Pacific Iris

Almanac of the Society for Pacific Coast Native Iris

www.pacificcoastiris.org Volume 49 No 2 March 2021

Facebook favourites

A few of our favourite Facebook photographs of PCI in the spring season 2021.

Jane Jordan's photographs from her garden

Left, from top: 'Bonus Point', 'Fresh Eyes', and Garry Knipe seedling 1138_5

Right, from top: 'Susannah Wept', and Garry Knipe seedling 1726_1

Pacific Iris, Almanac of the Society for Pacific Coast Native Iris

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SPCNI MEMBERSHIP

The Society for Pacific Coast Native Irises (SPCNI) is a section of the American Iris Society (AIS).

Membership in AIS is recommended but not required for membership in SPCNI.

	US	Overseas
Annual, paper	$15.00	$18.00
Triennial, paper	$40.00	$48.00
Annual, digital	$7.00	$7.00
Triennial, digital	$19.00	$19.00

Lengthier memberships are no longer available.

Please send membership fees to the SPCNI Treasurer.
Use Paypal to join SPCNI online at http://pacificcoastiris.org/JoinOnline.htm (SEE NOTE BELOW)
International currencies accepted

IMPORTANT INFORMATION FROM THE SECRETARY/TREASURER ABOUT DUES NOTICES

Members who get paper copies, please keep track of the expiration date of your membership, which is printed on your Almanac address label. We include a letter with your last issue, and may follow this with an email notice, if you have email.
Members who get digital copies will get an email message after receiving the last issue. If you have a question about your membership expiration date, contact the Secretary. Also contact the Secretary if your contact information changes in any way, including phone, e-mail and mailing addresses.

AMERICAN IRIS SOCIETY

Membership in AIS is not required for SPCNI membership, but it is encouraged and may be of considerable benefit to gardeners new to growing iris.
Send membership renewals or inquiries to the AIS Membership Secretary, or enroll on line at : http://www.irises.org/member.htm.
Pam Messer, AIS Membership Secretary, P.O. Box 6, Huxley, IA 50124
Phone: (515) 597-4240 E-mail: aismemsec@irises.org

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Annual, single	$30.00
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Life, single	$1000.00
Life, dual	$1500.00
E-membership	$15.00

PLEASE ADVISE SPCNI & AIS OF ANY CHANGE OF ADDRESS

PACIFIC IRIS DEADLINES: March 15 and September 15.

NOTICE RE PAYPAL

When you order seeds or extend memberships via PayPal, please send a message separately to the appropriate email address (seedex@pacificcoastiris.org or orders@pacificcoastiris.org). More often than we like, PayPal does not send a confirmation message to these addresses.

When you send a separate email, include the date that you placed an order, or the date when you updated your membership. Then the Secretary or Seed Chair can quickly find the missing transaction.

In this issue:

Front cover -

Iris douglasiana near Elk, Mendocino County, Ca. Photo—Kenneth Walker

PUBLICATIONS AVAILABLE FROM THE SPCNI TREASURER

Prices listed are for SPCNI members in the US.
For out of US, please add $3.00.

PRINT ARTICLES

Check List of named PCI species and cultivars
2005
Lists species and named cultivars and hybrids to 2005. $9.00
If ordering both print and CD checklist versions together, $14.00

A Guide to the Pacific Coast Irises
Victor A. Cohen, 1967
Reprint of British Iris Society 1967 booklet, describing species, sub-species and distributions. 40 pages, $8.00

A Revision of the Pacific Coast Irises Lee W. Lenz, 1958 Reprint of Aliso journal article 5.5 x 8.5
72 pages. $8.00

Hybridization and Speciation in the Pacific Coast Irises
Lee W. Lenz, 1959. Reprint of Aliso article 72 pages, $8.00
If ordering both of Dr Lenz's reprints, $14.00
All three volumes , $20.00

Diseases of the Pacific Coast Iris
Lewis & Adele Lawyer, 1986. Fall 1986 Almanac, 22 pages, $4.50

Almanac Index, 2005,
includes the following indices: author, subject, species, hybrids, $4.00, or download free PDF from the SPCNI website.

