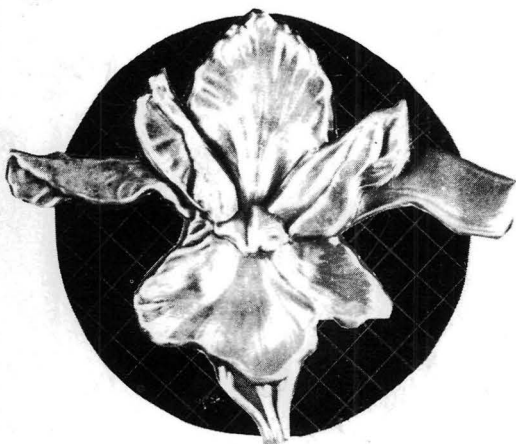


*The
Siberian
Iris*



*Volume 6
Number 7
Spring 1988*

THE SIBERIAN IRIS

VOLUME 6, NUMBER 7

SPRING 1988

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Write the Treasurer about Life Membership.
Membership is open to all AIS members in Canada and the United States, and to all iris fanciers elsewhere.

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**FROM THE
PRESIDENT'S
DESK**

This letter will of necessity be brief! After thirty two years in government service as an electrical engineer, I am retiring and taking a position with Loral Electronic systems in Yonkers New York. As of now I have started in my new position but we are still busy apartment hunting, which is very time consuming.

I do want to thank the North East Apogen Society for their generous donation to SSI, part of the proceeds from their fall auction. They have been faithful supporters of SSI for many years and we appreciate both the monetary support and their commitment to furthering the popularity of Siberians through their auctions. Please consider a gift of plants for this year's auction (see details p. 24).

This is the last TSI letter I shall be writing as your president. In May, Anna Mae Miller will take over and I wish her well.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank the Officers and Directors of SSI for all their work and cooperation. Our membership continues to grow and I think the Society is on solid ground.

Finally I would like to thank you all for the privilege of serving as your president for the last two years.

Jim Foreman

TREASURER'S REPORT 1988

On hand checking account.....1637.27

INCOME

Dues income	832.88
Book sales	666.79
Advertising revenue	30.00
Misc. income	116.00
N.E. Apogen Auction	125.00
Interest	383.83

Total income.....2140.50

\$3791.77

EXPENSES

Printing etc. (3).	1013.36
Postage	389.80
Typing	5.20
Envelopes	31.47
Misc. bulletin expense	83.75
Deposit box rent	5.00

Total expenses.....1528.58

On hand, checking account.....2263.19

\$3791.77

On hand (certificates of deposit) \$6000.00

Submitted by Gunther Stark

PUBLICATIONS

All back issues are \$1.50 each if available. We no longer have copies of some of the early issues. Judging Standards should be ordered from the AIS. Checks for all publications, payable to the Society for Siberian Iris, should accompany orders. Send to the Publication Office, Mrs. Ruth Wilder, 802, Camellia Rd., Anderson SC 29621.

CULTURE

A major portion of this issue is being devoted to the culture of Siberian irises, as there have been several requests for more information on growing, planting, dividing etc.. After some discussion it was decided to print a simplified culture sheet which beginners will find useful, and that local iris societies can copy and make available at their shows and auctions. That is the reason for the inclusion of the last three paragraphs which are of course unnecessary for SSI members.

Following this is a grower's robin. Experienced growers were sent a copy of the culture sheet and asked to comment on it, and add anything that they felt important to the culture of Siberians in their area of the country. I tried to have someone respond from each USDA zone in which Siberians are grown, so that local societies could adapt the original sheet by adding or changing information as it applies to their part of the country.

My thanks to John Coble for his help with this project. He put together the culture sheet which is applicable in certain particulars to his garden in Zone 5, but covers a good deal of general cultural information.

SIBERIAN IRIS CULTURE

Siberian irises are among the easiest of all types of iris to raise and bloom in the temperate climatic zones. Their graceful stems, blooms, foliage, and neat habit of growth make them the most adaptable irises for the perennial border and for landscaping. Their handsome foliage is attractive all year, even after the first frost when it turns rusty red-brown.

HISTORY: Our garden varieties of Siberian irises come to us, through hybridizers, from two species I. siberica and I. sanguinea which are primarily found in Central Europe and Asia. There they evolved in the rich soils of grassy meadows: very moist in spring, from flooding streams and mountain snow melts; moistened by summer rain on a deep prairie-type soil; and provided with a natural mulch of old foliage and dead grasses which kept them from drying out.

SOIL: Your Siberian irises will perform best for you if you can provide a rich soil, with some composted organic matter if necessary, that will retain some moisture during dry periods and will also help you attain the mildly acid pH of 6.5-7.0, which they prefer. Most garden soils though are satisfactory "as is", for good Siberian performance.

FERTILIZER: This depends on your own soil type and its natural fertility. The plants will respond better with an early spring application of a fertilizer higher in nitrogen, followed by an additional feeding of a balanced fertilizer just at the end of the bloom season. This is when they are maturing new increase fans and rhizomes.

SUN and MOISTURE: Siberian irises are very adaptable and hardy plants. They like lots of moisture in the spring, and can survive dry periods in the late summer months, but will be healthier plants and develop into specimen clumps faster if kept moist all summer. Try to plant them with other perennials that you normally irrigate during dry periods in July and August. They love full sun (especially in the northern states), but will grow in light high shade.

MULCH: A mulch of organic matter will benefit the plants in summer by conserving soil moisture and keeping the soil cooler. The mulch is also beneficial in keeping down most weeds. Siberians are very hardy, but a mulch applied after the ground is frozen, helps prevent the heaving and thawing which is responsible for the loss of many perennials over winter.

PESTS: Siberians are more resistant to disease than most other garden irises. They are, however, not immune to the iris borer. If this is a pest in your area, a systemic insecticide spray is necessary for control. Two applications of Cygon 2E or Orthene are recommended in the spring. The first, after the first few days of 70 degrees F., when the new fans are 3-4" tall, and the second spray when the fans are 6-8" tall.

TRANSPLANTING and DIVIDING: Opinions differ on this subject, and your local climate and gardening practices will influence your preferred time for transplanting, as well as other cultural

suggestions made here. A recommended time for digging and dividing older clumps is right after bloom. At this time new root growth is still active. However, keeping transplants moist for the following 6-8 weeks is most important for successful establishment, and hot dry weather may decrease survival; so this approach may work best in the cooler, wetter parts of the country. If watering is not always possible at this time, you may prefer early September transplanting when fall rains are somewhat more predictable and the sun's rays less intense. Others have found that early spring transplanting as new growth is evident can also be effective. The late spring transplants, if properly cared for will produce more vigorous plants for the next year. Two to four fan divisions are recommended for transplanting, and the roots must be kept moist whilst the plants are out of the ground. Plant the rhizomes one inch deep (slightly deeper in sandy soils). Siberian clumps can grow undisturbed for several years, dividing being necessary when either the clumps become crowded, or when vigor declines and blooms get smaller.

