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THE SIBERIAN IRIS

Published

By

The Society For Siberian Irises

May 1962

C O N T E N T S

Volume 1, Number 3 May 1962

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MEMBERSHIP REQUIREMENTS

All members of this Society residing in the United States and Canada shall be members of the American Iris Society. Dues shall be $1.00 per year.

SOCIETY FOR SIBERIAN IRIS

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Vice President ..... Mrs. Wesley Tiffney

Secretary ..... Mrs. John Withers

Treasurer ..... Dr. William G. McGarvey

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Research: Chairman ---------- Mrs. Irene Van De Water
Mr. Sherman Preece, Jr.

Registration and Awards ---------- Mrs. Wesley Tiffney

Slides: Chairman ---------- Mrs. Elizabeth H. Rowe

NEW MEMBERS SINCE OUR LAST ISSUE

Foreign Correspondent:

Mrs. Lucy Delany	21 Gladstone Rd, Richmond, Nelson, New Zealand
Allen, W. T.	10 Kemper Avenue, Newport News, Va.
Aultz, James M.	1010 13th Street, Huntington, W. Va.
Brenner, Francis	Rte #2, McMahon Road, Pedatonica, Ill.
Carlson, Mrs. W. W.	5457 South 52nd St., Omaha 17, Nebr.
Dallas, Robert E.	Route 1, Clarksville, Ohio
Poston, Irene	307 Ray Street, Bakersfield, Cal.
Price, Mrs. John	550 Mountain Ave., New City, N.Y.
Rice, Mrs. Burton	134 Newland Rd, Arlington 74, Mass.
Rowe, Mrs. E. H.	1231 Wightman St., Pittsburgh 17, Pa.
Snook, Mr. Wayne	12 Glengariff Drive, Glen Cove, N.Y.
Ulm, Mrs. Carleton	135 N Walker Street, Taunton, Mass.
Whitsett, Mr. Gale	2327 Kemper, Cincinnati, Ohio

We are sorry we have lost two members since our organization because they were not members of the American Iris Society. Remember, when you ask a friend to join, membership in the AIS is necessary.

Excerpts from a letter written by Mrs. Lucy Delany, New Zealand, to Mrs. F. W. Warburton, describing some of her Sibirica seedlings:

"One seedling is a deep blue with a rather large peacock blue 'flash' on the falls. It is a coincidence that our Nelson District colours are blue and I have a Rugby footaller son who has worn the representative colours many times. HE decides that the only possible name for that seedling is NELSON BLUE.

The other is a deep almost navy blue 'flat' one with petals all alike and overlapping. It is also very velvety and it is from a pale blue called DRAGONFLY. The first was from CAESAR. Both were "bee pod" seedlings. MOON MOTH is the name I asked for for the second seedling."

From Kathryn I. Chambers letter:

"First two issues very good and I think all points of view should be expressed. No static ideas on what iris should be will bring changes and progress in any part of the Iris genus.

I do feel if bee pods are removed, say from Caesar's Brother, the pod parent should be mentioned in registration and not just listed as UNKNOWN."

The President's Corner

Peggy Edwards

Well, whattaya know, here we are with the first issue of our second year of publication, and approaching our second birthday as an official Section of the American Iris Society! We have survived our first election and all incumbents were elected so it seems reasonable to assume that you feel we are not doing too bad a job. All concerned extend their apologies for the delay, by the way, but it was just one of those things where after it is all over we can see what we should have done instead of what we did, but at the time we took what appeared to be the right course. I'm sure you will all be glad to know that Dr. Conroe, who was chairman of the Nominating Committee, is recovering quite well from his combined operations-(ulcers and gallstones,poor Doc!)-enough to make any chairman feel like crawling under his chair. The chairman of the Nominating Committee for the coming year will be Mrs. W. B. Melnick; the theory is, it looks bad for the chairman of this committee to be nominated to another office-but the member whose term is to expire with the calendar year should be available for other office if the Committee feels he/she is in a position to handle it and it is going to be open; so while there is nothing in the By-Laws about it, I've felt that the Committee member with two years to serve is the best bet for chairman this year.

