

THE REVIEW

OF THE SOCIETY
FOR
JAPANESE IRISES



FALL 2001

VOLUME 38
NUMBER #2

2001 AIS AWARD OF MERIT — JAPANESE IRIS



LION KING (Bauer/Coble '96)



PLEASANT EARLYBIRD (C.Harris '96)

THE REVIEW OF THE SOCIETY FOR JAPANESE IRISES



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Front Cover: **PICOTEE PRINCESS** (L. Reid '92), 2001

Payne Medal Winner, Photo by J. Coble

Inside Front Cover: **LION KING** (Bauer/Coble '96), Photo
by J. Coble and **PLEASANT EARLYBIRD** (C. Harris '96),
Photo by J. Coble, both 2001 AIS Award of Merit (JI)

Back Cover: **ELECTRIC GLOW** (Aitken '92) , Photo by
T. Aitken and **DIOMEDES** (Innerst '92) Photo by J. Coble

Inside Back Cover: **KOSHUI NO ASA** (Shumizu by Warner
'98) Photo by J. Coble and **PLEASANT STARBURST** (C.
Harris '98) Photo by R. Probst

THE SOCIETY FOR JAPANESE IRISES

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SJI is an affiliate of AIS and all meetings are open to the public.

Appointments

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Business Items

The SJI Review is published semi-annually by the Society for Japanese Irises. The editorial office is temporarily located at 78118 M-40, Lawton, MI 49065. Deadlines for receiving copy are February 15th and August 15th, with earlier receipt desirable. Black and white photographs, colored prints (glossy) and black and white drawings are welcome. Reprinting permission is granted to any other iris society publication to reprint any material in this publication with due acknowledgement.

DUES:

Single annual - \$5.00 triennial - \$12.50 Life - \$75.00

Family annual - \$6.00 triennial - \$15.50 Life - \$100.00

Youth annual - \$3.00 triennial - \$ 7.50

Dues may be sent either to the AIS Membership Chairman (Anner Whitehead - see AIS Bulletin for address) or directly to the Membership Chairman, The Society for Japanese Irises.

Address changes: please notify membership chairman

SALES AND RENTAL ITEMS

The Japanese Iris by Currier McEwen \$24.95

Color Postcards - 2 for 1 Sale

Set #1 - 16 different W.A. Payne introductions

Set #2 - 18 different Payne Award winners

2 sets (#1, #2, or both) \$5.00

Overseas orders, add \$1.00 per set for airmail

Back issues of The Review - \$1.50 per copy

Volume 1 (1964) consists of 3 issues

All others contain 2 issues each

SJI Slide Set Rental \$5.00

Iris Laevigata - book rental \$5.00

All prices include postage. Send requests to John Coble.

Check payable to SJI. Please allow ample time for scheduling.

ADVERTISING

Advertising will be accepted for plants and horticultural-related items.

Charges:

Full page layout	\$18.00
Half page layout	\$10.00
Short ads, text only	\$2.00 for up to 5 lines and for each additional 5 lines or fraction thereof
Full page, color layout	FREE , Photo color separation at cost

Please send original photos (prints or slides) for scanning. Advertising copy and payment to SJI should be mailed to the Editor prior to Editorial deadlines.

1999 J.I. CHECKLIST

The SJI Checklist contains all registrations and introductions through 1999 of Japanese iris and any interspecies crosses involving Japanese iris. All updates, including awards, can be found in the 1999 edition. The 1999 Checklist is 65 pages of 8.5" X 11" format. The previous edition was published in 1997.

To order, Send \$4.00 postpaid* to:

John Coble, SJI Sales Chairman
9823 E. Michigan Avenue, Galesburg, MI 49053

*\$5.00 Canada, \$8.00 Overseas air mail – payable in US funds only
please make checks payable to SJI

SJI MEMBERSHIP LIST AVAILABLE

A current SJI membership list can be ordered. This will be a computer printout, listing members alphabetically.
Send check for \$3, payable to SJI, Bob Bauer, 9823 E. Michigan Avenue
Galesburg, MI 49053

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

Jill Copeland

After a bad start, I think we are on our way to good times. We have an editorial committee since a volunteer to do the whole job couldn't be found. I, with the help of the board and membership, will solicit articles, Rita Gormley will do the layout and deal with the printer, and finally John Coble and Bob Bauer will do the final proof since Rita isn't a JI person. What a wonderful person Rita is to volunteer for this demanding job when she says she knows very little about JIs and only grows a few.

To quote from her letter to me, she is "... Membership Chair of the Median Iris Society (my job is to do mailing labels!) and my husband Tom and I are the new Editors for TBIS, starting with the Sept edition. Just to add to that information, I also am Treasurer (and Membership Chair) for two local Affiliates as well as Assistant RVP for Region 18 (not due to take over until 2004 as RVP), garden a lot since I'm retired and do lots of stuff on the computer as well as play with my little cat Hamilton who as a Siamese qualifies as an interested oriental observer! We grow only 20 JI but there are many grown in the area so the articles will be interesting to me also."

Bruce Filardi is our new Popularity Poll Chairman. He will receive, tabulate, and report the results of the Popularity poll each year. Anna Mae Miller is the new Awards Chairperson. Send suggestions to her. Philip Cook is the new Display Garden Chairman. If you wish to be on the list or get off the list, contact Phil. Cindy Rust is the new Robin Chairman. Our robins don't seem to have been flying for a while so contact Cindy if you wish to be in a robin. Peter Weixlmann has volunteered to do the auction at the AIS convention in Memphis. If you wish to donate, let Peter know. A few others volunteered for jobs that were already filled and I will keep them on the list for the future. Thanks very much to all of you.

I am very pleased with the many responses to my questionnaire. One of you managed to get your reply through the mail without a return address so I won't be able to give credit for that one. The article will be in the spring 2002 issue so there is time if you wish to participate. Thanks to you who have responded.

Right now it doesn't look like we will have a convention this year. The Diamond State Iris Society (Delaware, Region 3) will host our next convention in 2005 with Dennis Hager as Chairman. There is a request for guest irises for this convention in this issue. I hope hybridizers will send lots of guests.

It is always good to get as much information on how your seedlings will grow in other gardens before introduction.