Siberian irises normally bloom at the end of the Tall Bearded season, 24-34" tall, with foliage that continues to grow after bloom until 36-40" tall. Some varieties are available that bloom around 10-12" tall with neat foliage clumps around 14-16" tall by summer. Hybridizers have produced a palette of colors from purples and blues to white, pink-lavenders and creamy yellows. Bitones and special color patterns of sharp contrast offer great diversity when choosing Siberian irises for special plantings and landscaping. Some varieties have silvery-blue foliage, some a fresh green, that is most attractive all summer in perennial borders.

Members of your local iris society can answer many of your questions and suggest sources for Siberian irises.

Excellent reading on Siberian iris culture, cultivars, and hybridizing can be found in the semi-annual publication THE SIBERIAN IRIS, published by The Society for Siberian Iris, an affiliate of the American Iris Society. An annual subscription is \$2.50 from the treasurer, Mr. Gunther Stark, 631, G24 Highway, Norwalk, Iowa 50211, and from the book "Siberian Irises" also published by the society and available postpaid for \$7.00 from Mr. Julius Wadekamper, 15974 Canby Ave., Rt.4, Faribault, MN 55021.

REGIONAL COMMENTS

FROM CLARENCE MAHAN, McLEAN, VIRGINIA

With regard to the history of Siberian irises, Brian Mathew points out in his excellent book, "The Iris" (Batsford, London. 1981), the Sibiricae are all Asiatic plants. Although the range of I. siberica extends from Central Europe to Central Asia, I. sanguinea is native only to Asia. The range of the latter species extends from Lake Baikal in the western USSR. to Manchuria, Korea and Japan. In fact, some of the earliest forms of I. sanguinea introduced into American and European gardens, and subsequently used in hybridizing garden varieties were clones collected in Japan. One of the earliest and loveliest of such irises is one many of us still grow, SNOW QUEEN, which was collected in Japan and introduced to commerce by Peter Barr in 1900.

FERTILIZATION: The recommendation that Siberian irises be given an early spring application of a high nitrogen fertilizer came as a surprise to me. I have not heard of this practice before and would be wary of it. I have sprayed Siberian irises in spring with liquid 20-20-20 fertilizer in dilute form, and they responded very well; but it would be my suspicion that more than very light applications of high nitrogen fertilizer would stimulate vegetative growth at the expense of bloom. Recommending application of high nitrogen fertilizer to beginners would thus cause me some concern.

PESTS: My garden in Virginia is certainly exposed to the infamous iris borer. Growing over a thousand different cultivars, the 'ol borer has my address. Even when I am diligent and put on three applications of Cygon 2E in the spring, a few borers will be found when summer comes around. But I have never found borers or borer damage on a Siberian iris. Even more than the bearded irises, the borer likes Spurias and Louisianas. It has attacked I. pseudacorus in the pond, the Japanese irises, and just about every other type of iris. I point this out because to me it is one of the great assets of Siberian irises

TRANSPLANTING AND DIVIDING: This portion of the article causes me more than a small amount of concern. Whereas it does not contain any

information that is not true, I really think it could lead to beginners having problems. I will not give or sell Siberian irises before September to people who are not experienced growers. Recommending that digging and dividing be done right after bloom will I fear, be disastrous in many instances. In this southern Mid-Atlantic area, transplanting at any time in the spring and summer requires shading and massive watering to be successful. I strongly recommend the article emphasize early fall planting as the preferred practice, and suggest transplanting at other times be tried only by those who are experienced Siberian growers.

FROM HARRY KUESEL, LITTLETON, COLORADO

SOIL: I believe what you have said would work fine for my former home on Long Island where we had plenty of rain, and acid soil, but will need some ammendments for the high plains around Denver where I have been growing Siberians since 1971. When I moved here, Dr. Carl J.C. Jorgensen, Professor of Horticulture at Colorado State University told me this was Siberian never never land, because our soil is naturally alkaline and our water is also alkaline, so even if the soil is ammended to become slightly acid which Siberians prefer, it needs to be checked every year or two to be sure the soil has not returned to its original state. For soil I have gone up into the Rocky Mountains, 50 miles west of Denver, and dug out some basic acid soil found in the pine and spruce forests (Ph 5.5). If that is not available get some western forest mulch, some Canadian or Michigan peatmoss and mix with soil at the rate of 1/3, 1/3, and 1/3. Plant in a low spot that naturally collects moisture.

FERTILIZATION: For fertilizer I use cow manure in the spring and I use Stern's MIRACID liquid fertilizer in a watering can about once a month after growth starts. Adolph Voght told me not to use commercial fertilizer (chemical type) for Japanese irises and I think this also applies to Siberians.

SUN AND MOISTURE: I recommend watering once a week if no natural rain has occurred. The early spring is our normal rainy season in Colorado, we

often have no rain from about June 10th until early October and sometimes even November except for some sporadic thundershowers. These often come so fast and disappear just as rapidly causing lots of run off on the dry parched earth, and not much moisture absorption. I have found that open shade on the north side of the house or from tall trees will prolong the bloom and full sun is not necessary.

MULCH: I agree with the comments about mulch but recommend a forest (shredded bark) type to keep up the soil acidity.

TRANSPLANTING: I prefer early spring planting but if that is not possible the Pot Culture recommended by George Slade in the Fall '87 TSI is needed to get good root development. Keep the pots watered well all summer and transplant in late September. Be sure to water at least once a week until the normal rains come. Double spring transplants are not satisfactory unless the roots are built up by pot culture. Four fan divisions are recommended here.

FROM MARIE CAILLET, NORTH CENTRAL TEXAS:

Siberian irises are grown by only a few gardeners in Texas, except for those living in the colder areas like the Texas Panhandle or the wetter and more acid areas of East Texas. The very old CAESAR'S BROTHER though grows for everyone everywhere!

SOIL: Part of the growing problem is the alkaline soil in much of the state. Another is the very hot, dry summers and falls. Both problems can be regulated by acidifying the soil, use of quantities of compost and mulch, and by frequent watering. Partial shade for mid-day in summer is also a help. I plant many in with daylilies, which also need water and whose foliage also shades the Siberian rhizomes.

DIVIDING AND TRANSPLANTING: This only works well in September and October and requires constant watering, but moving a clump undivided and with soil attached, can be done just before and after bloom in the spring.

PESTS: I do not have borers, but do have problems with cutworms cutting off bloom stalks and eating through the buds. The greatest pests are those digging up the plants for grubs; moles that leave air pockets, and armadillos that root the whole plant out of the ground. Large, well established clumps are seldom disturbed, but both pests like the damp, loose soil and mulch in the Siberian beds ---- so do the grubs!

FROM DON SAXTON, HUNTSVILLE, ALABAMA.