We have also, as you will see, a Slides Chairman, Betty Rowe. As I write this the Board of Directors' Robin is still circulating so I can't report on what action is being taken on various matters (if it returns before deadline I will put in a supplementary report on it). We have a new Foreign Correspondent: Lucy Delany of New Zealand, who reports on some of her own Siberians and has promised us comment on other New Zealand gardens for our fall issue. Dr. Van De Water has been teaching six days a week so has not been able to complete the second part of her group of articles on the Siberian species-the New York Botanical Garden Library, where she is doing some of the research, is closed Sundays-but Irene hopes to get back to it during vacation.

So far nobody has called on the Pollen and Seed Supply Committee for help. But it might help Eleanor if you would send her a list of the species and named varieties you grow, so that if someone puts in a call for pollen of a specific plant she can pass it on to the nearest member who grows it: and if you have seed of species available this summer, or want some, she can match up supply with demand. As for Publications, Charlotte Withers and I would love it if more of you would volunteer varietal comments, letters to the Editors, etc. Particularly - let us know if you have opened your garden to the local garden public, and what response you had. I'm sure too, that many of you are hybridizing-did you have anything special in the way of seedlings? We do have (at last!) a Letter to the Editor this issue.

Best for the last: THE MORGAN AWARD HAS BEEN REACTIVATED!!! It is on this year's Judges' Ballot. Judge-members - don't forget to vote for it! There are eleven candidates. Only one can win.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

More About Two Heads

In the last issue of The Siberian Iris (Vol. 1, No.2) an article by Dr. McGarvey appeared entitled: "Are Two Heads Always Better Than One?", in which he stressed the need for establishing careful standards for judging Siberian irises and took to task those who might attempt to breed for extra petals. Having read and re-read the article I am prompted to write this comment, although in doing so I realize that Dr. McGarvey and I probably have much the same point of view. For example, I could not agree with him more that standards should be set for judging which exclude quite atypical and bizarre types - although I hope considerable flexibility would be permitted as regards variation in flower form. On the other hand I had the impression from reading Dr. McGarvey's article that he would discourage efforts to achieve basic differences; and this point of view I question. Efforts to induce changes in the number of petals do not appeal to me personally, but I believe endeavors of this sort should not be discouraged. It is even conceivable that some day double flowers might be good enough to warrant the establishment of a separate category in judging. Indeed, in the case of the daylily, another flower with parts ordinarily arranged in a pattern of three, some doubling has been induced, and no less a person than Dr. Stout was importantly concerned in that breeding line.

I am not, of course, writing this primarily in defense of four-petalled flowers, but have used the latter as an example merely because they were cited by Dr. McGarvey. What is important, I think, is the general principle that effort directed toward change can be a good thing so long as experimental forms are not allowed to confuse the issue as to what constitutes an acceptable flower at any given period. I agree whole-heartedly with Dr. McGarvey that the Society has an obligation now to review standards for the guidance of judges and hybridizers in their appraisal of Siberian irises to-day.

Dr. Currier McEwen

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- SLIDE CHAIRMAN APPOINTED -

As you have read in the President's Corner, we now have a Slide Chairman, Mrs. Elizabeth Rowe. By the time you receive your copy of The Siberian Iris, we will have put her to work at a joint meeting of the Sections at the American Iris Society Annual meeting in Kansas City. She is a very capable, energetic person and we all know she will be a very active Slide Chairman. So let's give her a helping hand by letting her know you are willing to cooperate and take an extra slide for our set of Siberian slides.

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Siberian Iris in Nelson, New Zealand

Lucy Delany

I. Sibirica seems to increase and bloom well in New Zealand. Here in Richmond with heavy loam and a gravel subsoil, I have grown the various members of this family for many years. All they appear to need is a fairly good soil and a plentiful supply of water during spring until flowering time. My two sons put in a well for me and found a good stream of water 10 feet down which has never failed yet, and is a real lifeline for these irises.

