the spurias fill the all-too-evident gap between those last few straggling late-blooming tall bearded and the first burst of bloom by the Japanese hybrids. Sometimes the wealth of bloom put on by the TB's has suddenly come and gone, leaving us with the feeling we've lost something at which we'd still like to grasp. The spurias help to counteract this sense of loss.

While the color range of this attractive garden subject isn't as great as that of the bearded irises, great strides in this direction have been made during recent years with many hybridizers- following the late Eric Nies - working to improve the species both in color and in form. The formation of a spuria branch of the American Iris Society has helped a lot in the promotion of the type. The interest in this type is centered around Houston, Texas. It's a fact that the spuria is one iris that not only can take comparatively cold climates, but does not seem in the least affected by humid heat or periods of drouth. It seems like a foolproof plant, doesn't it? And it most certainly is.

Yes, spurias are a hardy lot. I've been growing them for the past 18 years- though not in any very large numbers- and never in that time have I found a case of leaf spot, mosaic, any of the various kinds of rot or any other common iris ailment. Neither have borers ever attacked them, even in years when the borers seemed to run riot in spite of spraying. I've never given them any particular care, and in some cases not even proper cultivation- a number of them for the past eight years have been in a perimeter border that backs to another property, and they've had to fight inroads of sod during that time. It hasn't seemed to make a bit of difference in their vigor, and I don't believe very much difference in the amount of bloom. Neither have they ever had any fertilizer, although to begin with they were planted in soil never before cultivated and heavy with humus.

Spurias do have two peculiarities not common to any other type iris. First, when moving them or shipping them, the rhizomes must be kept moist and not allowed to dry out even the slightest. Drying gives them such a shock they are badly set back, and as planting should be done in the fall, such shock could mean they wouldn't survive the winter- especially a cold and snowless one. (Well- we have had them!)

Their second peculiarity is their eagerness to set seed. They readily self-pollinate. They are called the butterfly iris: not only do the blooms look like butterflies, but they attract great numbers of butterflies and bees, particularly bumble bees. After the blooming period, one stalk may be found to have as many as five or six or even more seed pots. There is little value in trying to germinate such seeds as the results will not be worth while. To do a hand-pollinated cross and be reasonably sure of the results, one must start with a fairly tight

bud. I understand that even in the loose-bud stage the bloom can be selfed. Therefore, starting with tight buds, carefully remove all parts of the flower except the essentials; do your pollinating, then immediately bag your endeavor with a small cellophane bag- or lacking this even a waxed-paper sandwich bag will do. This can be left on and later torn open a bit as the pod matures- it will help catch any seeds should the pod explode and scatter while you're on vacation or elsewhere. The seed should be planted in the fall, but all probably won't germinate the first spring- or even the second.

Spurias do take a bit longer to establish; don't expect anything of them except new growth the first year, and maybe only a bloom or two the second. But beginning with the third year, watch out and jump out of the way, fast! Once established they may stay in one spot for years. Just how many years the limit is, I don't know, but I did have some in one spot for 10-11 years. At the end of that time a single rhizome had grown into a clump fully four feet or more in diameter and the center wasn't so hollow as to be very noticeable. They are ideal subjects for the back of the border, as they reach from about four feet in height for the shorter types to nearly six feet for the tall ones such as Wadi Zem Zem. The foliage stays brilliantly green until late fall,- any browning foliage being unobtrusive.

My original venture with spurias was in 1940 when I purchased a few from the late R. H. Hill, of LaFontaine, Kansas. Among these was a yellow self, Sunny Day, a Sass introduction. And after growing this one for so many years and watching its continuous year-in and year-out performance, I was very pleased when this splendid variety was finally awarded top honor for spurias last year- the Eric Nies Award for 1957.

I will not try to list any of the varieties as a number of growers list them. A reference to their listings will give you better descriptions than I could possibly write. Among those listing spurias are: Arizona Mission Gardens, Somerton, Arizona; Edenwald Gardens, Vincennes, Indiana; Melrose Gardens, Modesto, California; Syllmar Gardens, San Fernando, California, and Tell's Iris Gardens, Provo, Utah.

For anyone who has never tried them, and would like to venture, I would suggest starting with a few of the award-winning spurias as they have been thoroughly tested and proved reliable. Later plunging into the newer and more expensive varieties could be undertaken. Those of you who have the space and like to try different things, I'm sure you will find the spurias all I've said them to be and more. For a truly outstanding picture, and one that will have all your neighbors envious- try a clump of Wadi Zem Zem or Shelford Giant, or any one of the white and gold varieties backed up with an evergreen. You'll be highly gratified!