SOIL: Over the last ten years of AIS conventions, probably 50% grew Siberians poorly. This suggests to me that most garden soils are probably not satisfactory for good Siberian performance. Most of the tour gardens belonged to experienced iris growers, whom one would expect to give them good care. I suspect that most garden soils could be readily modified to give good performance.

MOISTURE: I agree wholeheartedly on the need for lots of moisture in the spring. My biggest problem is to remember to water them in winter. I tend to ignore rainfall amounts during this season because it's not pleasant to be outside, and it is getting dark when I get home from work. Besides when it rains 55" a year it shouldn't ever dry out---right? Wrong! Summer droughts are obvious, but not so in winter. I can really tell the difference in spring growth if I have not watered, even if we have received average rainfall.

MULCHING: You recommend summer and winter mulching, what about in between? I mulch them year around for all the same reasons using pine straw.

DISEASES: Orthene has caused me some problems with tall bearded irises. I haven't noticed these problems in Siberians, but others have mentioned them.

DIVIDING AND TRANSPLANTING: Here you didn't discuss the method of dividing. I'd like to know if anyone has a good way to separate a large clump other than cutting it up with a shovel.* Maybe this is only a problem for those of us with heavy clay soils. We in this region have always been told to divide beardless irises only in the fall. I have followed this practice, mostly because it is the

best time for me. In 1937, I dug all the clumps in late October to share with the new Botanical Garden. I put them in large garbage bags, added some water, and set them under a tree while I reworked the bed (which took a couple of weeks). The clumps were cut apart with a sharp shovel and a six inch diameter piece replanted. We'll see the results come spring.

* Barney Hobbs showed me an excellent way to divide established clumps. You need two people and two forks, invest in good quality ones, (the forks, any willing person is fine!), my dime store fork was no match for the large clumps especially the tets. After deciding where you want your first division, place the forks back to back along this line, and pry the clump apart by pulling in opposite directions. It really works well, and the forks cause less injury as they separate the rhizomes, unlike the spade which chops them up.

Ed.

FROM MARJORIE JANSEN, NEBRASKA.

Water is probably the most critical element in establishing Siberians in Nebraska. They can be successfully planted either spring or fall as long as their moisture requirements are met. When new plants arrive, I unwrap them and place them in a pail with a one-half strength solution (2Tbs to 1 gal. of water) of Ortho Up-Start with vitamin B-1. Vitamin B-1 is supposed to promote root development. I leave them to soak over night and plant the next day, using the Up-Start solution along with additional water to water them in; keep them watered for the rest of the season for spring planted, and until the ground freezes for fall planted. Mulch around newly planted plants is helpful in retaining moisture.

Alternate freezing and thawing cycles and long periods with no snow cover characterize Nebraska winters. Such conditions usually make winter mulching a must. However my established Siberians survive such winters without mulch and suffer no ill effects. I have even cut off their foliage at ground level in the fall and left them unmulched over winter. This practice speeds spring cleanup, when old foliage must be cut before new shoots start growing up through it. New plantings are usually mulched with discarded Christmas tree branches. When spring comes, these are pushed away

from the plants, remaining around them until the needles fall off for whatever value they may have in lowering the soil Ph.

A severe invasion of cutworms during bloom season a few years ago is the only pest problem of any consequence I've experienced with Siberians. Neat round holes appear in buds and blossoms. Damage progressed rapidly until flowers and buds were shredded. The elusive culprit responsible for this devastation remained a mystery until a friend pulled apart a damaged blossom revealing a fat cutworm hidden in the stem. Normally I avoid using poisonous substances, but this was a drastic situation, calling for drastic action. I marched to the local garden center and came away with a bottle of Orthene. After reading the dire warnings on the label, it was two days before I worked up enough courage to use it. The spray took care of the cutworms, but ruined the open flowers and buds showing color. Ideally it should be used as a preventive before the bloom season when the plants are 4-8" tall. I've never used it since. Fortunately the cutworms have not staged a repeat performance. Does anyone have an organic method for dealing with them?

FROM SHIRLEY POPE, GORHAM, MAINE:

I think the article is very well written. My only comments would be these: I use a lot of peat moss in the soil and a handful of moist peat in the hole when I plant. Where my soil is sandy I use Miracid foliage feedings several times during the growing season; twice in the spring, just before bloom, just after bloom and again in early September. My frequent waterings would wash away any regular feeding. Pine needle mulch left on all the year round not only protects the plants during our sometimes open (no snow) winters, but also controls weeds and retains moisture.

A few light sprinkles of cornmeal for cutworms and wood ashes for slugs seems to work well. We seem to have more than one family of borers so we carefully spray more frequently with a systemic to control them, and also spider mites.

FROM LARRY HARDER, NEBRASKA.

TRANSPLANTING: I do tend to plant down to single rhizomes when I replant or plant a new

Siberian. It's easier to get A single rhizome properly packed and settled than a small clump. I have also found that I don't lose new varieties as readily, of the several divisions trying to establish themselves I might lose one but never them all.

When I was planting whole clumps I always seemed to lose some over the winter.

I plant them at ground level, just barely covered with soil. Usually never any deeper that they were originally growing, you can tell where the soil line is on them.

DISEASES: I have found that I can get scorch in my Siberians. I have lost several varieties to it. One rarity lost was my entire collection of Sibirica acuta nana.

FROM BEN HAGER, STOCKTON, CALIFORNIA.

SOIL: Nearly all areas of low rainfall (15" or under) will have alkaline soil with the possible exception of red soils which are usually high in iron and that usually indicates acidity.

A good proportion of the continental USA has such alkaline soil. Siberian irises are not happy with these conditions but the problem is easily rectified by the addition of plenty of humus and soil sulphur. Add the sulphur to the soil at a rate of 1lb/100 sq. ft., and incorporate it thoroughly. Use of a rotary tiller is best but it can be done with a shovel, hoe or rake with diligence. It is then necessary to keep the acidity actively present. More frequent transplanting is usually necessary. Dig off a small division from each clump at two year intervals and transplant into newly worked beds, so that when the older clump shows evidence of decline the new clump will be going strong. Fertilize clumps of two years or older with acid fertilizer, spray or drench the clumps in the spring with iron chelates (or whenever they show yellowing of the leaves), and/or mulch heavily with pine needles, oak leaves, or other material that has an acid reaction, and keep the mulch in place around the Siberian clumps.