Our next convention years are 2008 and 2011. Our membership was much higher when we had conventions almost every year. If your group doesn't have the gardens, wants to start smaller, or can't wait until 2008; think about doing a symposium in the fall of an off year. Either way be a part of the fun!

The JI Board meeting at the AIS Convention in Memphis, TN is April 25 at 4:00. Everyone is invited if they wish to attend. The JI Meeting is April 26. We will have "What is new" from Don Delmez including slides from Willy Hublau. Don would like other hybridizers to bring their "newest and best" slides to be included.

This year, as you visit gardens with JIs, take notes and write an article on what you liked for The Review. With everyone's help this can remain a publication to make everyone want to be members of SJI.

Jill



2001 AIS JAPANESE IRIS AWARDS

W. A. PAYNE MEDAL

PICOTEE PRINCESS (L. Reid) 45 votes

Runners Up

ELECTRIC GLOW (T. Aitken) 27 votes

DIOMEDES (S. Innerst) 25 votes

Award of Merit

LION KING (Ensata) 29 votes

PLEASANT EARLYBIRD (Chad Harris) 25 votes

Runners Up:

DIRIGO DEBUTANTE (John White) 20 votes

GEISHA DOLL (Ed Matheny) 20 votes

ROSEWATER (Robert Bauer & John Coble) 20 votes

Honorable Mention

KOSHUI NO ASA (Hiroshi Shirrizu) 22 votes

PLEASANT STARBURST (Chad Harris) 21 votes

Runners Up:

PLEASANT SANDMAN (Chad Harris) 20 votes

TROPICAL STORM (Robert Bauer & John Coble) 19 votes

A Biography of Picotee Princess (Reid 92)

Lorena M. Reid

Picotee Princess came about as an indirect result of curiosity. Hybridizers may well have more or less specific goals; as it were, ideas of where they want to go. However, whether they realize it or not, or even want it or not, simple curiosity plays a substantial part in the crosses they make. Or am I merely painting all hybridizers with the brush of my own "failings"?

In my early days of hybridizing I thought it more interesting to find out how 3 Fall and 6 Fall JIs interact. It might take longer to poke about making crosses, than to search the literature for the results of other folks who've already made similar crosses, or for the theoretical research on what the results of such crosses "should" be. But it would be lots more fun to actually "do" it!

One such cross was Valiant Prince (a 6 Fall JI) x Mystic Buddha (a 3 Fall JI). I no longer remember the statistics of how many 3 Fall and how many (if any) 6 Fall seedlings resulted. One of these seedlings was registered and introduced as Garnet Royalty (Reid 83). Another such cross was Mystic Buddha (3 Fall) x Frilled Enchantment (6 Fall). Again the numbers of 3 Fall and 6 Fall seedlings has been forgotten. Only one seedling was deemed worthy of continued existence and was registered and introduced as Summer Splash (Reid 91).

Perhaps as a continuation of the "3 Fall 6 Fall" experiment as any other reason, I crossed Garnet Royalty x Summer Splash (just a seedling at that time). Both these were 3 Fall JIs resulting from crossing 3 Fall and 6 Fall JIs. Though there were 51 seed produced from this cross, only 4 seedlings resulted. One of these became Picotee Princess, a lovely 6 Fall JI. What the other 3 seedlings were like, or whether, indeed, they had 3 Falls or 6 Falls, I no longer remember.

So was my curiosity satisfied? It must have been, to some extent; I stopped doing 3 Fall x 6 Fall JI crosses "just to see what would happen". The moral of the story (oh, yes, there "must" be a moral) is for you budding hybridizers to go with your curiosity. Not only will you have fun at the time (even though you may not remember it 10 or 20 years down the road) something most interesting, perhaps even spectacular might result. This is more than you can say for straight library research on the genetic studies or hybridizing results in reports from other hybridizers.

JI ROBINS NOW TAKING OFF FOR FLIGHT!

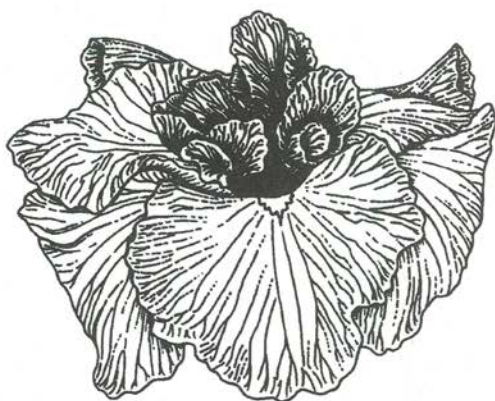
By Cindy Rust

My name is Cindy Rust and I am your new JI Robin Chairman. Our Robins have somehow run aground and it is my aim to get at least two of them up and flying quickly. If you are interested in the JI Hybridizing Robin or the JI General Interest Robin, please contact me immediately! My address is 2016 Meadow Lane, Union, MO 63084. Phone number is (636)583-2745. E-mail address is srust@fidnet.com . I am the director for the JI General Robin and Jill Copeland is the director for the JI Hybridizer's Robin. Her address is 78118 M-40, Lawton, MI 49065. Phone number is (616)624-1968. E-mail address is Jandjcope@aol.com .

I would love to hear from any of you about ideas you have for Robins, and if there are other topics you would like to start a Robin flying about!

Happy Gardening,

Cindy Rust



MINUTES OF THE SJI MEMBERSHIP MEETING MAY 24, 2001, HUNT VALLEY, MD

Bob Plank, the AIS legal council, was present to relay the 501 (c) 3 benefits that SJI as a section under the AIS umbrella will reap. Bob related that SJI income can increase to any limit and is exempt from state and federal taxation. Also an individual can itemize tax return deductions for donations of goods and monies towards anything that will further the goals of the SJI. Individuals while estate planning can allocate testamentary gifts or trusts for advantageous tax benefits for yourself and heirs.

Iris Culture: Regional Differences

Bruce Hornstein Mid Atlantic

Bruce utilizes the Japanese technique of pot culture.

Experiment: After dividing newly potted JI, Bruce placed 1/3 of the pots of JI in the driveway, 1/3 near the house and 1/3 left in dirt in the field. Those near the house had a 70% success rate.

