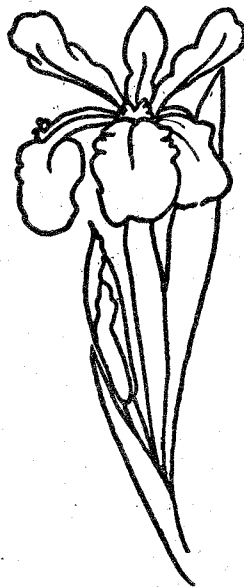


# SPURIA IRIS SOCIETY



## NEWSLETTER

**VOL. 9**

**APRIL 1965**

**NO. 25**

SPURIA IRIS SOCIETY

SECTION OF THE AMERICAN IRIS SOCIETY

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1st Vice Pres.	Mrs. Joseph Crawford	R.F.D. #1, Box 357	Oklahoma City, Okla.
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Secy-Treas.	Mrs. Mac W. Holloway	673 Acacia Ave., N.	Sacramento 15, Calif.
Editor	Mr. Ralph A. Johnson	4414 E. Flower St.	Phoenix, Arizona 85018
Past Pres.	Mr. Marion R. Walker	5210 E. Telephone Rd.	Ventura, California

- CHAIRMAN OF STANDING COMMITTEES -

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Information	Dr. Wm. J. Johnson	1420 E. Vermont	Phoenix, Arizona
Publicity	Mrs. Frank McCown	P. O. Box 176	Holtville, Calif.
Display Gardens			

- SPURIA IRIS SOCIETY INFORMATION -

Membership: Section of the American Iris Society under Approved By-Laws.  
American Members of SIS must be members of SIS.

Dues: Annual: Individual - \$1.00, Family - \$1.50, Sustaining - \$3.00.  
Notices of dues payable are included with January and July issues  
of your Newsletter. Please inform Editor or Secy. of change of  
address immediately.

Newsletter: Published Quarterly - July, October, January, and April.  
Deadline for all articles and news items, 1st of June, September,  
December, and March. If possible, all material for the Newsletter  
should be typed and double spaced. Send all communications re-  
garding Newsletter to the Editor.

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

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear Friends:

For some of us the bloom season is upon us and for the rest it is not far away. Hopes have risen that this may be the year of the winner and the dashed expectations of last year can be forgotten. It is a busy period not only in the garden, but also in the many associated organizations. The officers of your society are actively planning for the annual meeting in Memphis in May, for the rounding up of the numerous activities concerned with the close of the fiscal year, and for the nomination of officers for the coming year.

Again all members are urged to volunteer or make suggestions for officers and committee chairmen and workers to the Nominating Committee headed by Mrs. Eleanor McCown. Her address is: P.O. Box 176, Holtville, California. As has been stated before, much of the business of the Spuria Iris Society must be done by correspondence and we all would like you to get into the act and share your opinions and suggestions. The newly formed AIS Board of Counselors representing the various sections has begun work and although your Executive Board has been granted by the constitution the right to act for the membership in many areas, the members of the Executive Board would feel much more secure if they knew how you reacted to proposed changes.

At present two problems have been directed to the Board of Counselors: One dealing with awards for iris other than tall bearded, and the other with the accrediting of judges.

Some of the sections feel that they are now introducing sufficient iris that are receiving Honorable Mention awards to warrant the provision of more than the single named award that is the equivalent of the tall bearded Award of Merit. In the case of the spurias all iris awarded the HM are eligible for the Eric Nies Award, but this is given to only one spuria each year. There are twelve Awards of Merit granted to tall bearded each year and it is a small wonder that this class of iris receives the Dykes Medal each year.

This is a theoretical problem for the Spuria Iris Society at the present time. The number of spurias introduced each year is hardly sufficient to consider additional awards, but it is a real problem with some of the other sections and we should think of the time when we too will have far greater representation in the iris garden.