DISEASE: There is a condition of Siberian irises that is not new but is becoming more prevalent. An established clump suddenly turns bright russet brown and dies. This appears right after the

bloom period most commonly. Recent experiments show promise of a new product on the market, SUBDUE, being effective in preventing this (probable) disease. Soaking the plants in a label expounded solution seems to prevent the prevalence of the condition the next spring. WARNING: do not use too strong a solution, or leave the plants in the dip longer than about one hour. The recommended dosage is around 5-6 DROPS / gal. water. To get an accurate measurement use a glass eye-dropper with a rubber press bulb. The treatment is probably only effective the first season and experiments with clump treatments have not been in progress long enough for sure recommendations to be made, but it is possible that clumps can be treated in the following manner. Use one gallon of solution to each clump and drench the clump with it two or three times during the season for plants that are beginning to show the effects of the disease: general lack of vigor, leaf tips dying back or looking withered. It might also be advantageous to treat all clumps once a year with this treatment immediately after bloom, but only if this condition is a problem in your garden. Make a barrier around the clump so that the solution goes down and not out from the plant. A ridge of packed earth should work, or a five gallon can turned upside down and pressed into the soil. Punch a hole in the bottom (now the top) of the can through which to pour the SUBDUE solution.

If nematodes are a problem, soaking the plants in a Cygon 2E solution before planting has shown good results although there is no guarantee that it will be 100% effective. Root knot nematodes are prevalent in areas where the soil does not freeze deeply in the winter. Lesion nematodes can be found almost anywhere in the world and can be the cause of slow deterioration of the plants when the infestation is severe in warmer climates.

TRANSPLANTING: Spring and after bloom transplanting is not as successful in dry areas of high summer temperatures. It is best accomplished from early September through January or February in areas with mild winters. But don't expect commercial growers from these areas to ship plants later than the fall months, or to colder areas in the spring. Spring shipments to colder parts are not possible because the plants are too far along in their growth due to the earlier spring weather in the mild areas.

SUN AND MOISTURE: In areas with low rainfall, Siberians must be irrigated regularly, keeping the plants quite moist from early spring until about six weeks past bloom. After this period, irrigate regularly at least every three weeks during the entire summer. This is a regular procedure with most plants in these areas, so it is no great additional labor for the Siberian grower.

This all may sound like a lot of extra work for gardeners in areas without summer rainfall and soils that are not naturally acid, but actually when given the few and easily applied demands, the Siberian iris can be as magnificent here as anywhere.

1987 AWARD OF MERIT
WINNERS

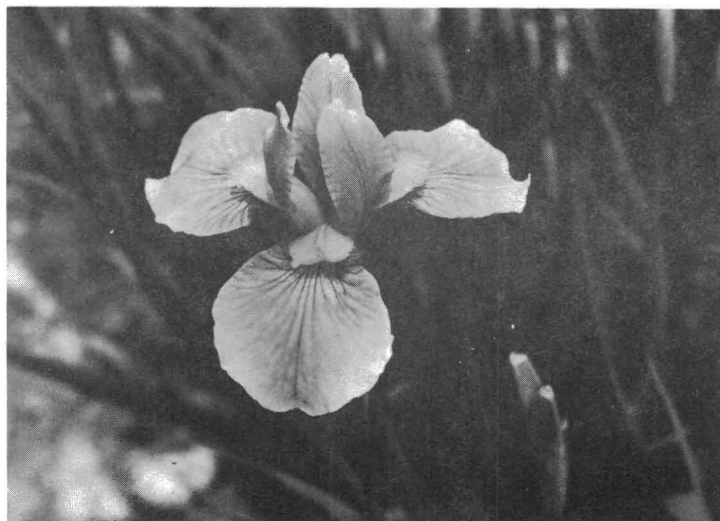


Omar's Cup, (Hager 1982). Photo: Ben Hager



DANCE
BALLERINA
DANCE
(Varner, 1982)
Photo:
Jim Foreman

Below:
HARBOR MIST
(Waite, 1983).
Photo: Ken Waite



1987 REGISTRATIONS AND INTRODUCTIONS

-A-

ADELIA GALAS (F. Galas, R. 1987). Sdlg. T4W-87. SIB (56 chrom.tetraploid). 32" (81cm), E. Lightly ruffled white, small yellow signal; slight sweet fragrance. White sdlg. X self.

ALMOST A MELODY (A. Miller, R. 1987). Sdlg. 78-11-6. SIB, 23" (58cm), ML. S. medium purple; F. velvety purple (darker than RHS 91C), edged a little lighter, medium purple signal. Dreaming Spires X Ruffled Velvet.

AQUA WHISPERS (A. Miller, R. 1987). Sdlg. 80-3-7. SIB, 36" (91cm), M. S. white, lavender at base; F. lavender (RHS 76A/E), veined violet-blue (91A) fine white edge, white-blue signal. 78-20-47: (Pink Haze x unknown) X Temper Tantrum.

-B-

BISHOP'S PAWN (Dale Johnson, SIB, R. 1986). Johnson Iris 1987.

BLUE HYACINTH (G. Bush, R. 1987). Sdlg. 1B-83-101. SIB, 15" (28cm). VVE. Lavender blue, bronze hafts, white signal. Un-numbered seedlings.

-C-

CATHY CHILDERSON (Dale Johnson, R. 1987). Sdlg. S-42. SIB (diploid), 29" (74cm), M. S. gentian blue (RHS 94D), veined bluebird blue (94B) in center; light blue (97C) styles with hint of turquoise on rib; F. bluebird blue (94B) with darker (94A) heavy overlay and veining. Silver Illusion X blue sdlg.

COOLABAH (B. Blyth, R. 1987). Sdlg. S255-1. SIB. 50" (130 cm), E-M. S. wine-rose; F. wine-rose, lighter area at top, green-brown throat, pure white signal; ruffled. Illini Charm X Thespian.

BALLOT FOR S.S.I. MEMBERS' FAVORITE 15 SIBERIAN
IRISES OF 1988

(Growing in members gardens, or seen growing
elsewhere)

MEMBER NO.1

MEMBER NO.2

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

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10

11

12

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14

15

THIS IS THE ONLY BALLOT WHICH WILL BE ACCEPTED-
DEADLINE FOR RETURN IS SEPTEMBER 1st 1988.
RESULTS WILL BE PUBLISHED IN THE FALL ISSUE. IF
THERE IS MORE THAN ONE MEMBER IN HOUSEHOLD, USE
ONE COLUMN EACH.

MAIL TO:

124 SHERWOOD RD. E.
WILLIAMSTON
MI 48895

COQUET WATERS (M. McCarthy by J. Hewitt, R. 1987). SIB, (diploid), 41" (104cm), E-M & RE. S. very dark violet-blue (RHS 93A); violet-blue (93A) styles; F. upper part white, heavily veined dark violet-blue, lower part dark violet-blue (93A), dark yellow hafts veined dark violet-blue. Unknown parentage.

-D-

DREAMING ORANGE (C. McEwen, R. 1987). Sdlg. T6 79/122(3). SIB (tetraploid), 37" (93cm), EM-L. S. light yellow (RHS 11D); light yellow (11C) styles; F. light yellow (11C). Yellow-orange (21A) signal. Happy Event X T4 76/64 (6): ((White Swirl x Cambridge) x Cambridge) x Dear Dianne sib). Pope's Perennials, Seaways Gardens 1987.