Fall Planting: Utilizing a mixture of oak leaf compost and soil less mix in gallon pots with pine needle mulch JI are place in kiddie pools filled with several inches of water. They are left for six weeks and then planted in the garden.

Spring Planting: Bruce places in JI divisions directly into the ground.

Terry Aitken North West

The North West has silt soil which is naturally acid and has very good drainage. With the good drainage and lots of rain, the nitrogen leeches out quickly. Terry uses lawn fertilizer which has an extremely high nitrogen content. Also soil additives of alfalfa pellets and chicken feathers are incorporated. Chicken feathers are ground up and have a slow release for up to a year, they are a 12-0-0 equivalent. They come in 50 pound bags and will cover 100 square feet.

Also Terry talked a bit about nematodes in JIs. They have many different nematodes and he uses Nemacure a granular product.

Transplanting: In the NW they can transplant anytime throughout the year. They have sufficient rain to provide the moisture that JIs need to reactivate their root systems. A mulch of bark or pine needles is also applied.

Melody Wilhoit Mid West

Melody presented a slide show on classic Japanese iris. For culture Melody divides in the spring and replants in beds that are refurbished with aged manure.

Peter Weixlmann, Secretary

MINUTES OF SJI BOARD MEETING MAY 24, 2001, HUNT VALLEY, MD

2001 SJI Board Meeting

Attendees: Jill Copeland, Bruce Hornstein, Peter Weixlmann, Terry Aitken, Carol Warner, Anna Mae Miller, Jim Copeland, Gary White, Andrew Gallagher, Vincent Lewonski, Jeanne Clay Plank, Ellen Gallagher

President Jill Copeland called the meeting to order. Minutes accepted as printed in the SJI Review. Treasurer Report, submitted and accepted, we are in a deficit budget.

President Copeland reported that 501 (c) 3 status under the AIS umbrella has been approved. Mention that the statements "affiliated with AIS" and "open to the public" must appear on all documents of the SJI.

Website. Bob Bauer and John Coble have volunteered to create a Website free of charge for SJI.

Anna Mae Miller has volunteered for the position of Registration and Awards following the resignation of Clarence Mahn.

Life Memberships, currently all life membership monies have been placed into the general fund. Bob Bauer has asked to set up a life membership fund for all these monies. Thus utilizing the interest generated to cover the costs of life memberships. Currently the Life Membership monies comes to \$3,600.

Membership: Currently we have 217 members, a significant loss, President Copeland suggests many reasons, lack of timely renewal notices, loss of momentum between conventions, AIS membership is down and competition from other plant societies i.e.. daylily and hosta.

Suggestions for symposiums on off convention years was discussed. Promoting JI at club sales as a way of attracting new membership.

Dues Increase from current \$3 - \$5 for single annual
\$9- \$12.50 for Triennial
Life Membership for \$75 -\$100

We also have excess bulletins which are free to clubs hosting a Japanese Iris show or exhibit.

The 1999 Check list will change from \$6 to \$4, Post Cards 2-1 sale, you will receive 2 sets for \$4

Invitation To Join- brochure, Ellen Gallagher will commission a printer to manufacture a 3 year stock of new ITJ.

Editor for the SJI Review is needed.

Live Auction. It was discussed and decided that during the AIS national Convention 2002, SJI would hold a live auction during it's General membership meeting. We will need a 2 hour block of time and donations will be requested. Peter Weixlmann will chair the event.

Nominating Committee

Current officers have 2 year terms, no action required.

Peter Weixlmann, Secretary

NOMINATING COMMITTEE REPORT

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Submitted by Don Delmez

(Editor's Note: The Officer, Directors and Appointments listed in the front of this REVIEW reflect most recent information – the date of mailing (March 2002), not the date of the REVIEW (Fall, 2001)

GETTING ACQUAINTED WITH SJI MEMBERS

Lorena Reid

The following SJI members replied to the questionnaire in the last issue of The Review last February and March. I think readers would be interested in hearing from some of you other members too, perhaps in the next or future issues. Meet some of your fellow SJI members! If YOU are inspired to make any comments on opinions expressed by any of these members, feel free to write me ("snail mail": 41886 McKenzie Hwy, Springfield, OR 97478-9612 or "e-mail": loreid@bossig.com) with comments or open discussion for the benefit of all SJI members!

Joy Flint of Victoria of BC Canada:

I became interested in JIs from Eliot Tozer's article in Modern Maturity Magazine, featuring Dr. Currier McEwen with color shots of JIs, which I had never seen before. I read it by chance in a Dr's waiting room. The book "Japanese Iris" was to be available in March so I ordered it and had no idea where to find them. I phoned local dealers and bought a few species from Vancouver BC with Japanese printed labels - which rotted before I could find an interpreter. Now we have busloads of Japanese tourists daily, but not then. My book finally arrived from New York in November. In June 1999 I was thrilled to have Dr. McEwen sign it.

I grow about 80 JI varieties; some species, some imported hybrids from Aitken's Salmon Creek Gardens, a few from Ensata (too far away; our Canadian delivery system, whether by mail or courier has been hard on the plants). Air Mail really means nothing as they are flown to Vancouver, and if you have a 3 day weekend, the plants don't move until inspected, despite the phytosanitary certificate. Parkside Gardens on Salt Spring Island has great plants, and if we choose we can go and select them in bloom (by appointment) or from the catalogue. JIs are not really difficult here, given what they need.

There are few growers here. I know of about 5 others and 2 of those are growing my stock, which I am happy to share (registered varieties only).

I'm a compulsive pollen dauber and it provides me with much enjoyment. I started in 1978 with dwarfs (via The Iris Book - Molly Price). They were so prolific it scared me! Nobody in their right mind should hybridize with only a city lot to grow them in. I'm not a botanist, so now I'm concentrating on merely enjoying my garden and growing wonderful things.

My first concern in any iris is that it is healthy, which should be self-evident

with graceful foliage that doesn't sprawl, strong stems that branch well and carry the flowers without drooping and should not need staking. We get terrific gales in the Strait of Juan de Fuca so it's an acid test. We're about 40 ft. above sea level. Salt spray at times is of concern. I love masses of good singles in strong colors, but really like them all.