I grow sibirica varieties Blue King, Distinction and Dragon fly; sanguinea and the white variety Snow Queen; I. Clarkei (though there seems to be some difference of opinion as to which is the true Clarkei. Mine is a very lovely blue, but I haven't examined its stem.); I Delavayi and Mirza; I. Chrysographes and I. C. rubellum; I. Wilsonii which bloomed this year for the first time - more interesting than attractive to me; I. Forrestii is difficult. So far I have not been able to keep it alive, though I believe it flourishes in Southland which has shorter and cooler summers than we do. I hope to find it a cooler shaded position. * I also have I. prismatica, about 12", lavender blue, dainty bloom. There are also Delfor and Chrysofor plus two I imported from England - Nora Distin and Mandarin Purple.

Mr. Kitton of England very kindly sent me seed of Delavayii x Forrestii, Bluecape, and Wisley White; and from the British Iris Society seed exchange I had Mirza Citronella, chrysographes and var. rubellum, Eric the Red and Helen Astor. Seedlings of these last two flowered for the Convention of the New Zealand Iris Society last November and many people admired some rather attractive dwarf reds and rosy pinks.

Harrisons Ltd., nurserymen of Palmerston North have listed at various times Ahalya, Fairy Dawn, Crystal Charm, My Love, Tycoon, Royal Herald and ** Red Flare which appears very much like some of the rather dwarf seedlings of Eric the Red or Helen Astor. Red Flare has an attractive blue band on the fall which is missing from the seedlings.

Seedlings I have raised are all from self-set pods but I intend to mend my ways and try some serious hybridizing - though these seedlings have been varied and beautiful.

Dragonfly, a very pretty pale blue, gave no pale blues, a number of mid-blues which varied in form and marking; whites which would not open properly; three velvety wine reds (which unfortunately I neglected to mark, and now do not know which they are. However, if they have not died of neglect, they should be in a patch I have marked for next year. They were of course very small clumps) - and one very velvety deep blue, almost navy, which is rather flat with its petals completely overlapping. I think this one is beautiful. Strangely enough, from quite a respectable clump I collected one very small pod of seed with less than one dozen seed. I noticed that one or two 'flat' ones in the mid-blues did not set any seed either. Usually seed is produced prolifically without any help.

Caesar: from a pod which appeared to be a freak with a small extra "pocket" in one section of the pod; most of these were very deep blues, some completely blue, some purple-blue. Almost all had a peacock-blue flash on the falls. One I had selected was much admired by Mrs. Stevens. Another had an orchid-pink flash on the falls.

Sanguinea: my scanty notes say I had one good white from this pod, and there is one navy blue, another deep blue-black resembling Mirza in form, especially the fall markings.

Snow Queen: two or three powder blue with orchid pink style arms. I may have lost these.

Chrysographes rubellum: some very deep red-blacks with wide falls, gold markings. Unfortunately I had to move these at the wrong time and fear most did not survive.

Delavayii: one seedling, exactly like its parent.

Mirza: this gave a wide variety, from pale grey-blues with a white or yellow blaze on the falls, to some very attractive deep velvety blue-blacks with white or gold fall markings. One unusual lavender will not open. These are all strong growing and flower easily.

I do not know of any disease this iris is prone to. Drought seems to be its only enemy. An established clump is very difficult to deal with if it is to be shifted - usually requires an axe!!

At the Nelson Horticultural Society's Rose Show in November, there was a section for iris, among which was a class for three sibiricas. Hitherto I think the class was just for irises other than Tall Bearded. I will inquire further for my next letter, as to shows, and habits of sibiricas in other districts.

Editors Note: * I. prismatica is not usually classed as one of the Sibiricae; according to Garden Irises it is in its own Series Prismaticae.
** Could this be Towanda Redflare?

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Is your camera handy? Is your hand steady? Did you take an extra slide for our Siberian set of slides? Please do! We have a Slide Chairman, Betty Rowe, who is anxious and eager to hear from you and talk about slides. Don't forget-take an extra slide for our set of slides.

REMARKS ON HYBRIDIZING

Sarah Tiffney

There seems to be a fairly widespread idea that "Siberians pollinate themselves in the bud before they open and therefore it is difficult or impossible to make true crosses". After several seasons of crossing Siberians I can see no basis for this idea, and I think it must be one of those sayings that is passed around without being verified because it seems so reasonable, for in a planting of Siberians practically every flower will form a seed-pod. I think that these pods are the work of bees and not the result of self-pollination in the buds, for several reasons.