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SPURIAS IN FAR-AWAY-LANDS -

Mrs. Riana Jacobsz, a member of the Spuria Society at Rowena, Marquard, South Africa, writes quote 'I am interested in some of the newer spurias and find it difficult to order from catalog descriptions only. I have flowered successfully this season, White Heron, Blue Acres, Cherokee Chief, Bronze Butterfly, LarkSong, Bronze Spur, Fairy Light, Fairy Wand and Mont Eagle, but Wadi Zem Zem has been stubborn for 3 years. New in the garden and growing well are- Big Cloud, Black Point, Blue Pacific, Blue Valentine, Color Guard, Investment, Sunnyside and Zephoso. I have a collection of the older English ones that do well here. Mr. Walker's new ones interest me but I haven't decided which ones are really different.

If you could find the time or one of the other members at the Test Garden could recommend one or two I'd appreciate it very much. I hope to flower some of my own seedlings this year. unquote'

SPURIAS AS THEY LOOK TO ME
Walker Ferguson, Escondido, Cal.

Like the bees, we are usually attracted to some plant variety by the flowers. At first we fail to notice a great many other factors which may be of considerable importance, but if we have had no experience with the plant we have no way to judge what is good and what is poor. There is height, size and lasting quality of the flowers to learn about and later on the ease or difficulty of growth.

Having passed through these and many other stages with spurias, I have come, after seven years and countless crosses and seedlings, to look for a plant that is a healthy and upright grower.

When Eric Nies started working with spurias he was looking for a tall, tough iris to use in perennial borders. Iris leaves have often been compared to swords and with the spuria leaves growing up to five feet and flower stems even taller, we need to be doubly sure of the temper of the sword or we will have a drooping, untidy plant and flower stems sprawling in all directions.

I can speak only from experience in my own garden, disregarding flower values and most other points, in the search for what I would call good health and good looks in the plant itself. The spuria that I would rate nearest to 100% in what I have in mind is Wadi Zem Zem. Sweep your hand over a clump and you will be surprized how firmly they resist pressure. The leaves are dark green, wide, very free from leaf spot or rust, with flower stems strong and upright.

Glance over the spuria patch when a light wind is blowing and notice which ones stay erect.

There are other quite healthy sorts with leaves perhaps more like rapiers than broad swords. Even the semi-dwarf Premier, with leaves scarcely wider than those of oats seems healthy.

I look over the seedlings and see one with very erect blue-green leaves. So I put a stake beside it and watch for the bloom. Some flowers may come along that you just can't bear to discard even tho the plant is not up to scratch. That is alright for your own garden but anything to be named and introduced should rate at least 75% for health.

I read about virus in spurias but so far have not been able to say "this one has it and that one doesn't."

Saugatuck and the taller Sunny Day appear healthy until they bloom then over go the stems. Two Opals is even worse.

Now what can we do about it. Wadi seems to transmit good health qualities to most, but not all, offspring. Its growth habit is open without a lot of increase. I am not certain yet but I feel that most of us fail to give spurias the space they need for sufficient sunlight and air.

Most of my named varieties are planted four feet apart each way and I haven't regretted it. Seedlings I have planted a foot apart in rows 3 feet apart. This will do if they bloom within 18 months from seed but if they have to be left another year it is utter confusion. It would be much better to plant 2 ft. by $3\frac{1}{2}$ ft. Fertilization also may play an important part and many of us may be using too much nitrogen and no trace elements.

I would rate some of the more common spurias in this order for health: Wadi Zem Zem; Investment; Blue Valentine; Russet Flame; White Heron; Azure Dawn; Alice Eastwood; Gold Nugget; Lark Song; Color Guard; Sunny Day; Cherokee Chief; to Two Opals 50% and Black Point 33 $\frac{1}{3}$ %, which may indicate why Eric Nies never introduced the latter though he had it a dozen years.

VARIETAL REPORT, Portland, Oregon
Robert C. Henningson

June 24, 1958 --- Some eighty spurias flowered this year and I took descriptive notes on all of them which included all the old varieties as well as some new named hybrids and all the "wild" spurias I am growing too. The season started on May 9th with the little plum-scented dwarf, *I. graminea*, a two-toned violet and purple flower. Three days later *I. spuria*, a small neat blue-purple was out and on the 15th of May *I. sintenissi*, another dwarf, small neat-flowered dark purple with a white area on the falls. The Armenian spuria *I. Kerneriana*, pale creamy yellow, also came out on the 15th and the two small clumps were covered with flowers which however did not last very long this year, as we had unusually hot weather during the middle week of May.