I am not interested in either an e-mail or regular mail robin.

We currently have 25 cm. of fresh snow. I have about 1000 crocuses trying to bloom through it. Also have *I. lazica* and *I. unguicularis* drooping out there. My JIs are sleeping. (This was dated 17 Feb 01).

Somebody should analyze the sap from JIs to determine why we can't get the stains produced from it out of our clothes (with anything)! Also Dr. McEwen stated in Oregon, that we soon would have a method for tetraploidy that would be simple and not involve colchicine (which is listed as a poison in Canada) and requires a prescription to a chemist for purchase which must be signed by the purchaser. I'd very much like such a simple method!

For the future I hope to be growing irids and orchids in a condo and maybe 3 pots of favorite JIs.

Clive Russell of England:

Says: I cannot answer all the questions as some are not relevant for me, but I will provide as much information as I can. My first JIs were 6 seedlings given to me by Nora Scopes, hybridizer of the 1989 UK Dykes Medal winner **EARLY LIGHT**. They were germinated here from seed sent from Japan, and although at the time I knew nothing of their cultural requirements, I managed to bloom them in the first year I had them. Four were dogs, one was not too bad, and the last definitely had potential. But they were all 3F purple selfs, which I did not find very interesting, so they were put to one side.

The JI bolt between the eyes came about through spurias. In the early to mid 1990's I used to make 3 or 4 trips to the USA each year, and would always arrange for one of them to be at iris shipping time, so that I could bring back with me anything I had ordered. In 1994 I had a long talk with Dave Niswonger at the national convention in Portland, OR, as a result of which he wanted to send some spurias to the iris trials at RHS Garden Wisley. When they arrived at my last port of call that summer, not only were there spurias from Dave, but also from Charles Jenkins and Floyd Wickencamp - 31 varieties in all. These were all duly sent down to Wisley,

and although I would go there for shows, I was not at the time on the Joint Iris Committee, so did not attend the judging sessions. In 1997, however, I decided to make a special trip to report their progress. I do not know whether you have ever been to Wisley, but to get to the trial grounds you have to go up and over Battlestone Hill, and as you go down the other side, the trial grounds open up in front of you. The spurias were in a far corner, but on the right at the bottom of the last flight of steps was the trail of JIs in full bloom, and I was stunned! I spent no longer than 15 minutes with the spurias, but over 1 ½ hours with the JIs. Because I was only expecting to make a verbal report on the spurias, I had not brought my camera with me, so I had to go back the following weekend to get them on film.

As a result of this visit, I ordered my first JIs that summer from the Aitken's, and in subsequent years have bought from the Aitken's, Ensata Gardens and Shirley Pope. In 1998 I paid my dues as a life member of the SJI and as you are aware, I attended the SJI convention in 1999. I now have 30+ JI varieties in my garden, including KOSHUI-NO-ASA and FRACTAL BLUE which I bought at the SJI auction, and a number of seedlings which Chad Harris sent me after I had admired one particular pink one in his seedling patch.

I garden on heavy clay with a pH of 8+, so when I first started growing JIs I did not have a proper bed in which to grow them. I did, however, have a garden pond, which had never been completed, and I eventually decided to sacrifice the pond to make a JI bed. The pond was subsequently drained, the liner left in, but cut back to finish 10" below the final level of the soil. Coarse infill was added, followed by 250 large bags of a mix of ericaceous compost, leafmold, and horse manure. After allowing it to settle, the JIs were planted, but unfortunately, the aspect is not ideal, as although they have done well, they could have done better had the neighbors kept the growth of their trees in check. I have plans to relocate in the near future, and will be looking for enough land in which to indulge my plans to grow iris.

As far as I am aware, there are no other JI growers in my area, although Norman Payne is not that far away in South London.

I have not yet started hybridizing, mainly because I do not have the space to deal with seedlings, but when I move.....

I have only ever bought 6 Fall JIs and after having attended the SJI convention, and seen all the kinds available, I am very happy to stick with them. I also prefer surface patterning to selfs, although I do have 5 of

the latter; the two already mentioned, ALPINE MAJESTY, LORENZACCIO and the Chad Harris seedling.

I would be quite happy to participate in an e-mail robin, but I am not too sure that I would be able to make any valuable contribution.

I hope in the future to see more blooms per spike and repeat bloom. 3-4 blooms per spike once a year are just not enough!

Philip W. Cook of Poker Hill Gardens, Underhill, VT:

I obtained my first JIs from a general mail order house and grew them for several years before I was made aware of the Society for Japanese Irises by a gardening friend. I joined just in time to learn of the convention in Maine (1989?) and it changed my entire orientation in gardening.

Japanese Irises are relatively easy in this part of Vermont. We have plenty of moist acid soils and reasonable rainfall in the summer. The main problem has been with thrips and with damage due to voles during the winter. Last winter the plants suffered some cold injury during a period of sub-zero temperatures with no snow cover. I usually rely on Mother Nature to provide the mulch (snow) and was caught unawares by the severity of the atypical winter. I grow in excess of 300 cultivars of Japanese Irises. The cultivars are arranged by hybridizers and I try to maintain a selection representing the efforts of hybridizers past and present.

Not too many people in my area are aware of Japanese Iris and seem to be surprised by the variety. (Japanese Iris and Siberian Iris are confused in the minds of many people) I've been marketing JI and sell wholesale to some local garden centers as well as retail to individuals. There's not an overwhelming demand.

I started a hybridizing program about 6 or 7 years ago. My crosses represent two main interests: (1) obtaining a greater variety of (very) very early flowering cultivars and (2) developing dwarf (<20") cultivars from a dwarf clone which I obtained accidentally from some wild-type seedlings. I've been encouraged by the results of the early flowering crosses (including your Springtime series). The search for new dwarfs continues and awaits some back-crosses which I hope will flower this year.

I like all kinds of JIs. Mottled or streaked patterns are probably at the bottom of the list. I might be interested in the hybridizer's robin once I get a little more experience and more results. I don't feel I have that much to contribute right now.

Some questions which I'd like to see answered are related to genetics. For example what controls the presence or absence of color in the style arms? Is the tendency to produce extra staminoids a simple Mendelian character? Also does susceptibility to thrips have a genetic basis? (Some very casual observations suggest that it might).