A tentative proposal has suggested that when an iris class has 15 hybridizers registering iris in a class and the number of iris introduced each year is 25 or more and at least 10 varieties each year receive HM awards, then automatically three AM awards for that class would be activated. Judges, of course, would be permitted to vote for three Awards of Merit for that class.

In 1964 a hurried survey revealed that there were thirteen spuria iris registered by four different hybridizers. During that year seven varieties were introduced and nine varieties received an HM award. This falls short of the proposal, but that would be expected - more about this later. In the case of the Standard Dwarf Bearded there were 46 registrations from almost as many hybridizers, over 30 introductions and 16 HM awards. For this group a single award above the HM is very limited.

Probably the entire award system of the American Iris Society warrants extensive study and the problems of the non-tall bearded iris sections may bring this about. May we have your reactions?

The problem of specialist judges for any individual class is a thorny one. Generally the sections do not favor the accrediting of judges for a single iris class, but do favor some means of certifying the individual judge so that ballots for the

(continued on Page 6)

EDITOR'S MAIL BAG - News from Here and There

Hybridizer Walker Ferguson of Escondido, Calif. underwent eye surgery early in December and writes that his gardening activity has been quite limited. However, very shortly, new glasses will be ready and Fergy hopes to return to his fine seedling crop of '64. We hope to have a good report on the 1965 bloom season for the July N.L. issue.

I have to take a fine quote from Peg Grey's latest Flight Lines and also her own comments to your Ed: "Obviously we can't print what we ain't got" so let's have some more news items, experiences with bugs, soil or what have you that will be of general interest to all members.

A note from Bro. Charles in Techny, Illinois expresses his thanks for the December issue of Arizona Highways. "I am particularly pleased to note that the magazine emphasizes magnificent pictures of natural beauty, scenery that is still unspoiled by man. It seems no artist has been able to 'capture' the beauty found in God's nature. The photographers have done a magnificent job too."

From Hazel T. McCaffrey, El Paso, Texas, Corresponding Secy., El Paso Iris Society, their 1965 officers:

President - Mrs. H. D. Shields, 5240 Alps, El Paso, Texas, 79904  
First Vice-President - Mrs. E. A. Berg, 9015 Comet, El Paso, Texas 79904  
Second Vice-President - Mrs. Dale Zellar, 709 Olson, El Paso, Texas 79925  
Treasurer - Mrs. Louise Terrell, 3325 Morehead, El Paso, Texas 79930  
Recording Secretary - Mrs. Bessie P. Stroud, 3719 Mobile, El Paso, Texas 79930  
Corresp. Secretary - Mrs. Hazel T. McCaffrey, 1215 Travis, El Paso, Texas 79903  
Executive Board - Mrs. R. L. Bruce, 7413 North Loop, El Paso, Texas 79915  
Mr. R. T. Clark, 944 Richard Dr., El Paso, Texas 79907

EDITOR'S NOTES -

As President Clark Cosgrove has stated in his message, nominations of new officers and plans for the annual meeting at Memphis in May are delayed as we go to press with the April Newsletter. However, plans for the S.I.S. section meeting at Memphis are being arranged by Ila Crawford and it is hoped a large group of S.I.S. members will attend. Also, the Nomination Committee will make its report at this meeting.

All spuria enthusiasts are looking forward to a fine bloom season and your Editor will appreciate your comments and reports for the July newsletter.

Weather has been a "bug-a-boo" in the majority of our states throughout the winter months which recently extended into mid-March. Here in Arizona (March 22nd) early morning temperatures have been from 40° - 50° which heralds spring. Some early TB's are already in bloom and some spurias should be in bloom early in April. The cool weather will possibly again extend our season into mid-May.

It is hoped that we will see the fine spuria display garden in bloom at Memphis as Jake Scharff has done a wonderful job at the Ketchum Memorial Gardens. Many of the latest introductions have been planted in a beautiful setting.