COMPACT DISCS

SPCNI Photo CD, 2009.
Compiled by Ken Walker, this CD includes 423 photos of species and hybrids, neatly labeled. $9.00.

Welcome to the Beauty of Pacific Coast Iris CD, 2009.
A 15-minute presentation with a concise overview of PCN species, early hybridizers, Mitchell Medal winners, gardens landscaped with PCIs, and culture tips.
Ready to play for individuals or groups, $9.00

Editor's notes

Pacific Coast Iris gardeners from all parts of the globe are starting to look forward to something like a normal growing season, after all the trials and tribulations of the past year or so.

We can begin to think about trips to other parts of the country, (and other countries) to view plants growing in the wild, as well as visiting gardens that feature PCIs.

In general, the nursery industry was busy over lockdown, as people were spending time on home improvement, and devoting more energy to their garden.

Bob Sussman and Garry Knipe invested some of their time on experiments—Bob looking to introduce genes for early flowering, while Garry trialed different methods of sowing old PCI seed. Both file reports in this issue.

Debby Cole has penned an interesting piece about trimming PCI foliage, while I added some notes on my experiences with this question.

Kathleen Sayce tells us of the remarkable discovery of an *Iris douglasiana* found growing in an Atlanta, Georgia garden - not where you would expect any PCI to be flourishing.

Kenneth Walker has shared a lot of photographs of various wild forms of *I. douglasiana*, both in the wild, and in botanic garden collections. It is a fascinating illustration of the species' diversity.

We also carry a story from the *Otago Daily Times*, a Dunedin, NZ newspaper, on the PCI breeding exploits of SPCNI member Mary Barrell.

As well, there is plenty of administrative news in this issue—financials, new members, seed exchange news, and a report from the SPCNI Board's first Zoom meeting.

Here's hoping you had a great bloom season, and that there has been plenty of seed set and gathered for next year's seed exchange.

Gareth

Bob's early bloomers

Words and photographs by Bob Sussman

Why do people hybridize flowers?

The simple answer is that they want bigger and more interesting blooms.

But there are other considerations too. For example, there is the desire to produce plants and flowers that will grow better, and are more resistant to disease and local factors, like frost and heat.

Somewhere in the mix of hoped-for traits is the desire to extend the blooming period, and this is what we have spent some time working on, concentrating specifically on creating early bloomers. At the same time, we have been keen to make sure the progeny are both nice looking and are also good growers that will easily survive the warm and dry summers we have in southern California.

Typically, we cross a couple of irises that flower early in the season. This is as early as December at times, but more regularly toward the end of February into early March. Our peak blooming season is mid-March until the end of May or sometimes early June. While every year is a little different based on fluctuations in weather patterns this is our typical experience, evidenced by several years of pictures.

Early flowering 'San Ardo'

How does one go about inducing early flowering, and how long will it take to get results?

One way to go about this is to cross the early bloomers that we have with each other, the idea being that like breeds like .

In theory early bloomers are more likely to produce progeny that are also early bloomers.

Second, we can cross one early blooming plant with another that blooms during the regular season, with the hope that we will get some early bloomers with a wider range of characteristics.

This is not a short term project – you will not get results in the first year. This is because from initial cross to flower takes between 1-1/2 years to 2-1/2 years. Further, when an iris is juvenile it may bloom later in the season but as it becomes more mature it flowers earlier in the season on a predictable basis.

Although we have not been working on this for very long, we are starting to get some very positive results from our first crosses.