I would hope for the development of cultivars which are tolerant of a wider variety of growing conditions (similar to the "Care" attempts reported from Germany a few decades ago).

Other comments: I would like to see hybridizers make a careful comparison with "standard" cultivars which are readily available and, when introducing a new cultivar, highlight the differences between the new introduction and what is currently available. I tried to include such information when I registered LA MOUETTE, but much of it was edited out. I'm wondering if there might not be a different form for registering Japanese and Siberian Irises as distinct from the bearded types which would request information relevant to those groups but which wouldn't have to devote any space to the characteristics of "beards". Could the SJI develop such a form?

He also asks: Are judges who do not grow JI eligible to vote for JI award candidates? I've never attempted to become a judge myself, because I rarely have the opportunity to attend training sessions, and despite over 10 years of growing many cultivars, I question that my experience is broad enough to vote for an award candidate. Do all AIS judges have to have had training for JI, and if not, are they still eligible to vote for JI awards? I have not read any explanation of the awards process.

Something new to think about, he says: I'd like to see some discussion of the pros and cons of merging the SJI with the SSI. It would seem (and I may be in great error) that there is a large group of gardeners who belong to both societies. I've been a little disappointed with the content in the bulletins of both societies and the possibility of a larger organization which is devoted to beardless irises is worth exploring. I may write a letter to the officers of the societies and raise this issue. One benefit might be strengthening the voice for beardless irises within the AIS (which, in my biased eyes, is really a society for tall bearded).

Kathy Marble of Harvard, MA:

I first became interested in JIs in the early 1980s, through the Iris Society of MA. Probably the first one I saw was grown by Marty Schafer and Jan Sacks.

I purchased my first JI, BETTERYET, in 1984 at an ISM sale. I now grow 54, mostly named hybrids, but a few species (seeds from SIGNA). I grow them in landscape plantings, in perennial beds, and in "holding bed" rows. I mulch heavily with bark mulch. My greatest problem comes at dividing time, because I've usually left them too long and need to almost saw them apart. I have had some trouble replanting in the same place, which I often want to do because I use the irises in the landscape. Even though I enrich the soil with compost, alfalfa, and fertilizer, a replanted site often doesn't do as well. I have given many clumps to my local Garden Club for their spring sale, so there are many JIs in local gardens. Region I has a number of growers and/or hybridizers: Marty/Jan, Currier, Shirley Pope, Steve Smith, and Andy Wheeler come immediately to mind.

I am concerned with what I see as a trend toward "bigger is better" among some JI hybridizers. This doesn't mean I am immune to a big, beautiful, bossy tetraploid, but there is a grace and beauty in diploid 3 Fall JIs that should not be lost. I was delighted at a recent "Hybridizers' Meeting" at Barbara Schmieder's to see that Steve Smith has some wonderful 3 Fall seedlings in new colors and patterns.

I would not be interested in joining a JI robin; I was an original SIBROB member, but withdrew about a year ago due to lack of time.

The most exciting thing I've been doing is not in the garden, but on a table. I focus on arranging, especially Ikebana, and wish arranging was encouraged more within the iris world.

The most useful studies or programs to me would be those on pest control!

I would hope in the future for hybrids that would grow in a wider range of conditions, hybrids that would not require as frequent dividing, and less emphasis on "more".

Liselotte Hirsbrunner of Switzerland:

I first became interested in the JIs through some SIGNA seed from mixed hybrids ordered in 1990. They germinated and grew well, although I believed at the time our soil would be too alkaline to grow them.

By 1998 there were 30 registered cultivars and many seedlings growing in this garden. I like both the single forms and the doubles. JIs are vigorous growers here, but parts of clumps are frequently lost to scorch. This condition may be due to overcrowding. Most plants can be rescued if

divided and replanted to a new site with well prepared soil as soon as possible.

To my knowledge no other JIs are grown in this area. Three years ago I gave vigorous seedlings to two neighbors to test them in their gardens. None of the plants survived the first winter. (No attention was given to my growing instructions!)

I do hybridize, if playing with pollen and crossing 'pretty on pretty' can be so called. I was amazed at the beautiful flowers on my seedlings and went ahead to order plants from Ensata Gardens.

I like all types of JIs, except for too much "splashing" or white veins on dark colors. I am looking for pure white, clear blue, good pink, and the darkest purple. Plants, naturally, have to be garden worthy.

At this time Robins are not possible due to too many interests and not enough time.

The most exciting event for me in JIs recently was having had JAPANESE PINWHEEL bloom for a very long time and produce new scapes; very exciting at our altitude of 4000 ft. with rather cool summers.

Getting the results of Dr. McEwen's research on scorch would be most useful to me. I would also like to get more information on Phytophthora.

What I foresee, or hope for, in the future of JIs is more rebloom, and more tolerance to alkaline soils. A list of fertile reblooming varieties would also be very helpful.

Frederick Held of Nature's Garden, Scio, OR:

I planted my first JI seed in Jan 1991 and observed the first flowers from them in June of 1993. I did select and register a few of them.

I have planted quite a patch of JIs purchased from Aitken's Salmon Creek Gardens, Ensata Gardens, and Laurie's Garden. In the beginning I lost over \$200.00 worth of JIs which froze out because I had them in 1 gallon cans in the open over winter. Some of my JIs were donated to me by a friend, and I have gotten some recently from a grower in Sandy, OR. Last fall I got WISLEY WHITE in a 1 gallon can and it produced 8 divisions!

Likely the closest grower to my garden is Wildwood Gardens in Molalla, OR. I might visit his garden next June.

I do not hybridize JIs. It takes up too much room to line out seedlings. That is likely for richer people. I must think survival.

I love all JIs, but throw out 'spoiled whites' and "undecided thin flowered" plants. It does take time to judge varieties, and some may be discarded to leave myself some elbow room.

A U.S. Mail JI Robin might interest me, but I do not wish to participate in complicated, boring, bureaucratic robins, just lighter stuff.