-E-

ELEANOR VALENTINE (F. Galas, R. 1987). Sdlg. T30-8-87. SIB (56 chrom. tetraploid), 38" (97cm), M. S. deep navy blue; F. lightly ruffled velvety deep navy blue, yellow signal. Involved sdngs.

-G-

GENTEEL GRAYCE (A. Miller, R. 1987). Sdlg. 77-11-2. SIB, 36" (91cm), M. S. pale pink, darker pink along veins, white edge; F. light orchid-pink, veined darker, near red-violet veined white around signal, brownish on side of hafts. Pink Haze X unknown.

-H-

HIGH STANDARDS (R. Hollingworth, SIB, R. 1986). Borbeleta Gardens 1987.

-I-

ILLINI DAME (D.S. Varner, R. 1987). Sdlg. 5106. SIB (tetraploid), 34" (86cm), M-ML. S. slightly lighter than F.; ice pink styles with light aqua lavender midrib; F. medium rose lavender. Dance Ballerina Dance sib.

ILLINI GLORY (D.S. Varner, R. 1987). Sdng. 5062. SIB, 28" (71cm), E-M. Very dark maroon-red, small white signal. V9240: (V689, red sdng. x Ann Dasch) X Illini Ruby.

ILLINI RUBY (D.S. Varner, R. 1987). Sdng. V477M. SIB.28" (71cm), M. Red self, white signal. Mutation of V477, Tealwood X self.

IT'S DELIGHTFUL (Dale Johnson, R. 1987). Sdng. S-102. SIB (diploid), 36" (91cm), M. S. Wistaria blue (92C) veined darker; light bluebird blue (94B) styles edged white, blue rib; F. wistaria blue, washed bluebird blue (94B), antique gold signal, veined blue with small white area. S-42 X Silver Illusion.

IVORY CREAM (C. McEwen, R. 1987). Sdng. T5 79/227. SIB (tetraploid), 38" (97cm), EM-L. Ruffled cream white (RHS 11D) self, yellow signal veined green; feathered midribs on styles. T4 76/64 (6): ((67/110(2) x Cambridge) x Dear Dianne sib) X T1 74/136D: (Cambridge x Wing on Wing). Pope's Perennials, Seaways Gardens 1987.

-M-

MAD MAGENTA (B. Warburton, SIB, R. 1986). Joe Pye Weed's Garden 1987.

-P-

PINK HYACINTH (G. Bush, R. 1987). Sdng. C8-41. SIB, 18" (46cm), VVE. Light orchid pink self. Unknown parentage.

PRECIOUS DOLL (D.S. Varner, R. 1987). SIB, 12-14" (30-36cm), M. S. deep lavender; icy styles with aqua midrib; F. lilac, cream white signal. Illini Charm X V9146: ((Sea Shadows x Cambridge) x (Dreaming Spires x unknown)).

PRECIOUS ILLINI (D.S. Varner, R. 1987). Sdng. 5080. SIB, 31" (79cm), EM-M. S. dappled light blue; aqua ice styles; F. dappled light blue center, edged darker blue; Slightly musky fragrance. Waterloo X S027: (Ann Dasch x Steve Varner).

-Q-

QUEEN'S GAMBIT (Dale Johnson, R. 1987). Sdng.
S-22. SIB (diploid), 24" (61cm), M. Imperial purple
(RHS 78A), blue signal with little white veins and
violet (88B) wash. Bishop's Pawn X SR-385.

-R-

REDDY TO GO (Dale Johnson, R. 1987). Sdng.
Sr-385. SIB (diploid), 24" (61cm), L. S. deep
violet-purple (RHS 77A); imperial purple (78B)
styles; F. deep violet-purple (93B), blue signal
veined white. Bishop's Pawn X S-22, red sdng.

ROY BOHRER (H. Briscoe, SIB, R. 1986). Borbeleta
Gardens 1987.

RUBY THREE (G.B. Loveridge, R. 1987). SIB, 49-53"
(125-135cm), M. Ruby red self. Maranatha X Pansy
Purple.

-S-

SHIRLEY'S CHOICE (C. McEwen, R. 1986). Sdng.
T581/71. SIB (tetraploid), 31" (79cm), M. Ruffled
white with faint chartreuse infusion on F., yellow
signal with green tint (RHS 1A); feathered styles.
Violet Joy X T4 76/64(14): ((67/110(2) x
Cambridge) x Dear Dianne sib). Pope's Perennials,
Seaways Gardens 1987.

SILVER ILLUSION (Dale Johnson, SIB, R. 1985).
Borbeleta Gardens 1987.

SKY MIRROR (B. Warburton, SIB, R. 1986). Joe Pye
Weed's Garden 1987.

SMUDGER'S EARLY EVENING (I. Smith, R. 1987). SIB
(40 chr.), 34" (86cm), M-L. S. mid violet-purple;
mid violet styles with cream overlay along the
edge; F. mid violet, pale yellow throat blending
to cream, forming a quadrant on upper third with
slight violet pencilling, balance of F. lightly
veined cream. BIS seed exchange.

SMUDGER'S STORMY SUNSHINE (I. Smith, R. 1987).
SIB (40chr.), 36" (91cm), M-L. S. mid purple;
light greyish mauve styles; F. mid greyish mauve,
gold throat emerging to form quadrant on upper
third, with mauve pencilling, remainder of F.
lightly veined yellow. BIS seed exchange.

SMUDGER'S TROPICAL MOONRISE (I. Smith, R. 1987).
SIB (40chr.), 40" (102cm), L. S. mid violet; F.
mid blue-violet, yellow throat emerging and fading
to cream, forming a quadrant on upper third,
fading to cream pencilling on balance of F.; mid
blue-violet styles with cream overlay on edge. BIS
seed exchange.

SNOWY MOUNTAIN (Dale Johnson, R. 1987). Sdng.
S-212. SIB (diploid), 24" (61cm), M. White (RHS
155D) with citron green (151A) center line on F.,
citron green shoulders, sulphur yellow (6A)
signal; feathered white styles. Silver Illusion X
self.

STANDING TALL (Dale Johnson, R. 1987). Sdng.
S-122. SIB (diploid), 36" (91cm), M. Violet (RHS
888B), blue signal veined white; violet styles
with blue rib. Silver Illusion X S-42.

-T-

TRI-BLUE (Dale Johnson, R. 1987). Sdng. S-92.
SIB (diploid), 28" (71cm), M. S. gentian blue
(RHS 94D); blue (97D) styles with cobalt blue
(101D) rib; F. same with darker (96D) overlay,
blue signal veined white. SO-41 X S-102.

TRIPLE EXPOSURE (G. Bush, R. 1987). Sdng.
53-6-3. SIB, 36" (91cm), M. S. light lavender-
blue; F. lavender-blue, copper hafts, white
signal. Unnumbered sdngs.

WHITE TRIANGLES (B. Warburton, SIB, R. 1986). Joe
Pye Weed's Garden 1987.

FALL FLOWERS-ENVIRONMENTAL ABNORMALITY?