I have invariably found that when a Siberian flower opens, the anthers are still intact and closed; they do not open and expose the pollen until a little while afterwards, and their breaking open is caused by their drying after the petals open and expose them to the air. Sometimes in damp weather anthers of certain lavenders and whites do not open at all, and have to be forcibly split with something sharp to expose the pollen; this is true all the time in my garden of the beautiful White Swirl (even the anther walls have exceptional substance!) but once the pollen is dug out, it is effective. I have never opened a Siberian bud and found loose pollen in it unless an insect had been chewing around in it; this is always obvious and such buds should not be used for breeding. The remarks above are true for Siberian irises in our garden, but are not necessarily true for other types of irises. In the Japanese and the Louisianas, for instance, there is a different situation and problem, and possibly in other regions the Siberians may behave differently; the moral is to observe your own plants and conditions and act accordingly.

The chief pollinators in our garden in Siberian season are many happy busy bumblbees, although there are other smaller insects at work too. Most of the bumblebees have a standard systematic routine - they do not fly at random. A bee flies to a flower, lights on a fall, pushes down between haft and style to the nectary at the petal base, backs out again and goes to the next fall of the same flower and repeats, and then to the third fall. Then he goes to a neighboring flower in the same clump, works all three falls, then to another neighboring flower and so on. He works one clump quite thoroughly before moving to another clump, and this is the usual pattern. To me this means that most bee-seed is probably self-pollinated seed, and this would explain the statement that "seedlings from Siberian bee-pods look very much like their parents". Of course one could not depend on it in any one instance, for there is bound to be some mixing, but if I were trying to guess the pollen parent of a seedling, my first guess would be self-pollination unless its appearance indicated something very different.

My procedure in making crosses is to remove the falls and standards from a bud the day before it is going to open, leaving the styles exposed. I take out the unopened stamens and put them in little boxes in the house overnight to dry and open; this assures that their pollen will not be contaminated with pollen brought from other flowers by bees.

To make a cross I put dry pollen from one of the boxes on the exposed sigmas, and attach a tag. Pollen can be applied immediately after the bud is peeled, the next day, or even the next. I do not feel that it is necessary to bag the styles to protect them from chance pollination, although some people would disagree with me on this question. Although bees will come to the nectaries of the peeled flowers, they light on the stem below the nectaries and do not come near the stigmas. The removal of the stamens makes it unlikely that any walking insect would carry pollen to the stigmas. That leaves wind, and while wind-pollination is not impossible, it seems to me a remote danger. In any case,of the many buds I have peeled and left exposed and then failed for one reason or another to come back and pollinate, none has ever made a pod. Therefore I conclude that the method is reasonably dependable, and that Siberians do not pollinate themselves in the bud. One can make true crosses.

What crosses? Obviously, pick plants with good qualities and combine them (and hope that the good features will come through!). If a plant you want to breed has a fault, try to pick the other parent to counteract it. Color is obvious; substance, shape, proportion - in a word, quality - is more important than size. Give some thought to the characteristics of the plant as well as of the flowers. Remember that more branching means a longer period of bloom. Season of bloom tends to be inherited too, and extending it would be very desirable. Of course we cannot achieve everything at once; some improvements will have to come through several steps or generations.

Do not overlook the value of selfing flowers. This is the quickest way to begin to find out what is in them for breeding purposes, and it is especially important because, except for Bill McGarvey's fine job on Royal Ensign (in the October 1961 AIS Bulletin), we know very little about what is in any of the Siberians now. Or perhaps some of you have done some of this work but have not published the results - in that case, come on, communicate!