(In answer to the question what he had seen recently or been doing in his garden....his reply received in mid February.....I don't know how exciting....but his routine is interesting). I think about weed control, looking at mouse holes, and cutting down all old foliage. Some JIs need dividing, others a layer of cow manure or mulch. Some divisions heeled in by the sawdust pail outperformed the tired out plants where they came from. I have started to apply Roundup between rows. Finally the grass gets yellowish. It takes awhile early in the season. I do not spray where the stock bed is.

I did some weed hoeing this afternoon. They won't die....a bit too wet yet....but it will slow them down. The weather might get worse so I do, whenever possible, some weed removal. I use weeds to fill in depressions, where they can rot. I can help with Roundup where it is safe. February 18th perhaps I will throw some 10-20-10 on the JIs, as it has no lime. Might spray soon, by early March with what I have stored (pesticide-fungicide combination). Likely I will mulch them with sawdust obtained from a racetrack, time allowing. On meager plants, cow manure.

It would be helpful to me to find out how to prepare a potting mix for JIs. More information on summer care and frost protection would also help. Also information on how to use mouse poison outdoors; what kinds are safe. Is it safe to use 'soil cleaner' in tunnels mixed with water? The mice are eating my JIs and girdling others. It is hard to keep things clean all the time, year round. There is no income with selling a few and caring for so many.

Hopes for the future definitely include a somewhat airy version and wildflower type (3 Fall) for light meadows. I feel they would be less work and fuss, and might help planting some in bogs in park like settings; especially pure white and deep purple. Personally I love pinks and pale blues. I will introduce a low wildflower type clone in the near future, 3 Fall, aqua-marine.

Jerry Huntley of Canning, Nova Scotia, Canada:

I first became interested in JIs back in 1995 when I bought four unregistered varieties from a nursery. They put on incredible growth their first year, and I had bloom the next summer.

Currently I have about 25 varieties of JIs in my garden ranging from singles through to peony doubles. I hope to increase this number by at least 30 this spring. In general, I have had very little trouble growing JIs in my area. My garden soil is a heavy loam with excellent water-holding capacity. All the beardless irises seem to thrive in it here, with the exception of the *Spurias*. I have witnessed some winter kill due either to a lack of winter hardiness in some varieties or an application of fertilizer too late in the season.

At present, I know of no other gardeners growing any number of JIs in my area or in all of Nova Scotia for that matter, but I am sure there must be a few.

I began hybridizing in 1997 with a cross selfed on an unregistered JI. I got 54 seeds from the one pod. I have really just been daubing pollen on the few I had in bloom. Last summer I did no crosses, as I hadn't seen any bloom on the previous crosses. Hopefully this summer I'll have several more varieties in bloom to do crosses on, and I hope to see my first seedlings bloom. At this point I have no specific goals in mind, although extended bloom is something I feel strongly about.

All JIs interest me, but I am quite taken with the peony doubles (9-12 Falls) as well as any bloom with a picotee effect. I love edges on flowers, no matter the color. I also like good clear self colors, especially the whites. I am also interested in tetraploid JIs, but as yet I have none in my garden. The *versicolor-ensata* hybrids also interest me, and I have a few of these in my garden displaying excellent vigor and growth habits.

I would be interested in a robin for the Canadian members of SJI, so we might exchange ideas with each other. There aren't that many of us, and we are spread out across our large country.

In general the development of the tetraploid JIs is really exciting; with all the possibilities that are opened up with these hybrids. In my own garden, I hope to apply for display garden status with SJI within the next couple of years. I have a bed devoted almost entirely to JIs, but I also like combining them with other perennials, such as daylilies, providing two seasons of bloom.

The problem of JIs exhausting the soil they are growing in needs attention, although I don't know if there is a simple answer. I have heard that rose growers have encountered similar problems when replanting new roses where roses have previously been grown. Also more studies on plant hardiness, either on a scientific or hybridizer's level. The northern limit of JI hardiness should be extended. There seems to be a common perception in the gardening world that JIs cannot be hardy below Zone 6 USDA, but many are much hardier. I have heard of JIs growing in Zone 2 with some protective winter mulch.

I really look forward to the development of extended bloom, reblooming, remontant, or continuous blooming JIs. My ocean-side garden and its climate allows for a fairly long bloom season, sometimes into early August, but the prospect of JI bloom into September is really exciting. I also hope that hybridizers will continue looking at the entire plant when selecting seedlings, so as not to fall into the trap of a pretty face with nothing else going for it. I want healthy, vigorous JIs with wonderful blooms to boot.

Ella May Wulff of Philomath, OR:

I first became interested in JIs when I saw advertising from Walter Marx Gardens in the late 1960s.

I grow JIs here in Oregon, but haven't really had a permanent planting place for them until last fall so I can't tell you how they are doing for me. Last time I grew them in Corvallis, they did well. I had them for many years in CT, which is why I am wondering about the remarks I have seen about clumps going downhill after being in the same place for awhile. How long a time might that be? I had mine for about ten years in the same spot in the CT garden. They were still looking great when we moved back here.

Oregon is fortunate in having quite a few growers and hybridizers of JIs. It seems to be an ideal location for them, though they do need watering in the summertime.

No hybridizing for me; I'm way too busy with too many kinds of plants and other matters. If I ever do any breeding with irises, it will be to follow Jean Witt's suggestion that I make use of the many different clones of *I. tenax* on our four acres to produce some selected strains that hybridizers can use with other PCIs to get hybrids that do well in the Northwest. My limited experience with the *Californicae* hybrids is that they do very poorly for me.

I favor the 6 Fall Higo types. I guess I got started with them from Marx (Marhigo) and am sticking with the familiar. I do NOT like ones with many more petals or petaloids. They are freaks! Some of the broader petalled 3 Fall JIs are ok. I'm not sure we need dwarfs either.

No round robin for me! Just more time consumed, despite the fact that I'm a motor-mouth.

Nothing especially exciting. OK, actually getting them into the ground is exciting, considering that I keep buying and they have languished in pots for several years!

If the diseases I've read about in The Review start to affect my plants, maybe then I'll find some studies or research of use.

I would like to see lots of repeat bloom, many branches and buds, and GOOD FOLIAGE. It is frustrating to have such gorgeous flowers available for only a few weeks. The foliage has to carry the show the rest of the year, so it had better be attractive. Flowers should be held ABOVE the foliage.