Our early blooming cultivar 'Canyon Banner'

We started a couple of years ago in 2019. We crossed 'San Ardo' with our 2020 introduction 'Canyon Banner' and reversed the cross as well. Both of these irises have historically been early bloomers. 'San Ardo' a Joe Ghio introduction from 2002 has bloomed at our nursery as early as January. 'Canyon Banner', our other parent tends to bloom in early March with us.

We also crossed 'San Ardo' with a few of our 'Clincher' x 'Now Showing' crosses. 'Clincher' is a 2003 introduction from Joe Ghio, light golden in color, while 'Now Showing' is another Ghio creation in much darker colors, usually flowering later in the season.

It is early in the process for 2021 so far. There are 1150 crosses that should bloom this year, growing in 3-gallon nursery pots. Of them, 20% have 'San Ardo' or 'Canyon Banner' or both as parents. There are five from 'Canyon Banner' x 'San Ardo' that have flowered with more in bud. There are none at this point from the other group that have flowered or are in bud.

The new early blooms to this point are shown below, in the next column. and on the next page.

What does this all prove? Not much at this point but the results will keep coming in.

In theory when early bloomers are used as parents, they should produce early blooming children.

"In theory, theory and practice are the same....

in practice they aren't."

More ‘San Ardo’ x ‘Canyon Banner’ crosses

2020 Statement of Financial Position

Income	2,253
Memberships	1,139
Seed Catalog	1,112
Interest Income	2
Expenses	1,155
Licenses	20
PayPal Fees	72
Postage	333
Printing	612 [see note]
Website	119
Net for 2020	**1098**

Account Balances at year end
(SPCNI uses a calendar year)

Total	19,458
Checking	7,978
PayPal	1069
Savings	6,840
Scholarship	3571

Note: Printed only Fall 2020 issue in 2020

Scratching the surface -

experiments with old PCI seed

Words and photographs by Garry Knipe

This past fall, I decided to plant some leftover seed from 2016 which had produced some of the best turquoise blue seedlings that I have seen. Since these were prized seed, I wanted to try to maximize the likelihood of germination.

What should I do?

Hindsight is a marvelous thing - if I had known I was going to want those seeds four years later, I would have stuck them in the freezer. But lack of foresight and freezer space meant they ended up in a plastic bag in a dark corner of my closet.

Many years ago, in a somewhat poorly controlled experiment, I found that placing seed in a nylon stocking hung in a toilet tank did not substantially affect the germination rate. So, I thought that maybe I should try one of the methods of scratching the outer seed shell to allow water to more easily set off germination.

Accordingly I set up an experiment to see if this "scarification" technique would work for my PCI seed. From an online list of seed scratching methods, I chose sandpaper.

Taking the four most hopeful seed packets from 2016, I divided the seed evenly from each packet paying attention to the size and quality of each seed. I also did this for two packets from 2019 and a packet from 2020. From each packet, half of the seeds were sown into pots unmodified. Before planting, the other half were first dragged across some sandpaper to scratch a very small hole through the outer shell until just a tiny bit of the soft interior was visible. Each pot contained from 17 to 25 seeds depending on the seed count in the original packet.

"Garry's reason for wanting to plant 4-year old seed: the beautiful blue seedling 1613_6. Unfortunately, it has a few faults: its stems are very short, the long spathes must be manually torn away to allow the flower to open, and it failed to survive transplanting. Darn!"

These 14 pots were labelled and set outside in partial shade along with nine other seed pots containing unaltered fresh 2020 seed. This year here in central California, winter temps were mild with daytime highs usually between 48-68F (9-20C) and morning low temps seldom approaching freezing. Unfortunately, we only had one or two good rains so I had to water the pots every few weeks to keep them moist.

It is now the end of March. The emerging sprouts have all been counted, and here is what I found.

Looking at all the planted seed: 83% of the fresh 2020 seed sprouted. 77% of the 2019 seed sprouted, and 28% of the 4-year-old 2016 seed sprouted.

Looking only at the 14 pots of scratched and unscratched control seed, the scratched seed sprouted slightly less at 43%, while the unscratched seed sprouted at 53%.