I. ochroleuca began flowering on the 18th and the first old spuria hybrid, MRS. TAIT, a spidery soft porcelain blue, opened its first flowers on the 19th. BLUE PINAFORE, a big medium blue, was the first of the new hybrids to open also on the 19th, as well as AZURE DAWN, a smooth pale lavender.

Some of the older *Nies* spurias all came out with their first flowers on the 20th and one, TWO OPALS, was very good this year. It's generally a poor and slow grower with us so we don't have very much bloom, but this year it was very nice, a blended pale lavender and bronze with a cream undertone. It's our observation that it has a little lip or horn on the reverse side of the falls (the first named spuria to have this).

MT. WILSON (Milliken) and SAUGATUCK both blue-lavenders and BRONZSPUR and FIFTH SYMPHONY, brown and gold and old gold brown-lined, also opened on the 20th.

Walker Ferguson's BLUE TITMOUSE, a deep lavender dusted gold, came on the 21st of May. This is a very lovely flower having a horn or lip on the falls and also on the standards giving this particular spuria a very distinguished characteristic look.

The best species type, *I. Monnieri* came out on the 20th and was the best it has ever been for us, a nice vivid yellow of very smooth finish and excellent substance. The falls were 1 3/4" wide.

COOL I, a Ferguson hybrid, very large white and yellow and one of the fastest growing spurias I have, opened on the 21st and the species *I. halophila*, a poor pale grey white with neat flowers and the two-toned PREMIER, another very fast grower and very dependable bloomer in shades of purple and violet were open. Our old standby, Dr. Annie Besant, cream and gold, and Russet Flame, bronze-brown were out on the 21st too.

A very much improved FIFTH SYMPHONY, RUSTY (Ferguson), a large very ruffled and very flaring old gold with lined and dotted bronze falls and bronze lined golden brown standards, the best in this color class I've seen to date, first opened on the 21st of May, its first flowering in our garden. Several seedlings flowered at this time which are some improvement on the species *Ochroleuca*, but they are very much like ALICE EASTWOOD. The dark brown BLACKPOINT came out at this time and although small was the best it has been for three years.

CAMBRIDGE BLUE, a very neat cobalt blue on tall stalks was out on the 23rd, as well as Ferguson's COOL II (WAKEROBIN), a very large white slightly ruffled with pale lemon signal and deeper yellow line crest. This and WHITE HERON are the two best white spurias I've seen so far. PASTORAL, SKYBLUE and BRONZE BUTTERFLY came out on the 23rd and were very good this year.

KATRINA NIES first flowered for us on the 24th of May, a very lovely violet-mauve with orange-yellow signal area. This spuria has a medium-large flower, very unusual, good form and substance with a very neat appearance.

Our old favorite, FAIRY WAND (Washington), came out on the 25th, an old gold and blue combination very unusual, and the spuria having the most fragrance. The small neat Washington hybrid, SKYLINE, a soft blue grey was out on the 25th also and true to form, it had up until the very warm weather its characteristic yellowish foliage which later in the season turns dark green. CHEROKEE CHIEF was also in flower at this time and as dependable as ever with its large dark velvet brown flowers with the excellent flare. SUNNY DAY was unusually good, a gleaming yellow on tall stems.

Another Ferguson spuria, LAVENDER LACE, a smoky lavender and gold combination was very nice, flaring and of excellent substance. LUMIERE, a soft cream and gold, is a small neat spuria with a "Spanish look" (having the appearance of the Spanish bulbous iris) and FAIRLY LIGHT, a lemon chrome similar to Ochroleuca. MONTEAGLE, another Washington spuria flowering during this period, has the "Spanish look" too, is a small neat bronzy red-purple which this year was not at its best and for this reason I will replant most of it in several new locations in the garden, some with filtered shade and some sun for part of the day.

BLUE ROCKET (Washington), blue purple, is another "Spanish look" spuria which I believe would do best in semi-shade too, so will try it or part of it under these conditions next season. A very unusual spuria which we call DEEP ORANGE came from Melrose Gardens last year and both plants flowered on May 25th. The falls are deep orange, somewhat pointed, orange line crest, styles yellow orange and standards flaring deep orange, slightly fluted. This iris has very neat small orange yellow flowers with a luminous luster, very vivid and glowing of color and the deepest orange I've seen to date.