DISPLAY GARDENS

Phil Cook is preparing an updated list of display gardens for inclusion in the next issue of the Review. If you are interested in participating and are NOT already part of the Display Garden program, please contact him. If you are ALREADY listed in the program, you will be contacted in the next few weeks for information and ideas on how to promote the appreciation and use Japanese irises by the general gardening public.

Phil Cook
PO Box 338
Underhill, VT 05489
802-899-9928
phgarden@together.net

2005 – INVITATION TO HYBRIDIZERS

The Diamond State Iris Society will host the Society for Japanese Iris Convention in Dover, Delaware, June 2005. Hybridizers are invited to send guest Japanese irises of recent introductions or seedlings under serious consideration.

Shipments will be accepted:

September 1 to October 15, 2002

April 1 to May 15, 2003

September 1 to October 15, 2003

Send guest plants to:

Theresa Jewell

310 Lloyd Guessford Road

Townsend, DE 19734-9544

Email: tljcwjell@aol.com

(302) 378-3523

Photographs: We are requesting that hybridizers send a 35mm color slide of each of their submissions. Please mark them clearly with the name or seedling number of the iris. These slides will be shown at the convention.

Guidelines: Three to five divisions of each variety may be submitted. The name of the variety or seedling number must be clearly marked on each division. In addition, a packing list with the following information must be enclosed:

Hybridizer name and address

Email, if available

Name or seedling number of variety

Description, distinguishing characteristics and bloom season (E, M, L)

Year of introduction, if applicable

If a guest seedling is named subsequent to shipping to the convention, it is the responsibility of the hybridizer to notify the Guest Iris Chairman no later than January 1, 2005.

A receipt will be sent to all contributors. Two months before the convention, contributors will be asked for instructions regarding disposition of guest plants. Options are destruction, donation to the SJI for auction at the convention, or return. Returns will be shipped post paid, except to foreign addresses. The convention committee and the owners of tour gardens will follow the code of ethics as printed in the AIS Convention Handbook. Only officially submitted guest iris will appear in the convention booklet.

UPCOMING EVENTS

UPCOMING EVENTS:

- April 24-29, 2002 2002 AIS Convention, Memphis, TN
 <http://www.irises.org/2002convention.htm>
 AIS January 2002 Bulletin, page 17
- 4-25-02 4:00 PM SJI Board Meeting – McNair & Henry Room
- 4-26-02 1:30 PM SJI Membership Meeting – Salon E
 Slides – Don Delmez
 with slides from Willy Hublau
 Hybridizers-bring your newest & best
 Auction – Peter Weixelmann
 Donations accepted <pweixl@aol.com>

All meetings are open to the Public and members are encouraged to attend.

2005 JI Convention – The Diamond State Iris Society will host the Society for Japanese Iris Convention in Dover, Delaware, June 2005. Hybridizers are invited to send guest Japanese irises of recent introductions or seedlings under serious consideration. See article on Page 25 for rules.



How To Become a Hybridizer

John Coble, Michigan

Tim Brown and Georgia Pomphrey of Rockford, Tennessee, wrote that they enjoyed reading all of the hybridizers comments in the Fall 2000 Review. They then asked, "could you drop back and do an article for the beginners on how to pollinate a Japanese iris, how to plant the seed, do they require refrigeration prior to planting, etc.?"

The drawings that Bob Bauer did for the book, *The Japanese Iris*, make it easy to point out how to make sex with a Japanese iris. The female parts are hidden. The male pollen is easy to find on 3 anthers attached to the end of 1" filaments, one under each stylearm. The 3 stigmatic lips (female parts) are located at the end of the stylearm, just under the stylearm crest. This is the same location for all iris.

To pollinate an iris and make a seed pod, collect pollen (pick off an anther with finger or tweezers) and apply pollen to the stigmatic lips of the flower you have chosen for the pod parent. Most Japanese iris are very fertile, and bumble bees (even thrips) pollinate many blooms (bee pods). So, you need to protect your cross.

The pollen is ripe and ready to collect just as soon as the flower opens, about mid morning. Pick the anthers and store dry as soon as the flower starts to open (to protect from pollen eaters). The anthers will continue to open and fluffy pollen will mature for use later in the day. When the flower you want to pollinate starts to open, tear off all the petals, leaving just the 3 stylearms, to prevent insect pollination. Also remove and discard the 3 anthers (stamens) from under the stylearms to prevent crawling insects from self pollinating the flower.

When the flower opens, the stigmatic lip is tight up against the tip of the stylearm and not receptive. It will be late afternoon-early evening before the stigmatic lip matures, curves down and is receptive to pollen. It will still be receptive and viable the next morning. Japanese iris are easy for the hybridizer who is still keeping his "day job": collect pollen and emasculate the pod parent blooms in the morning and pollinate in early evening or the next morning!

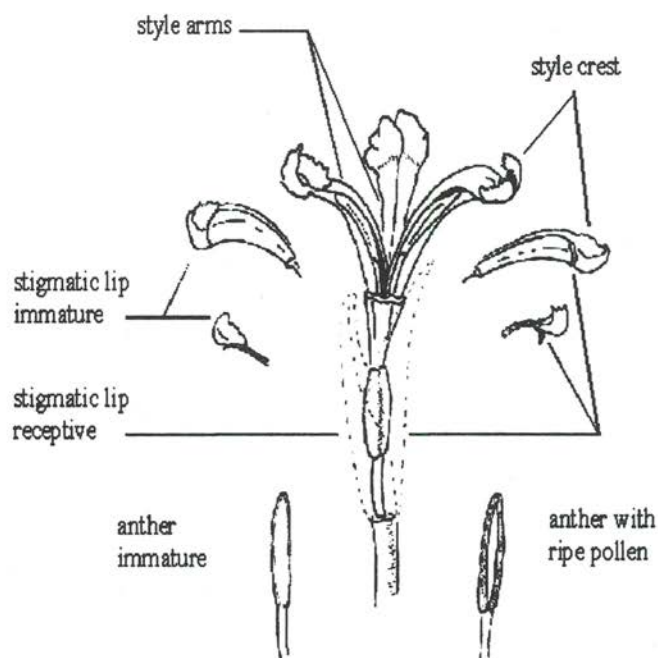
To pollinate: hold the stylearm crest between thumb and finger with a slight pull upwards, and with the other hand brush pollen on the exposed lip. That's it.