By John Coble.

This is in response to your note in the last issue of TSI (Fall '87 p.23), about finding 3-4" rebloom spikes on Siberian irises in September. We have found examples of these almost every year since we began growing Siberians (about seven years).

We have no conclusive explanation for this phenomenon: no order or pattern. We have found such 2-4" bloom spikes pushing out of the foliage fans, often with distorted blooms, on spring blooming plants that are in severe distress (root loss from fungus or "scorch-like" symptoms).

When we find these stunted stalks in the fall they are usually on healthy fans of both cultivars and seedlings. Whether genetic or environmental in their formation, we do not understand why they mature at only 2-4" tall, often with the swelling of the buds forcing them out of the base of the 30" fan and often with some falls of the blossom pinched and caught between leaves of the fan base. In our observation there appears to be some regularity to the appearance of these bloom stalks on the cultivars LAVENDER BOUNTY and ROANOKE'S CHOICE (normal repeat bloomers in early July) and their seedlings, but a scattering of such spikes on other unrelated varieties.

We have not yet had a complete, full height, fully formed rebloom spike on a Siberian in the fall (Aug., Sept., or Oct.,).

As a note of comparison; we also had the head scratching phenomenon of stunted bloom stalks in Japanese irises this autumn. There was the occasional fully formed stalk, usually with excellent branching and bloom. This leads us to further question why these stunted stalks form and bloom so short, when one or two do grow up in normal form. The summer-fall of 1987 produced more of these stunted, late bloom stalks than any other year observed to date.

My own hypothesis is that some environmental influence of our abnormally early and warm spring caused some of the increase fans to grow and mature at an early date. Instead of sitting dormant with a bloom potential for next spring, they went right on growing with immediate development of the bloom stalk meristem. The temperatures during these bloom stalk formations

were much different in August than in their normal May development period. I think their formation and performance is something akin to the situation observed when tulip or lily bulbs are forced too quickly. With too warm a temperature and without the slow, cool period of root development and bloom spike formation, they tend to force up very short stalks and not quite completely formed flowers.

What will this year's weather give us to ponder, hypothesize, or second guess?

AUCTION NEWS

The 1988 NORTHEAST APOGEN AUCTION will be held September 11th, in Bedford Massachusetts. In the morning there will be slide presentations including new hybrids and seedlings of Currier McEwen and Bee Warburton. After lunch and a mad dash for the sale table (in 15 mins everything is gone) the auction begins. While Japanese irises are creeping up in popularity, Siberians are clearly the most popular items at the auction. The Northeast Apogen Auction Committee would greatly appreciate donations of plants from any member of the Siberian section. All proceeds from your contributions will be sent on to the Society for Siberian Irises. Anyone interested in contributing to or attending our auction should contact Marty Schafer, 45 Elm St., Bedford, MA 01730, for further details.

THE AIS BOARD OF DIRECTORS HONORS WHITE SWIRL

At the 1987 SSI board meeting (report in TSI. Fall '87) it was decided that White Swirl (Cassebeer 1957) be recommended to the AIS Board for consideration for the Board of Directors' Award. We are happy to announce that the board found it a worthy candidate and have granted the award.

This distinctive award is neither a garden award, nor an exhibition award. It is made by the American Iris Society's Board of Directors to honor an iris which has not won a Dykes Medal, but which shows clearly in its progeny that it is among the greats of irisdom.

It is only the third iris to win this prestigious award, the other two, TOBACCO ROAD and SNOW FLURRY were both Tall Bearded. We are thrilled that a Siberian has been awarded this high honor, but WHITE SWIRL certainly met the requirements.

This lovely pure white flower with its rounded flaring falls was a new and exciting development in the Siberian world. Introduced in 1957, it won the Morgan Award in 1962, the first time in seven years it had been awarded. It was eagerly received by hybridizers who recognized its breeding potential, and has proved its prowess as a pod parent (it is ineffective as a pollen parent), being present in the lineage of all but three of the fifteen Morgan and Morgan-Wood medal winners from 1970 -1987 (see following chart), and in two British Dykes medal winners, CAMBRIDGE in 1972 and ANNIVERSARY in 1979. sure proof of its greatness! It is a pity that we do not know its parentage. Bill Mc Garvey tried to ascertain it through genetic studies but came to no definitive conclusions. Nevertheless this beautiful flower has won a firm place in the hearts of Siberian irisarians and in the annals of the society.

The thread of WHITE SWIRL through recent
Morgan Award winners

- 1970. DEWFUL (McGarvey 1965) White Swirl X
McGarvey Sdng. (Gatineau x Caesar's Brother)
- 1971 SUPER EGO (McGarvey 1965)
White Swirl X McGarvey Sdng.
- 1972 EGO (McGarvey 1965) White Swirl X
McGarvey Sdng. (Gatineau x Caesar's Brother)
- 1973 SWANK (Hager 1968) White Swirl X Blue Cape
- 1974 GRAND JUNCTION (Mc Cord 1968) No White Swirl
- 1975 HALCYON SEAS (McCord 1972). No White Swirl
- 1976 ORVILLE FAY (McEwen 1969). No White Swirl
- 1977 VI LUIHN (DuBose 1973) Tunkhannock X Swank
1/4 White Swirl.
- 1978 SILVER EDGE (McEwen 1973) Orville Fay X
T1 65/23: (White Swirl x Violet Flare).
1/4 White Swirl.
- 1979 AUGURY (McGarvey 1973) Temper Tantrum X
McGarvey sdng. At least 1/8 White Swirl
- 1980 RUFFLED VELVET (Mc Ewen 1973) Polly Dodge X
61/Cas 4: (White Swirl x unknown).
At least 1/4 White Swirl.
- 1981 BUTTER AND SUGAR (McEwen 1976)
Floating Island X Dreaming Yellow
At least 1/4 White Swirl.
- 1982 STEVE VARNER (Briscoe 1976) White Swirl X
Barbara's Choice.
- 1983 ANN DASCH (Varner 1977) Gatineau X
Dreaming Spires. 1/4 White Swirl.
- 1984 PINK HAZE (McGarvey 1969) Sdng. (Royal
Ensign x Royal Ensign) X Sdng. (White
Swirl x Royal Ensign sdng.) 1/4 White Swirl.
- 1985 No Award.
- 1986 BUTTER AND SUGAR (see 1981)
- 1987 STEVE VARNER (see 1982)

AN APPRECIATION OF FRED CASSEBEER

By Dianne Werner

(Reprint from The Siberian Iris Vol.3 No.6 Fall 1972)

When irisarians think about Siberian irises, the name of Fred Cassebeer naturally comes to mind. It was Fred who elevated Siberians from a rather humble status in the iris world to the popularity they enjoy today. Because of his high standards in choosing seedlings to work with we have superb Siberians.

