

The American Iris Society Announces
Iris of the Year 2025 ‘Perry Dyer’
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Photo by Andi Rivarola

The American Iris Society (AIS) is pleased to announce the 2025 “Iris of the Year”, arilbred¹ iris ‘Perry Dyer’. This outstanding iris is the result of hybridizing work conducted by plant breeder Paul Black of Milwaukie, Oregon. Paul introduced ‘Perry Dyer’ to the public through Mid-America Garden of Salem, Oregon in 2017. Paul Black asked his mentor, well-known commercial iris grower, hybridizer, and judge Perry Dyer from Oklahoma to choose an iris to be named for him from six of his seedlings; and Perry chose this one prior to his early passing in 2018.

About ‘Perry Dyer’

The Iris Encyclopedia describes this iris as having midseason to late bloom; its standards (top petals) palest lavender; style arms (center of flower) same, accented orchid; falls (bottom petals) cream-lavender fading to near white with a dark plum-wine spot and extended darker veins around brown beards.

When asked to describe his iris, originator Paul Black said “I think ‘Perry Dyer’ has several attributes that drew AIS judges to it. First, it is a quarter arilbred that grows well through much of the U.S. and has easily identifiable aril characteristics. The bold dark plum-wine signals on palest lavender falls insure a distinctive eye-catching presence in the garden. Compact clumps are filled with bloom stalks which also adds to its allure as a landscape iris. Like Perry Dyer the person, his namesake won’t be confused with any other.”

AIS Garden Awards

Iris are judged chiefly on their qualities as perennial garden plants, with more emphasis on strong growth characteristics and disease resistance than on mere beauty and distinctiveness of the flower. Judges accredited by the AIS cast votes that resulted in ‘Perry Dyer’ earning an Honorable Mention (including the Walther Cup for greatest number of Honorable Mention votes among all classes of irises) in 2019; an Award of Merit in 2021; a William Mohr Medal in 2023; and AIS’s highest award, the American Dykes Medal in 2024. Along the way, ‘Perry Dyer’ earned the Franklin Cook Cup in 2022 (best introduced iris from outside the local Region) and was among the Favorite Guest Irises at AIS National Conventions in 2019 and 2022.

About The American Iris Society

The mission of AIS is to organize and disseminate knowledge of the genus *Iris* and to foster iris preservation, enjoyment and continued development. The Society is welcoming to all people regardless of race, religion, socioeconomic status, ethnic background, gender, or sexual orientation. Members collaborate locally, regionally, and nationally to encourage the cultivation, enjoyment, and preservation of all irises. Activities often include educational programs, judges’ training, exhibitions, and garden observation of irises in 15 horticultural iris classifications. The AIS maintains the official world registry for non-bulbous irises. Visit the AIS website for more information, including a commercial directory of iris growers and hybridizers. **irises.org**

¹An arilbred is a hybrid between an iris native to the Middle East which has a fleshy collar on its seed and an iris of a different class, in this case a tall bearded cultivar. ‘Perry Dyer’ is only the second arilbred to receive the American Dykes Medal.