On May 26th BLUE ACRES opened her first flower, silvery blue white of very good form and substance and of medium size. This spuria has the cleanest and best foliage of all the spurias we grow. On the same day the well-formed buff gold MICHIGAN STATE opened its first flowers of the season and the same week I. aurea from Kashmir came out, the tall deep yellow always a dependable bloomer with us and one of the spurias we have been growing for the longest time.

On the 26th of May we had a real treat with the first flowers on a spuria from Ben Hager of Melrose Gardens, Sass' blue seedling, an excellent blue-lavender-purple and gold, a medium large spuria well carried with a very unusual lovely golden glow in the signal area. On the same day MT. BALDY, a large white and yellow Milliken spuria, started flowering and Shelford Giant, our tallest spuria of cream and yellow, together with BLUE DISPLAY, ALICE EASTWOOD, and BATHSHEBA.

This season ZEPHROSO, a honey colored lavender with "rosy overlay", did very well but like TWO OPALS is rather slow of growth and shy of bloom normally with us. MT. WHITNEY, our next tallest spuria to SHELFORD GIANT, a very large flaring white and yellow of heavy substance was out on the 26th. DRESDEN BLUE had poor flowers and I rather think it would like a cooler location. MONAUREA was very good and the third tallest spuria, a gleaming orange yellow. WHITE HERON is a great white and very flaring and large, and GOLDEN AGATE is a taller brighter BRONZSPUR.

RUTH NIES CABEEN came from Lyon Iris Gardens last year and flowered on the 27th of May, a very nice Dauphin's violet or almost a blue self of excellent form and substance, very flaring and an A-1 spuria in our opinion. We have an

unusual yellow spuria from Lyon's which we've had for some seven years, a very neat medium-sized yellow unlike any of the others, comes closest to looking like *I. aurea* but has very rounded, cupped-back falls, very distinctive of shape. It must have been a stray seedling.

During the latter part of May DUTCH DEFIANCE, BIG CLOUD, INVESTMENT (?), and YELLOW SWALLOWTAIL all flowered well, especially the latter. We have at least 35 plants of WADI ZEM ZEM and for the second time in seven years we've seen WADI with two or three plants getting the idea it was time to flower. WADI is a nice large yellow cream of excellent shape and substance even if a shy bloomer with us.

A number of seedlings from Marion R. Walker did very well, some nice yellows of good form and substance out of WADI ZEM ZEM, which flower better than their parent and a large white and yellow. PEACHES AND CREAM, a lovely deep yellow and cream with a "peach yellow" area over most of the falls, was out on the 27th. This has large and neat flowers.

Two older Barr spurias, A. J. BALFOUR and LORD WOLSELEY, did very well in late May, being very neat and clean in shades of blue, purple and lavender blue. The darkest purple to date is the late-flowering Monspur, a tall dark blue-purple, with good foliage. Hazy Hills, a delft blue with a gold flush, did well this year and is another late Washington spuria having a faint fragrance. Our own named spuria, LAVENDER WHISPER, also late-flowering, has very pale icy lavender white and gold flowers, and Euphrosene has bright bluish-purple small "Spanish-looking" flowers of a delicate charm and airy form, very late flowering.

LARKSONG is late flowering with us and slow of growth but is a nice, very flaring flower, cream and yellow and very ruffled. HARPETH HILLS, of which we have only a very small clump had only one flower stalk after a number of years, but the flowers are nice, pale blue and fragrant. BEN LOMOND flowered on the first of June and had small electric blue flowers. GOLDEN NUGGET and GOLD STANDARD are both nice deep yellows.

Our largest spuria to date is Golden Lady, an immense golden yellow with somewhat ruffled falls over $3\frac{1}{2}$ " wide and long, and standards $1\frac{1}{2}$ " wide & $3\frac{1}{2}$ " long; last spuria out was *I. spuria* var. LILACINA, a species type we raised from seed from Europe, a very neat lilac lavender-blue, flaring and late.

Our season was about twenty days earlier than ever before this year and in the past we have had spurias still in bloom on the 4th of July. This year they are now all gone except for one or two late stragglers and they will be finished in a day or two. A large number have not flowered yet so we will look forward next year again to seeing something new.