Label your cross: tie a tag around the base of the specific ovary that you have pollinated. Crosses are always written "pod parent" x "pollen parent". The successful cross will start to grow a swollen seed pod within a week, but will take 10-12 weeks to form a mature seed pod ready to pick – usually with 40-60+ seed per pod.

In Michigan, we pick the pods in late September as the pods turn tan or brown. Within a couple weeks, crack the pods open and store the seed in marked envelopes. This quick removal of seeds is to remove any worms that eat seed. Seed can be stored for germinating indoors (refrigerated) or planted outside (October in Michigan) for spring germination.

Japanese iris seed need stratification to germinate: a cold chilling period (10-12 weeks) to breakdown one set of germination inhibitors, and a wet period to leach or break down another set of germination inhibitors. Plant seed outdoors in organic rich soil about ½" deep, tamp the soil lightly, keep soil moist in spring as they germinate. When the seedlings are 4-6" tall, thin or transplant to 4-6" apart – mulch and keep moist to damp all summer long. Use a miracid type fertilizer monthly.

Indoors, we store the envelopes of seed at room temperature or in the refrigerator. We "package" each cross in old nylons in December. The bundles are all put in a bowl and soaked in water for 12 days, changing water daily. The next to last soak is in 10% bleach water to retard mold on seeds in the refrigeration stage. The drained, wet bundles are then refrigerated for 12 weeks in a zip-lock bag. The seeds are removed from the refrigerator in early February. We spread the seed from each cross on a cup of wet sand, covered with plastic wrap, to watch germination which usually begins in 3 days and will continue for 3 weeks. We then pot up only germinated seedlings to save space under the fluorescent lights, where empty cells in the trays would be wasted space. The plain "shop lights" (cool white) are kept close to the seedlings (even touching) and kept on 24 hours a day. We plant the seedlings outdoors after all danger of frost. The 3 month old seedlings (with the equivalent of 6 months light) grow rapidly, show increase fans in July, and often produce 2-4 bloom stalks per plant the following June. You're hooked! ♣



Japanese Iris flower with petals removed

To create a little flower is the labor of ages

William Blake

IRIS CITY GARDENS

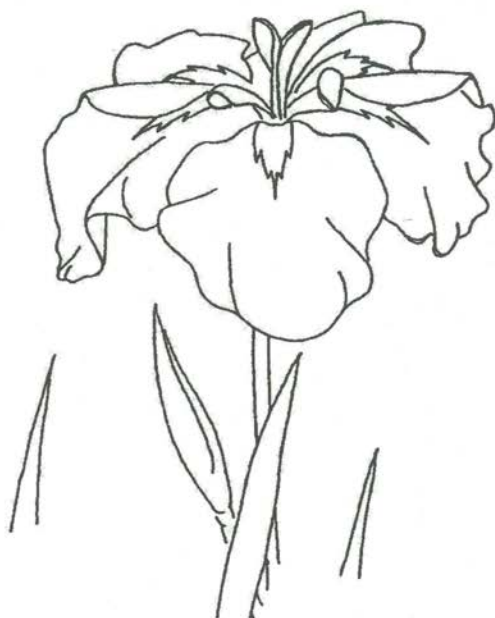


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EDITOR'S ESSAY

Rita Gormley

This issue we want to dedicate to Evelyn White who passed away after a prolonged illness last year and was our editor for many years. Her obituary is in the spring 2001 issue and all of her many friends will miss her forever.

These are very big shoes I have volunteered to fill and I will be grateful for your patience and assistance.

Although this issue is very delayed, the Spring 2002 issue is well on its way and should be out by June 2002. Our usual deadline of February 15th has been extended to April 1st and I URGE you to send your items in (UPCOMING EVENTS, SHOW SCHEDULES etc.) by that date. With the publication of that issue, we will be back on track and on time.

It is important that we publish articles of quality, print pictures of quality and give our quality members all the up-to-date news. If you even hear a hint of an interesting new item, let me know and we'll try to track it down!

Lorena Reid's article "Getting Acquainted with SJI Members" is a fascinating snapshot of what is going on in gardens all over the world. Thank you very much to all who took the time to share this information with us. We hope more of you will respond back to her telling about your likes, dislikes, successes and failures. We all will learn a lot from what has or has not worked for others who grow Japanese Iris.

As a result of spending many years involved in Iris Youth activities and seeing the benefits both to the Youth and the overall Iris organizations they are involved with, I am a firm advocate of Youth membership. AIS has many knowledgeable Iris hybridizers who started as AIS Youth members and the newest Board member of the SJI, Andy Wheeler, was a Youth member not too many years ago. There is a special Youth Dues structure to encourage their participation in SJI and we urge you to give a gift membership to your favorite youth members to encourage their participation.

On a more personal note, many of you know me as Kevin Gormley's mom and, with his dad Tom, grew with Kevin, irises, and the AIS family he acquired. Kevin is now 21 but his love of irises and all those people who taught him, spent time with him (and sent him free iris) when he was 12-16 meant a lot to him and I am forever in your debt. You saved me from endless hot, sweaty baseball and soccer practice games. I had to drive him to Iris shows

and Judges' Training instead! He trained as a judge with Don Delmez, Riley Probst, and Dave Niswonger. Most of my Iris knowledge comes from osmosis; Iris people are generous and give information freely and I hope to return the favor by working on THE REVIEW.

Now that I have retired from the hustle and bustle of the corporate world, I can devote more time to my passions of reading, writing and gardening. My little cat-friend Hamilton and I pursue these pleasures together, are often tripping over one-another sharing the book, computer or garden tool. A lovely life, indeed!



2001 AIS HONORABLE MENTION — JAPANESE IRIS



KOSHUI NO ASA (Shumizu by Warner '98)



PLEASANT STARBURST (C.Harris '98)

2001 W.A. PAYNE MEDAL RUNNERS UP



ELECTRIC GLOW (Aitkin '92)



DIOMEDES (Innerst '92)