I visited Fred in April with two of his friends, George and Ann Buchanan. They met forty five years ago when the two men were involved in hybridizing gladioli. They reminisced about the year George volunteered to plant Fred's Siberian seeds as Fred had no space left. After they collected the seed pods and extracted the seed there were four coffee cans full of seeds! George plowed a wide furrow the length of his field and scattered the seeds along the entire length. Of the thousands of seedling blooms three years later, Fred chose a 150 which might have possibilities. He is a perfectionist regarding both form and color.

The Cassebeer gardens are located in West Nyack, N.Y., in a most picturesque setting. They extend to the brink of Lake DeForest; and behind the lake in the distance, is a range of hills which adds to the beauty of the setting. All this can be enjoyed the year round from the comfortable living room of his home, for the entire wall facing the lake is of glass, and this continues around the corner for about six feet, all giving a view of the entire gardens.

Fred Cassebeer has always impressed me as a rather shy and quiet gentleman who prefers to let his accomplishments speak for him. He is a man of many talents. Until his retirement he was a pharmacist, the fifth generation of Cassebeers to follow this profession. His apothecary shop as he liked to call it, was located in the midst of Manhattan, on Madison Avenue. However, all his spare time was spent working with and photographing flowers.

He became interested in photography at Dartmouth College and perfected this art to the professional point. He was a photographer for the

Federated Garden Clubs and has taken slides of exhibits everywhere, including the International Flower Shows. His work has appeared in numerous magazines and catalogues. He is especially proud of the work he did for the beautiful Jackson & Perkins catalogues, and our own American Iris Society bulletins were enriched by his photographs.

"A good photograph is the greatest publicity an iris can get", he remarked, and credits the success of WHITE SWIRL to the cover picture of a magnificent clump of it on the January 1958 bulletin.

He served as editor of the bulletin for five years in the early forties. His assistant editor then was Miss Marcia Cowan, who later became Mrs. Cassebeer. About his years as editor Fred said, "my wife did all the work, give her the credit. She was a writer and publicity expert; I just made the photographs".

He was also a Director of the American Iris Society for six years and during that time designed the two medals given for Achievement in Hybridizing and for Distinguished Service to the Society. He has been awarded both medals; in 1952 he received the Distinguished Service Medal and in 1968 the Hybridizer's medal.

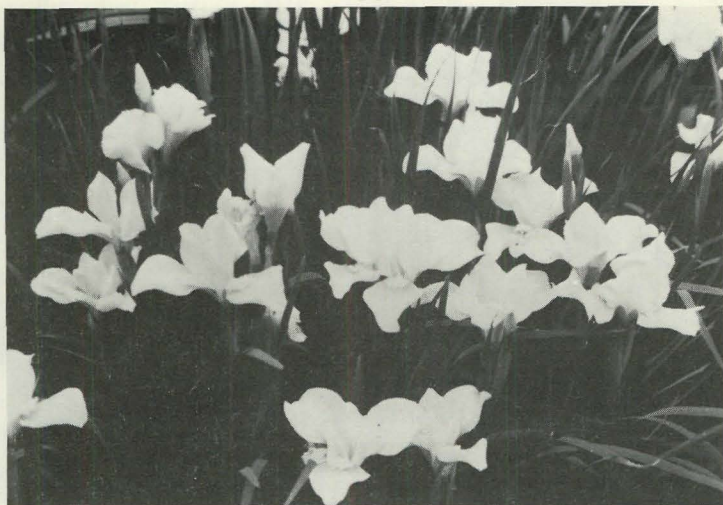
Fred began his hybridizing with gladioli in the 1920's, and introduced some fine varieties. Among them was the lovely cerise HELEN HAYES, named for his neighbor and lifelong friend.

Early in the thirties he became interested in irises, joined the American Iris Society and began visiting hybridizers. These visits took him over into Massachusetts to the garden of Mrs. Thomas Nesmith who became his advisor in iris hybridizing. "None of them ever got anywhere", he said, meaning perhaps that none of them won the Dykes Medal. But his work with Siberians was another matter.

His masterpiece is WHITE SWIRL, his pride and joy. It was and is the ne plus ultra of the Siberians. It is used by all Siberian breeders both here and abroad. However the Cassebeer blues are also famous. In the 1960's he won four Morgan Awards with WHITE SWIRL, BLUE BRILLIANT, VIOLET FLARE and PIROUETTE, and has won six HM's. His last introductions in 1969 are AU SABLE RIVER a rich lobelia blue, and CLEAR POND, a clear blue-violet.

Fred was partially disabled by a stroke several years ago. Two years later his son John, his

WHITE SWIRL, Cassebeer 1957. Photo: Jim Foreman



constant companion and co-worker in the garden, was struck down by a drunk driver while away at college. The final blow was the passing of Mrs. Cassebeer in 1970. Fred has since been invalided and says his gardening days are over. However when we were there he did seem stronger and his handclasp was firm. So we hope and pray that warm days and iris bloom will find him back in his garden creating beauty for us to share and enjoy.

(Mr. Cassebeer died on March 14th 1975)

FEATURING ONE OF OUR "HOMEGROWN" HYBRIDIZERS

KEN WAITE

It is impossible to live in the same region as Bee Warburton and Currier McEwen and not become fascinated by Siberian irises. Visits to their gardens, seeing and growing many excellent varieties they had created was always a joy.

I had been crossing within the bearded iris classes for several years with sporadic results, but at their urgings, in 1972 I made my first attempt at hybridizing Siberians. Only a few pods resulted. A light blue seedling surprised me with the longevity of its bloom season, from early June through mid-July! Alas to my dismay, the 1972 cross book had been lost and was never found, so the parentage remains unknown.

Seedling number WS-72-1 was guested at Bee's. Its ability to continually put up stalks was noted and Bee suggested that it be registered and introduced. It was registered as HARBOR MIST and introduced in 1983. It received an Honorable Mention in 1985 and an Award of Merit in 1987.

Since that time in '72, I have continued the crossing of Siberians when time allowed. Other varieties we felt worthy of introduction were LAUGHING BROOK '84, HM in '86; (Dewful X Tealwood), a wide petaled dark violet; BEDFORD LASS, '85, HM '87, darker blue and more flaring than HARBOR MIST, which resulted from crossing CAMBRIDGE X BLUE BURN and for 1988, SERENADE IN BLUE (Sally Kerlin X Cambridge). This mid-season bloomer is 34" tall and a light to medium blue. Its turquoise style arms almost cover the yellow and white signal, and the sturdy stalks have one or two branches and terminal; three to four buds. The form is flaring and slightly ruffled, and the dark green foliage stays attractive throughout the summer.

Many of the goals of my hybridizing are taking longer to achieve because my lack of garden space limits the number of crosses I can make each year. A primary goal is to produce more varieties with the branching bud count and continuous bloom of HARBOR MIST. There is not a particular form that I aim to produce, most are pleasing to me. Another aim is that of bluer blues, truer pinks and, of course that elusive red that I'm still working for in the bearded class as well.