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FOR LITTLE ONES

Tiffany

If you are interested in breeding for dwarfs, there are several little Siberians available. Acuta, a soft blue with a particularly large white signal patch, has been around for a long time. Orientalis nana, a very short purple, has turned up in a local garden where rare things are cherished, and will be spread around when we can increase it. Perry's Pigmy is available from two or three sources now; one calls it blue, one purple - maybe there are two! Ben Hager's description in TSI of their newly acquired white Sibirica nana sounds wonderful. Lady Godiva so far in my garden has been very short and if it continues to maintain this height I would call it a dwarf. That makes at least three blue-purples, one white and one lavender to work with, and perhaps there are others around. Some will undoubtedly turn up among seedlings. In addition, one might use some of the shorter standard varieties, such as Snow Queen and Red Emperor. One might also cross dwarfs with talls and hope to recover the dwarf habit(assuming that it is recessive) in the second generation. If we could produce a series of little ones with the Siberians' good habits of vigor, hardiness, beautiful colors and free bloom, think how useful they would be - fun, too!

Status of Awards For Siberian Iris

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MORGAN AWARD:

Tycoon - 1951 (HM 1950)
Eric the Red - 1952 (AM 1946, HM 1944, HC 1943)
Caesar's Brother - 1953 (HM 1936)
Tropic Night - 1954 (HM 1951)

AWARD OF MERIT (Given before Morgan Award was instituted):

Helen Astor - 1942 (HM 1941)
Mountain Lake - 1944 (HM 1942)

All of these are'overage' to compete for the Dykes Medal.

HONORABLE MENTION (Now eligible for Morgan Award):

Blue Brilliant	HM 1961
Blue Moon	HM 1961
Cool Spring	HM 1951
Helen Astor	HM 1941
Martha LeGrand	HM 1936
Mountain Lake	HM 1942
Royal Ensign	HM 1953 & 1958
Silver Tip	HM 1961
Snowcrest	HM 1936
Violet Flare	HM 1961
White Swirl	HM 1957 — Mrs. Jan (2)

Remember - any Siberian which has been introduced to commerce prior to this year and has not been awarded HM is eligible for it now. Any Siberian which has not been introduced to commerce, whether registered or still officially under number, is eligible for H.C.

Members who are Judges accredited by AIS:

Baird, Mrs. Thew
Bergin, Mrs. Joe
Bahret, Mrs. C. A.
Brink, Mr. Paul
Brown, Mrs. Rex
Carlson, Mrs. W.W.
Cassebeer, Mr. F.W.
Chambers, Mrs. W.E.
Conroe, Dr. Irwin
Cosgrove, Mr. Clark
Craig, Mrs. Raymond
Decker, Mrs. Clyde
Douglas, Mr. Geddes (Honorary)
DuBose, Mr. Sid
Hillyer, Mrs. E. J.
Johnson, Mrs. M.R.
Johnston, Mrs. G. H.
Judd, Mrs. J. W.
Kanela, Mrs. Stephen
Knock, Mrs. H.E.
McClure, Mr. W.E.
McGarvey, Dr. W. G.
Nesbit, Mrs. Joe E.
Price, Mrs. John
Reath, Dr. D.L.
Sargo, Mrs. Sam
Shinkle, Mrs. B.I.
Tiffney, Mrs. W.N.

Edwards, Mrs. H. L.
Emery, Mrs. G. H.
Gatty, Mr. Joseph
Grapes, Miss Hazel
Gutekunst, Mrs.J. B.
Hager, Mr. Ben
Hale, Mrs. J. B.
Tolleson, Mrs. T. E.
Van de Water, Mrs. Carleton
Varner, Dr. D. S.
Warburton, Mrs. F.W.
Westmeyer, Mrs. Troy
Wilkie, Mrs. Harry
Rowe, Mrs. E. H.

Honorary Member Mr. Charles E. F. Gersdorff is an Honorary AIS Judge.

