

While on the subject of William Mohr, we might mention its seedling Capitola. I have seen Capitola in bloom only once, but I hope to bloom it myself this coming Spring. To me there was nothing at all impressive about the flower or stalk. It showed obvious influences of its William Mohr parentage in having a large violet flower on a short stem. It was considerably less veined than William Mohr. It also showed influence of its grandparent, the oncocyclous Iris iberica, in having a small dark signal patch at the end of the beard. Altogether I think the blooms of Capitola are undistinguished and are not those of a good garden subject. On the other hand it would seem that every iris hybridizer should keep at least one plant of this available in order to use its pollen on the tall. It apparently produces unusual and attractive seedlings—to name only a few of these I'll mention Lady Mohr, Flurrymohr, Heigho, Blue Elegance and Morning Blue.

Before leaving the hybrids, I shall mention that unusual true hybrid iris, Paltec (hybrid of *I. tectorum* and *I. pallida*). It is planted all too infrequently in gardens. In Memphis it is widely used to border the tall bearded iris beds, and for this purpose it is without peer. Its culture is the same as tall bearded culture, and I have never heard of anyone having trouble growing it. It blooms with the tall bearded, and literally showers its dark yellow-green foliage with charming lavender blue flowers. The shape of the flower is particularly apropos for its height. Its falls flare widely, and its standards are open so that you can look down into the heart of the flower.

Those of you who are not familiar with the table iris Tom Tit, should make its acquaintance at the first opportunity. Tiny "Tom" is one of the latest of the bearded irises to bloom. It resembles the tall bearded irises insofar as proportions of flower to stem to foliage go, but is a tiny gem with thin, graceful stalks. Its flowers have absolutely horizontal falls. Both standards and falls are of a solid purple color with a slight reddish cast. An unobtrusive yellow beard completes the picture. Some 30 odd years after its introduction, this iris remains as original, different, and attractive as any that is grown.

In recent numbers of the Bulletin, there have been inquiries regarding the iris Zua. Although it has been about four years since I have seen this variety in bloom, I would nevertheless like to call your attention to it. Mrs. Black (on page 106, Bulletin, October 1951) describes Zua more adequately than I could. In part she says, "The texture of the petals amazed me—the entire surface of the falls was covered with tiny upstanding horns, growing very crinkled and ruffled towards the edge, even back of the falls or underside was horned and peaked. Standards are horned in the same manner, growing so crinkled and ruffled toward the top it is literally laced with holes and feathers off at the top edges in little tendrils . . . color white with a faint blue shading."

Supposedly Zua is a sport of Florentina. After more than 35 years of existence the variety Zua remains a most distinctive bearded iris.

Among the combined list of 141 best irises for 1951, there is not to be found a single iris coming under the category of red bicolor, or red bitone. The significance of this lies in a bit of iris history regarding the attempted attainment of red color in irises. Apparently, though not proved, red color has been mainly descended from *Iris variegata*. Thus initially some of our so-called reddest irises had the distinct bicolor characteristic of *I. variegata*. Among these were Shirvan, Cheerio, Garden Magic, and Junaluska. But of course the redness shown in the falls of these irises merely spurred breeders onward towards attaining this same color in both standards and falls. Thus the red bicolor seems to have been merely a stepping stone in producing the red self. Red bicolors are themselves inherently attractive irises, and there is a need for better varieties of this type. Notwithstanding the fact that the newer varieties Red Torch and Rajah Brooke are quite effective, I still feel that the three most meritorious varieties in this color class are the older Shirvan, Frank Adams, and Junaluska. Shirvan perhaps has the greatest contrast of coloring between its tannish standards and its smoothly colored purplish red falls. Frank Adams is an extremely vigorous grower, and makes an imposing clump, yet the individual blooms are somewhat marred by haft venations. Junaluska is a fairly early bloomer. Its standards are of a light reddish color with golden infusion toward the bases of the petals. The falls are solid deep red. It is a good performer.

### **Staten Island Flagrant Omission**

Perhaps before I get accused of being "old fashioned" and "behind the times," I had better mention a few newer irises which are notable omissions so far as the two 1951 lists are concerned. The most flagrant omission is that of Staten Island. This iris seems to me to be head and shoulders above its nearest competitor (and parent) City of Lincoln. Staten Island has more brilliant and clearer medium yellow standards. Its maroon falls are pleasingly edged with the yellow color of the standards, and its haft, although not devoid of markings, is unobtrusive. The size and shape of this flower are better than those of its parent.

Much overlooked is Gilt Edge, whose large individual flowers have light yellow standards and creamy white falls with a "gilt edge" to them. It is a tall iris which makes a bold floriferous clump . . . a worthy addition to anyone's collection.

Newer and rarer varieties which are almost certain to make these lists after they receive wider distribution are Gaylord and Helen Colling-