The hybridizing plan is to stay within the diploid types for the most part as the smaller

blossoms are more appealing to me. In this respect, I feel most fortunate to have acquired a few of the late Dr. Bill McGarvey's seedlings to work with in my program. These should blossom this spring and I'm anxious to start working the PINK HAZE and JAMAICAN VELVET offspring into the pink and red lines.

SSI SECTION MEETING, OKLAHOMA CITY
MAY 4th 1988.

The program for the section meeting will feature the recent hybridizing of two of our members. Bob Hollingworth and Currier McEwen.

There is only time for two speakers, but if you are a hybridizer and would like to share slides of your recent hybridizing with us, Anna Mae Miller is willing to present them at the meeting for you. Send her the slides with a brief description no later than April 21st. Her address is 6065 N. 16th St., Kalamazoo MI 49007.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

In my article about the Siberian season in the Rocky Mountain States (TSI Fall 1987, pp.15-16) I reported good bloom on BLUE WILSON, and a blue form of I. wilsoni at the Denver Botanic Gardens. Currier McEwen has written to me that he has crossed BLUE WILSON with half a dozen 40 chromosome plants, and none took either way. On the other hand crosses with EGO, and four or five McEwen 28 chromosome seedlings took readily both ways giving fertile seedlings.

When he wrote to Bill McGarvey about his findings, Bill said that BLUE WILSON was a seedling from seed obtained in the British Iris Society's seed exchange, and labelled I. wilsoni. He agreed that this could not be correct as the seedlings should all have been yellow, but never got around to changing the name to something less confusing.

On page 16, I mentioned that a blue form of I. wilsoni bloomed in my garden. This is a different plant from BLUE WILSON, but it undoubtedly came from the same source as Bill's - seed from the BIS seed distribution plan.

I also mentioned that Panyotti Kelaidis, curator of the Denver Botanic Garden's Rock Alpine Section, is trying to grow all the species of irises mentioned in Dykes' famous monograph. If any of our readers are growing Siberian species other than I. forrestii or I. chrysographes, which he already has, I know he would appreciate your sending a division, or seed from that plant selfed, to enhance the collection. His address is 909 York St. Denver, Co. 80206.

Harry Kuesel

Not to muddy the waters here, as BLUE WILSON is obviously not a 40chr., but Dykes does say in "The Genus Iris, p.26 in reference to I. wilsoni "It is uncertain as yet whether a purple-flowered form of this iris exists, but certain herbarium specimens seem to point to the possibility."

Ed.



the last word

There has been quite a bit of discussion lately about spring versus fall planting, personally, I still haven't made up my mind. It seems to me there are really two considerations. Spring transplanting within your own garden which seems to be fine, because you can monitor the time, temperature, and soil condition, and shipping to another area of the country when these factors are out of your control. We shipped to, and received from Massachusetts in the spring of '87, and there were losses both ways.

On the subject of fall Siberian bloom which I mentioned in this column in the Fall '87 issue. Steve Varner wrote that he has seen the stemless fall flowers I mentioned, in Doug and Jeanne Clarke's garden in Noblesville, Indiana in 1985, and one of his own seedlings bloomed in the same way in his own garden in Monticello, Illinois.

I know that when we were living in Indiana, we saw some of the very earliest blooming Siberians with virtually no stems when a spell of unseasonably hot weather forced them into bloom before the stems had time to develop. If you have experienced this fall blooming trait in your garden, keep some notes to share with us on summer and fall temperatures and rainfall.

Please note the "Letters to the Editor" section on page 32 of this issue. This has been started to address subjects that need clarification as in the letter from Harry, or for you to let us have information that would be useful to the membership but is not long enough for a titled article. Don't let the idea that I might print your letter deter you from writing to me. I will always check with you first, unless of course you specify that it is for the "Letters to the Editor" column.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Jim Foreman for all his help at such a busy time. He looked out photographs for this issue, and is also responsible for the printing, collating and mailing of TSI., a job which takes many hours of his leisure time.

Enclosed is your 1988 ballot for your favorite 15 Siberians. Please return it to me by September 1st.

RED! RED! RED! RED! RED! RED!

"A few nights ago I dreamed up one possible way of getting that red (iris). I mean, it woke me right out of my sleep. All you have to do is find someone who can do genetic surgery, locate the gene for red on a gladiolus chromosome and the gene for blue on a Siberian chromosome do a little microsurgery to remove the blue gene and replace it with the red one, and repeat as necessary until you get a red seedling. Maybe another 25-30 years? When I dream, I do a good job of it -- I produce the best!"

Peg Edwards, TSI., Fall 1983, p.24

Well our Peg dreamed ----- and now it's been done! Peter Meyer and colleagues at the Max Planck Institute for Plant Breeding Research, Cologne, West Germany, (Nature, Vol. 330 17 December 1987). reported the first genetic engineering of flower color. Using gene splicing they made a white petunia red.

The petunia mutant RL01 from the Petunia hybrida collection at Tubigen was used as the recipient plant as it has no flower pigmentation. Corn was used as the donor as it has the enzyme for red pigmentation. The enzyme gene was extracted from the nucleus of a corn cell and spliced into a piece of DNA which transmitted the corn gene into the petunia cell. Of the first 15 plants raised, two had red flowers and four had flowers with red sectors.

Scientists are also working through a similar process to produce blue roses. So while we can all go on hoping, rushing out at the break of day hoping to see that elusive red mutant seedling (my closest heart stopper was a deadheaded red geranium tossed carelessly into the iris patch) -- what we really need is a benefactor to fund some genetic fiddling on irises, and we could have our red iris in a couple of years.

MOLES - THE BATTLE CONTINUES

" Where heaves the turf in many
a mould'ring heap"

Thomas Gray

You may recall my report in the Spring '87 issue bemoaning our troubles with moles in the garden. Even after a move of 250 miles, as I look out of my kitchen window at this very moment, I see "mould'ring heaps" on my front lawn, within striking distance of the new iris beds.

And so when we received by mail yesterday a specimen of the taxidermist's art it was a sight to gladden this gardener's heart. A beautifully preserved mole, proof at last that they can be caught!

Accompanying this thoughtful gift from the mole specialist at Purdue University were the following lines.

"Here just in time for spring is your friend the mole. This mole in fact, was captured about 1 mile from your home in West Lafayette, who knows, maybe it's part of the mole clan that was terrorizing your lawn and family.

Rumor has it that if you stick pins in this mole and hang it up in a tree on your lawn, you will not experience mole problems. There is also a chant that goes along with this ritual but I can't recall how it goes.*

Anyway also see enclosed "testimony" of other mole victims".

(Watch for this in the next issue).

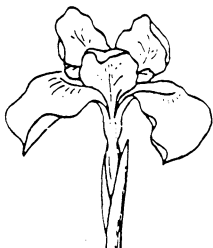
My own feeling is that like death and taxes moles are a permanent fixture in our lives.

* This is his out of course, if this scientific procedure fails!



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