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ATTITIONAL "WHERE TO SEE SIBERIANS IN BLOOM"

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		How Many	Time
Indiana	Mrs. Cleora Detamore 122 North Main Street Andrews, Indiana	52 named & sdlgs.	New garden-see in year or two
New York	Dr. Currier McEwen Palisade Ave at 255th St. New York 71, N.Y.	16 Named Varieties About 150 sdlgs.	1st week in June
Ohio	Rainbow Gardens Robert E. Dallas R.R.1,Clarksville, Ohio	12-15 Siberians	Starting with Siberians but Dwarf & TB
	Timberline Gardens Mrs. H. S. Shinkle 3227 Old Salem Road Dayton 15, Ohio	About 40	Last wk in May
	Mrs. Harry Wilkie 302 North Main Bellbrook, Ohio	Twelve	May 28 - June 15
Utah	William E. McClure 155 36th Street Ogden, Utah	About 10 Siberians Onco -TB crosses and TB, others	Last 10 days in May(Please call & make arrangements)

Please refer to previous lists of gardens where Siberian iris are in bloom. Take an iris growing friend along on your visit to any of these gardens. If you know of any gardens not listed in The Siberian Iris, please let the Editors know. Help us to publicize these lovely irises.

Proposed Research Projects

Sherman Preece

I think members of our Society are interested in Siberian irises primarily from the following points of view: classification, ecology, breeding and propagation. Under these headings there are many projects which might be suggested. Many of these have already been mentioned. Here are a few ideas for your consideration.

I. Classification:

1. Research concerning the proper identification of the horticultural varieties. The programs suggested previously involved detailed descriptions of clones from various sources, and color slides of various clones. This sort of project will require the help of many individuals, but could result in useful standardized information.

2. Research concerning the proper identification and description of the species within the section Sibiricae. Some aspects of this have already been suggested along with a list of seed sources. If some of us could grow and study all species of the section which are available much information could be gathered which would be of interest to others and which would be useful for future projects in breeding programs, etc. Perhaps some lucky individual might even arrange a collecting trip to Europe or Asia.

3. Of a more technical nature, research of the monographic type could be carried out with studies of herbarium specimens, living plants including chromosome counts, and hybridization. Along with this there could be nomenclatural studies involving the proper names to be applied, list of synonyms, etc.

II. Ecology and Culture:

1. Some of Peggy Edwards' suggestions would go here:
   a. growing and reporting on irises in various parts of the country.
   b. varying the soil types
   c. varying the light conditions
   d. varying the amount of moisture in soil and air
   e. varying the type of fertilizer

2. Investigation of diseases, pests and their controls.

III. Breeding - (Hybridization)

1. An elementary article on techniques could help in this area.

2. Projects involving particular crosses, both intro- and interspecific, could be most rewarding in the formation of new types. I am really not familiar enough with certain aspects of the section to suggest particular crosses.

3. Again somewhat more technical but worthwhile would be the counting and study of chromosomes as background.

4. The use of colchicine or other materials for inducing polyploidy might be worth while if somewhat tricky.

IV. Propagation:

1. Studies involving seed collection, storing, treatment and germination could be useful to all of us. Embryo culture might also fit in here.

2. Pollen studies involving fertility of various clones, length of viability, storage methods, etc. could also yield valuable information. Perhaps some exchange plan could develop.

3. Studies on vegetable propagation and culture, including seasonal aspects, storage and transportation, etc., would be of interest not only to the grower but to the buyer as well.

4. I'm personally less enthusiastic about growth substances, etc. for our Society, but this may not reflect the interests of the group.

(Sherman says he is a teacher of Botany and Biology at Montana State University with special interests in plant taxonomy. Says he is a relative novice at Siberian Irises and at Iris breeding in general and would welcome an elementary article with diagrams telling how to make iris crosses with some detail of techniques. (Ed.)

Okay, kids, line forms on the right. What projects are you going to take on? I'm sure the Research Chairman, Dr. Irene Van De Water, would love to have a letter from every member volunteering to take on some one or more of the above suggested jobs. Please don't all volunteer for the collecting trips! Seriously, each of us has a stake in the success of our research program. It is from projects such as those suggested above that will come the finer Siberians we all hope for, and the improved techniques in growing them that will make them still easier to grow to perfection in our gardens. But if we want these improvements we must, each of us, do what we can to help the program along. There are 12 major lines of work in Sherman's article, with various subdivisions, and 8 of the 12 are well within the capacity of people with no technical training in Botany. For example, project I-1 can be done by someone with a tape measure or yardstick and a standard color chart- or a slide camera - or both. II-1 could be done by people who can divide a clump and plant the parts in different parts of the garden, or using half a dozen different fertilizers (of different formulas, that is). Not that any one person would be doing the whole job on one project; II-1 should be spread out among members in all parts of the U.S. and Canada. II-1-a would require that one clone be divided and sent to all members working on it, or perhaps that members who have purchased the same variety from the same source all work with that variety. But you don't