The new Board of Counselors representing the various sections is a very progressive step by A.I.S. and should result in many improvements in all areas, such as awards, information and communications. However, the continued success and growth of the S.I.S. section will depend on our membership in meeting the challenge stated by Clarke Cosgrove.

See you in Memphis,

RALPH A. JOHNSON

WHAT I EXPERIENCED WITH SPURIA IRIS  
by Eckard Berlin Markplatz, Germany

1. "My experiences taught me that the USA varieties brought over here up to now can so far only be recommended for rather warm regions. In a colder climate, their floriferousness decreases. Seedlings from American seed tend to winter out more or less (up to 50%) according to their origin. The hardiest seedlings I had from seed sent by Tell Muhlestein, Provo, Utah. My first, though but weak bloom I had from 3-years old seedlings. Spuria breeding requires patience.
2. Plants must be set deep enough; with species collected in Roumania I had heavy losses, since, by lack of experience, I had covered the rhizomes insufficiently as is recommended for TBs.
3. In humus soil I had better results than in tight loamy soil, but this appears to depend on the climate. The finest spurias I have seen so far were those of the Gräfin Zeppelin gardens (vineyard climate and loess soil).
4. Spuria seedlings badly withstand temporary dryness (contrary to Bearded). Therefore always take care to let them have the moisture required. Seedling trays should not be too flat, unless planting out is done soon. Seedlings germinating in autumn (Spurias tend to germinate in middle or end of September) ought during winter be kept in a cellar free from frost as far as possible. Dry seed tends to delay germination for a year; following American reports, unripe seed shows best germinating results by immediate sowing.
5. Species of the Spuria group with chromosome numbers  $n=11$  and  $n=22$  are found farthest in the north; working with them should promise best results in our climate. Here they are: *I.spuria* 22 chromosomes, *I.spuria notha* 44 chr., *I.musulmanica* 44 chr. *I.halophila* 44 chr., *I.klattii* 44 chr., and *I.carthalinae* 44 chr. Varieties with the same chromosome numbers were only obtained by the late spuria breeder, Thomas A. Washington: BEN LEMMOND (42), BLUE ZEPHIR (44), and by Mrs. Nesmith with her ROYAL TOGA (43-44). These varieties should be procured. My experiments of crossing some of these species with American varieties of usually 40 chromosomes had so far no results. Only *I.klattii*, a light blue abt. 40 in. tall (similar to *I.spuria* which however is less tall) has set some seed, but this is possibly from self-pollination.
6. Spuria crossings must be carried out with much greater care than crossings with TBs. Remove anthers before the flower really opens. The stigma should be absolutely protected, since spurias may be pollinated by the wind."

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Editor's Note - The above article was sent to our Secy-Treas., Marilyn Holloway, by good friend George Hacklander of Hamburg, Germany. This fine information should be of interest especially to our American hybridizers. Mr. Hacklander closed his letter "with all good wishes for a fine blooming season and for a prosperous development of the S.I.S.

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NEWS FLASH

Word has just been received that Peggy Burke Grey's husband, Bob, passed away recently at Calistoga, California. Our good friend Peggy is staying on at the Deer Trails Farm and know each of you is as sad and shocked as I am.

All of A.I.S. and S.I.S. members express their deepest sympathy.

REPORT ON SPURIAS IN MONTANA - Homer Metcalf, Bozeman, Montana

Since it is nearly two years since you sent me a collection of spurias for trial in our northern climate, I think it is time to report to you on their performance up to now.

We have the plants growing in a silt loam soil with a pH of 7.2-7.3, and on a site where the spring water table is fairly high. The plants are grown under irrigation which is continued until late August or early September, depending on the season.

The following are comments on each clone:

Black Point x 58-11: failed to establish and was dead in the spring of 1963.

Counterpoint: failed to establish and was dead in the spring of 1963.

Dark Silk: Survived the winter of 1962-63, and of 1963-64. It has not flowered, and as of 24 July had but three fans of leaves.