Looking only at the eight pots of 4-year-old seed, scratched seed sprouted at 21% while 35% sprouted from the unscratched seed. It should be noted that great variation in the sprout counts was observed. Some batches of old seed sprouted decently while others hardly at all. Here are the sprout counts for each pair of scratched and unscratched seed from the four packets of of 4-year-old seed: (10, 12) (6, 12) (1, 4) (1, 2).

So what does this imply?

Firstly, I probably won't bother taking the time to scratch PCI seed before planting.

For seed stored at room temperature, expect the germination rates to decrease as the years go by. However, if you have a good reason to try some old seed, go for it. I have heard stories of partial germination from 10-year-old PCI seed. I know I have high hopes for those 48 seedlings that did sprout from old seed.

Other advice for germinating PCI seed.

Back in the 1990s Lewis Lawyer wrote some articles in the SPCNI Almanac regarding the best temperatures for germinating different species of PCI. In general, most PCI seed required moisture and temperatures around 50F (10C) to germinate optimally. A few of the northernmost species needed temps a bit cooler. This is not a problem for me since winter rains in central California usually come with temps in this range. However, folks living in warmer places might consider stratifying their PCI seeds in the refrigerator before planting.

Also talked about in some old Almanac articles was that below freezing temperatures were fine for seed that had not yet germinated. But PCI that had started germinating were sensitive to colder temps and should be protected from a solid freeze.

Any readers (especially those living in cold or warm regions) who have suggestions on how to best grow PCI from seed are encouraged to send their descriptions to Gareth, our editor.

Seedling 1613_6., showing its short stem.

Another from the class of '16 - 1611_ 2

Pacifica Foliage: Trim It, or Not?

Words by Debby Cole

Every few years this question comes up again. The answer, I think, depends somewhat on where you are and what you want from your garden.

If you're in a place that gets multiple hard freezes over winter, it makes sense to leave the dead foliage on the plant as insulation for the crown. Or if dead foliage just doesn't bother you, sure, leave it on as a testament to the survivability of the variety.

If you get a few frosts but definitely not hard freezes, and you'd rather not give the garden pests shelter, it's fine to tug off the dry, grey old stuff lowest on the plant.

If you'll get hard freezes but just can't stand looking at the dead foliage, then take it off but insulate with something else, like maybe a 3" deep layer of bark or conifer boughs or dry oak leaves. (Note that those are somewhat acid mulches, and don't decay rapidly into soft mush.) Be sure to scrape back the mulch when freeze danger is past.

Well, how about the green stuff? Should you remove the old green leaves too? After all, there'll be new ones in the spring..... This is more the province of the obsessive gardener, who really cares how things look out there.

And the answer is: wait until the new growth is up in the spring. The plants need some green for photosynthesis, to feed themselves, even in the dead of winter. I conducted a pseudo-scientific experiment one year and trimmed off all the old green in the fall on several PCI beds, and bloom and growth on them the next spring was extremely poor. The only exception would be diseased foliage (like with rust); you don't want to leave that on to be spread over winter. Hopefully you've sprayed if needed, and aren't faced with that problem.

How do you know when it's time? When you see the old green foliage lying down and the new bright growth spiking up, and it's warm enough to work outside, you can trim off the old green leaves if you want to. Granted, not all your PCI will be at the same stage of development on the same day, so just wait until that standard is met by all your clumps.

Further words by the editor

The question of trimming PCI leaves has also been a vexatious one for me, growing a large number of PCI seedlings in a big bed in the front of the house in my garden in Masterton, New Zealand.

I like the naturalistic look of the bed, which when not in flower looks like a large meadow of tall grass, or for New Zealanders, like a big display of dwarf cultivars of New Zealand flax, *Phormium* species.

The plants do tend to look a bit tired by the end of the season, and for a couple of years I assiduously trimmed all the foliage back in early winter—the brown dead leaves, but also the dull green leaves of the previous year's growth.