need to be a botanist to keep track of how you handled your division of THE PLANT. We will have in the fall issue an article on the technique of hybridizing Siberians, if you like - there wasn't time to get one for this issue. But meanwhile, those of us who know how might lay out for ourselfes a set of crosses we will work on - and follow up, because sometimes the desired information doesn't turn up in the first generation. Here are some specific suggestions for crosses:

1. a white selfed (any colored seedlings?)
2. two whites crossed (ditto)
3. a dark violet selfed (do the seedlings vary from the parent color? How?)
4. a white crossed with a dark violet(color range of 1st & 2nd generation)
5. a branched variety selfed (branching in 1st and 2nd generation)
6. a red-spathed variety selfed(percentage of red-spathed offspring)

If you have some of the 40 chromosome species:

7. chrysographes selfed (same plant!) (variations of color and pattern; variations in vigor and growth habits)
8. two clones of chrysographes crossed (which characteristic dominates?) (does darker color dominate? veining dominate over self-color? etc)
9. delavayi self (variations?)
10. Chrysofor selfed (variations?)
11. two clones Chrysofor crossed (which characters dominate?)
12. forrestii x delavayi (how much of the yellow characteristics
13. forrestii x chrysographes (came through in the 1st generation of (these crosses?)
14. any 40 chromosome species or variety x any 28 chr. species or variety - (are any of the offspring fertile?)
15. YOU think up some more!

In making crosses for research it is not enough to look over the resultant blooms and describe the best of them; you should make careful notes on all of them from the time the first seedling comes up-even sooner: count the number of seeds from each pod! After germination, note which type germinates earliest; which has the highest percentage of germination-and which the lowest; in fact, note dates and numbers on any crosses you make. Make notes of first bloom on each plant, size, shape, color, habit of growth-anything you can think of! I suppose ideally one should plant each seed in its own widdy biddy pot, carefully numbered, so no mixups could happen, but if any of you are like me you'd manage to get the labels mixed somewhere along the line, or one of the neighbors' kids would do it for you. So we won't ask for THAT much perfection. But don't take on too many projects, or you will just about have to neglect some--after all, there is the day's work to do, and the rest of the garden to take care of, and you need a little social life! But running two or three of these hybridizing projects can be a great deal of fun, besides being useful; when the seedlings begin to make flower stalks it even takes on the characteristic of a good suspense story. Or a soap opera, with a new installment each day - will seedling #1 be taller than her mama? Is #6 going to have two branches like its father? Does the creamy look on bud #14 indicate that it will be a YELLOW? Run out in the garden TOMORROW, before breakfast!

But be sure to bring your tape measure and notebook!

Peg E.

GENERAL SOURCES FOR SIBERIANS IN THE UNITED STATES

* * *

PLANTS:

Brown's Iris Gardens	14920 Highway 99, Lynnwood, Wash.
Chautauqua Flowerfield	Greenhurst, New York
Edenwald Gardens	Vincennes, Indiana (Closing out Sib.)
Englerth Gardens	4652 Division Ave S, Grand Rapids 8,Mich.
Fairmount Gardens	166 Fairmount St.,Lowell, Mass.(Cat.20¢)
Franklin Gardens	Big Springs, Nebraska (Catalog 10¢)
Mrs. Herman E. Knock	Rte 2, Box 185A,Sioux Falls, S. Dak.
Lamb Nurseries	East 101 Sharp Ave., Spokane 2, Wash.
Mrs. Lois McInnis	9451 Jefferson Highway, Baton Rouge,La.
Melrose Gardens	Route 1, Box 466, Stockton, Calif.
Patricks Garden	717 North G St., Muskogee, Okla.
Shoemaker's Gardens	8134 W 78th St., Overland Park, Kan.
Walter Marx Gardens	Boring, Oregon (Catalog 50¢)

(If you have purchased or know of other sources PLEASE, PLEASE drop a card with the information on it to your secretary. If you are a source of Siberians we will be glad to list your name in our publication.)