Driftwood: Survived the winter of 1962-63, and of 1963-64. It produced 3 bloomstalks this year, and is showing good increase. It was in flower on 24 July this season.

Golden Lady: Survived the winter of 1962-63, and of 1963-64. It has not flowered, but is showing ample increase this season.

Good Nature: Survived the winter of 1962-63, and of 1963-64. It has not flowered, but is showing good growth this season.

Mister Wadi: Survived the winter of 1962-63, but was dead in the spring of 1964. The cause of its demise is unknown.

Monspur Cambridge Blue: Survived the winter of 1962-63, and of 1963-64. Early blooming, it produced one bloomstalk in 1964, and was out of flower by 24 July. Vigorous, with good increase.

Mountain Bluebird: Survived the winter of 1962-63, and of 1963-64. It has not flowered, and is now in moderately weak condition, with but 4 fans evident.

Premier: Survived the winter of 1962-63, and of 1963-64. It produced 7 bloomstalks on two clumps this year, with the last flowers open on 24 July. A good increaser.

Ruffled Moth: Survived the winter of 1962-63, and of 1963-64. It has not flowered, and is in rather weak condition, with but 3 small fans.

Thrush Song: Survived the winter of 1962-63, and of 1963-64. It has not flowered, and the plant is in rather weak condition.

Wake Robin: Survived the winter of 1962-63, and of 1963-64. We have two clumps, one of which flowered this year, the other did not. There are 5 fans on each plant at this time.

Since we commonly have to wait 2-3 years for bloom on tall-bearded irises here, I'm not surprised that some of the spurias have not bloomed. I'm hoping that they will be more floriferous next season. The spurias commonly bloom in July here, coming along after the tall-bearded types which bloom here in June. The bloomstalks of spurias do not much exceed the leaves here, in contrast to what I saw in southern California two years ago.

We much appreciate the opportunity of growing these spurias, and will continue to keep you advised as to their progress.

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ED'S NOTE: The above report was sent to Walker Ferguson by Homer Metcalf and has been reproduced as submitted.

DIRECTORY OF SPURIA GROWERS

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SPURIA IRIS  
Write for Listing  
WALKER FERGUSON  
1160 N. Broadway  
ESCONDIDO, CALIFORNIA

SPURIA IRIS  
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MYRON D. BIGGER  
201 N. RICE ROAD  
TOPEKA, KANSAS 66616

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WELCOME NEW MEMBERS --

- Mr. W. Harry MacKendrick, Boxerly 2038 Lakeshore East, Oakville, Ontario, Canada
- Mr. Merle Daling, Box 774, Waterville, Washington 98858
- Mrs. Ernest Parsons, 7935 Genesta Ave., West Van Nuys, California 91406
- Mr. & Mrs. B. E. Hobbs, R.R. 1, Box 127-B, Novlesville, Indiana 46060

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE (continued from Page 2)

Dykes, for instance, would be from judges who are qualified to judge in a minimum number of classes that would include apogon iris. What is your reaction to Class A, B, and C judges where Class C are limited to one class, Class B certified for three classes, and Class A certified for five classes or more and be the only class of judge eligible to vote for the Dykes Medal award?

There is a problem that each of you can help with at the present time. I had promised to report on the spurias seen in New Zealand and Australia during my recent trip and can do it simply by stating I saw a single clump of specie spuria. The clump was not in bloom.

Working so closely with those interested in spurias, making a special point of seeing those gardens that grow spurias, searching out the new varieties, etc., it is very easy to lose sight of the plain fact that the spuria form of iris is practically unknown and is very seldom encountered in even the larger gardens.

It is up to all of us to adopt the missionary spirit and within our sphere of influence draw the attention of gardeners to spurias and their values. Be generous in dividing and distributing your excess plants. Give plants to public gardens where the greatest number can see them. Never fail to exhibit whatever spuria is available in the local flower shows even if it has to go into the every-other class. Think spurias, talk spurias, grow spurias, show spurias.

Sincerely,

CLARKE COSGROVE