It made the beds look tidier—perhaps a little too much so for my taste—but it also had a bad side effect that it took me a few years to begin to understand.

Our climate has warm and dry summers and cool and wet winters with the chance of frosts in any month—literally. We are warm enough to grow tropical hibiscus in sheltered spots, but cool enough to grow peonies well.

The problem is we regularly get late spring frosts, and they play havoc with the PCI flowers. Not, as you may imagine. by killing the buds, but by attacking the stems as they expand, leaving them with a weakened area. This does not show up immediately, but as the flower stem extends, it develops a soft area and eventually falls over at the damaged spot.

Sometimes it is near the flower bud, but equally often much lower in the stem.

I have found that the best way to circumvent this problem is to leave the foliage alone. The plants do look a bit scruffy at some times of the year, but it means I get much better flowering, without the "swan's neck" effect of stems flopping over the deep pine bark mulch the plants are growing in.

I do have a bit of clean up each autumn, but I am careful to only remove the oldest and deadest leaves, making sure there is plenty of frost-proofing for next spring.

And I also get some delightful surprises—*Cyclamen coum* seedlings, originating from the PCI's time as seedlings in the glasshouse, appear in random spots under the dying foliage of the irises. Another reason not to trim.

SPCNI New Members, May 2019—to March 2021

Gail Barth, Richmond, New Zealand

Sara Cammeresi, Kenmore, WA

Beth Conrad, Stoke, Nelson, New Zealand

Carol Cullen, Chico, CA

Signe Danler, Corvallis, OR

Joy De Vries, Portland, OR

Jessica Fullerton, Mill Valley, CA

Pat Garamone, Yuba City, CA

Jon Hall, Los Angeles, CA

Steven Hall, Portland, OR

Mark Hannon, Sonoma, CA

Ann Heenan, Newport, OR

Andrew Hendrickson, Dixon, CA

Jan Jakobsen, St. Heddinge, Denmark

Daniel Jeffers, Sarasota, FL

Teddy Kawakami, Stockton, CA

Brandelyn Kuhl, San Francisco, CA

Ramon Mestres, Playa de Aro, Spain

Maria Moreno, Højerup, Denmark

Mary Morrison, Portland, OR

Philip Oertel, San Francisco, CA

Mary Parsons, Kenwood, WA

Patrick Paterson, Somerset, CA

Paul Rogers, Aloha, OR

A.J. Rei-Perrine, Seattle, WA

Devora Rossman, Mendocino, CA

Samuel Sacharoff, Centralia, WA

Elizabeth Simpson, Hope, New Zealand

Elizabeth Vantassell, Suisun City, CA

John Whisler, Astoria, OR

The Board of the Society for Pacific Coast Native Iris is thrilled to have so many new members. It is heartening in a time when so many horticultural and gardening groups are struggling to maintain their membership, that we are able to attract new members.

A glance through the list of our newest members illustrates that the Pacific coast of the United States of America is the homeland of PCI - the only member on the eastern seaboard is Dan Jeffers - in Florida.

Those who know the conditions that PCIs prefer will be astonished to think that someone could grow them in Florida, but rest assured - Dan actually lives at altitude in Mexico, and just uses Florida as his postal address.

As well as Washington, Oregon and (of course) California, we have a small group of new members from the Nelson area of New Zealand—all three new Kiwi members come from that district.

We also have two new members from Denmark, and one from Spain.

Those of you who are lucky enough to garden on the Pacific coast have an opportunity to help the Society spread the membership even more worldwide. A key ingredient of what we do is running the seed exchange, allowing our international members access to the latest genetics from American breeders, as borders have closed to transnational plant sales in many places.

If you can save your seed and send it in to our Seed Exchange Chair Louise Guerin , you will have many grateful gardeners across the world.