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1958 AIS CONVENTION
Ila Nunn

Again as in 1957 I saw no spurias at an AIS meeting, almost no beardless iris at all. There were a few Siberians, an unusual fuchsia pink one in Mr. T. W. Hall's garden in Manlius, exciting quite a bit of comment. But there seems less effort to use the beardless types of the iris family in the tour gardens than other conventional perennial plants. Having become an iris fan by way of various beardless branches of the family this never ceases to distress me, even though I can understand how bearded iris can satisfy completely the iris appetite that has never developed a taste for any other kind.

The meeting was carried along at a fast pace with a serious well-planned program of garden tours, lectures, panels, etc., but with very little consulting or relaxing time. I felt every inch a Southerner in that energetic whirl. The weather wasn't too kind, as wind and rain at times damaged both irises and the spirits of the viewers, and two frosty nights didn't help either. But there were so many beautiful new iris on display in so many gardens extremely varied in type and size, that those few not ready to open or hurt by weather were not missed too much. The gardens were reached by bus trips in all directions from Syracuse, and it was my impression we were seeing quite a bit of New York state.

The trip to Ithaca and beautiful Cornell University, "high above Cayuga's waters", was most memorable, as Dr. Randolph's garden and extensive fields of iris were perhaps the most rewarding of all for bloom specialists. This trip came on the next to last day and as each succeeding day helped to open new iris, this meant more to see on the last days. Dr. Randolph's EXOTIC BLUE was perhaps the most talked of iris at the convention. It is difficult to describe, an unusual smoky grey-blue color with a dark chartreuse beard. It was runner-up for the President's Cup, won by H. F. Hall's PATRICIAN, a large and handsome white.

The New York hybridizers did themselves proud as they had assembled so many of their fine iris introductions and promising seedlings. Some of these starred in my book besides the two above were Cassebeer's SWEETHEART'S FOLLY and WHITE SPRITE, Fass' WEDDING RING, BRIGHT SECRET, ELEGANT MISS and GREEN FASHION, Lewis' MIGHTY SWEET, T. W. Hall's GOLD ENSIGN and OMONDAGA, Randolph's BLACK AND BLUE, BRIGHT HALO and MORNING SUNLIGHT, Rundlett's KEN, INNER LIGHT and WHIRLING GIRL, and K. Smith's JANIE VAUGHN.

The MacAndrews garden in Syracuse was perhaps the most charming garden of all, a "gardener's garden" reflecting the loving care of its owners in each beautiful and orderly planting arrangement combining fine iris with many other kinds of plants. It was here I enjoyed Cliff Benson's BARTOW LAMBERT and JEAN SIBELIUS, Dube's MARION and BLUE MARVEL and renewed acquaintance with other favorites, ELEANOR'S PRIDE, BETH COREY, INDIAN BAY, GOLDEN IVORY.

Impressive iris in the well-grown garden of Mr. and Mrs. H. C. Porreca in West Henrietta were D. Hall's ALPHA and GOLDEN GARLAND, Hinkle's HELEN NOVAK, DEMETRIA and CURL'D CLOUD, Shreiner's GAY LAVINIA and KING'S CHOICE, Schortman's SIERRA SKIES and MEMPHIS LASS. In other gardens some of the most interesting and beautiful iris shown were Mrs. Hamblen's BLUE CLIF, VALIMAR and GLITTERING AMBER, Schirmer's lovely pink BREATHLESS and RARE GOLD, DeForest's huge dark TEXAS WAY and pale pink 'LINA BETH, and for oddity Benbow's small well-named SAFFRON CHARM, Austin's new fancies WINGED FUCHSIA, WINGS OF FLIGHT and HORNED SKYLARK.

In the afternoon at Cornell everyone was free to attend his choice of five lectures and demonstrations offered by members of the faculty. With the problem of the "mustard seed fungus" and subsequent soft rot we have recently had to cope with here in Houston in growing spurias, my choice was Iris Diseases given by Dr. A. W. Dimock. The above disease was identified by him as sclerotium rot, a soil inhabitator encouraged by a combination of humidity and warmth and growing through the ground from plant to plant. The control is PCNB or Terraclor manufactured by Olin Mathieson Chemical Co., Baltimore. Use one rounded tbsp. per gallon of water on and around the plant or 1 lb. to 100 gallons down around the row in a spray. In Houston we have used effectively potassium permanganate, 1 tsp. per gallon, but it will be interesting to see whether Terraclor will give more effective control.

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OF GREEN HILLS AND FLOWER GARDENS -

And this our life, exempt from public haunt,
Finds tongues in trees, books in the running brooks,
Sermons in stones and good in everything.

-(Shakespeare- As You Like It)