SEEDS:

Pearce Seed Company, Moorestown, New Jersey (Also some plants)

Thompson and Morgan, Ltd., Ipswich, England (Send a U.S. quarter, 25¢, for catalogue)

Mr. Gale Whitsett, 2327 Kemper, Cincinnati, Ohio

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LET'S HAVE SIBERIAN IRISES FOR CHRISTMAS!

Does that title sound unreasonable? Well, it isn't. You CAN have iris, roses, or any of your lovely garden flowers in arrangements all year around and simple too. I have discovered an easy, clean, convenient way to preserve my favorite garden posies for use in wintertime bouquets.

For years I have messed around with washed sand, corn meal and borax and various other types of materials recommended as "perfect for drying garden materials". You were usually very disappointed with the results for the color did not come through the process -that is - red became too dark and pastel shades faded away completely. Well, all that is a thing of the past. Here is a report on my experiences during last summer and fall. Please note that the flowers I used are those generally found in everybody's garden.

Davidson Silica Gel FLOWER-DRI is a ready to use formula for drying and preserving flowers. It is distributed by Plantabbs Corp., of Baltimore, Maryland and can be purchased in one and five pound cans. It is a mixture of blue and white material about the consistancy of fine sugar. When the blue particles turn white the silica gel has absorbed as much moisture as it can and you have to regenerate it by placing it in a cookie tin or other open pan. Heat it in the oven at 250° until the blue coloring returns.

Steps in drying flowers are as follows:

1. Select a can which can be sealed (such as a coffee can) pour FLOWER - DRI into the can-about 2" deep, insert short stemmed flowers, face up. Space them so they aren't touching.

2. Sprinkle FLOWER-DRI over flowers until completely covered, gently working it up and around the flowers so shape is retained and petals are in contact with FLOWER-DRI.

3. Cover can or container with a tight lid and seal with freezer or masking tape. Put it away for one week-in a place where it will not be disturbed. (I used F-Dri to cure an artichoke for a winter bouquet and it took longer-you can always check)

4. When ready to remove the flowers, pour off the mixture slowly until they are uncovered. Lift out gently and blow away any particles that cling to the flowers or you can dust them off with a soft artist's paint brush.

5. To make stems, insert a length of medium weight florists wire into the short flower stem and fasten it with a small piece of masking tape or freezer tape.

6. Cover the wire by spiral-wrapping it with green floral tape and the flower is ready for arranging and for many decorating uses.

When I first used FLOWER-DRI I used Iceland poppies, pansies and the baby violas. Then as the other flowers started to bloom they too were given the silica gel treatment. Among these were larkspur (which I tried drying by laying them lengthwise in a box), delphinium (I took the lower, large blossoms off the main stem and later re-wired them on to it) perennial scabiosa, calendulas, asters(Heart of France did become darker red), climatis, marigolds (Persian and French were very satisfactory). In fact, in my living room right now sits a small arrangement of orange and yellow violas which I have enjoyed many months. An arrangement of Red Pinoccio roses was shown at our fall flower show and many comments were made about how well they had held their red color.

I said earlier in this article that artichokes could be dried and used in winter bouquets. It does take longer to dry them but the result in my case was worth the effort. It turned a lovely deep tan shade and was used with corn-shuck roses and dried pods of various types.

Now you know how to go about it--why don't you invest in a can of FLOWER-DRI and try it out on some of your favorite iris. I have also seen advertisements in the recent garden magazines telling of a new product called PERMA-DIP for the use of those who wish to preserve foliage instead of using the old method of water and glycerin. Really, there is no excuse for not having beautiful arrangements of flowers all year around. Wouldn't you like to have an arrangement of your lovely Siberian iris for -yes - Christmas!

Of course, if you are a venturesome person - how about embedding your flowers in liquid plastic - Castolite or some other form of fluid plastic? Oh well, we will save that adventure for another lesson and I am sure you will eventually try that too.

Charlotte Withers

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Be sure to visit as many gardens where there are Siberians growing as you can. We are sure there are some lovely ones in your area.