The other thing you can all do is contribute stories about your experiences growing PCIs. We are all interested to hear how others have coped with the issues of seed germination, foliage trimming, frost protection, plant breeding - just the day-to-day tips you have picked up along the way.

Our Society is most viable when many members actively contribute to its successful running.

Iris douglasiana in Atlanta, Georgia? Oh My!

Words by Kathleen Sayce.

In the current issue of the Rock Garden Quarterly, North American Rock Garden Society www.nargs.org Raleigh Wasser, horticulture manager, writes about a rock garden at Atlanta Botanical Garden atlantabg.org.

Heat, summer rain, and humidity are inevitable in this location, thus this rock garden is a test area, not for alpine plants from around the world, but for tough plants that demonstrate rock garden style, in Raleigh's words "creating alpine vistas at sea level."

Raleigh likes irises, (sensible woman), and writes about irids that do well at ABG, including several *Sisyrinchium* species, *Alophia drummondii*, *Herbertia lahue* ssp. *lahue*, *Iris pumila*, and *Iris douglasiana.*

I read that paragraph several times, then wrote the editor of RGQ to ask Raleigh for details about the last species.

The *Iris douglasiana* selection came from Garden in the Woods www.nativeplanttrust.org in 1993, and was a tiny grassy tuft of leaves when Raleigh started at ABG. In the past few years it has grown and bloomed. I asked if it has set seed, and have not heard back. Raleigh sent me a few photos, and yes, the flower details in the photo show without a doubt that this is clearly an *Iris douglasiana*-type PCI.

Iris douglasiana **label and foliage at Atlanta Botanical Garden. Photo Raleigh Wasser.**

This was confirmed by several SPCNI members who grow, hybridize and judge PCI; Bob Sussman, Garry Knipe, and Debby Cole.

The miracle is that it grows in Atlanta at all.

Boulders in the rock garden are from midtown Atlanta, 1989, from a building excavation. The soil is sand mixed with local red clay and topped with pea gravel. Slopes are 15 to 30 degrees. This long arc of rock and well drained soil faces south-southeast. Atlanta is zone 8a, with 52 inches of rain per year, hot humid summers and cold winters.

I. douglasiana **flower. Photo Raleigh Wasser.**

So, by chance, this rock garden has neutral to acidic soil, the soil is well drained, and fortunately, has a very tough *I. douglasiana* species-type selection that can weather the humidity and year round precipitation. I would not have bet money this could happen, but it has.

Irisarians, from outside the regions where PCI naturally grow, take heart from this success: excellent drainage in neutral to acidic soil, summer rainfall, and a tough PCI all came together to thrive in a Georgia rock garden. This environment provided just enough of the right conditions.

Thank you Raleigh for this wonderful information.

A Barrell of fun with PCIs

First published in the *Otago Daily Times,* New Zealand

Most people recognise bearded irises but less common is a group native to western parts of the United States, from Oregon to California. Like the bearded types, Pacific Coast species are rhizomatous, growing from thick underground stems, but they lack the bristle-like "beards" on the prettily marked lower petals (falls).

When hybridiser Mary Barrell, of Cambridge, spoke to the Otago Iris Group earlier this year, she explained that what were known as Pacific Coast irises are now called Pacific native irises, confusing for New Zealanders, who tend to stick with the earlier name, making it clear that the group comes from North America's west coast.

"There's a whole family of them," Mrs Barrell said, of which four were used in hybridising programmes. The result is a colour spectrum from pastel-like to darkest purple, clearly demonstrating why irises get their name from the Greek goddess of the rainbow.

Of the four Pacific Coast species used for hybridising, the most familiar is probably *Iris innominata*, which comes from southern Oregon and California. It likes cool, wet winters and dry summers, so does well in much of Otago and Southland (NZ provinces).

Next up is *I. douglasiana*, whose home territory is southern Oregon, north and central California. Mrs Barrell commented on its "ugly leaves", adding that *I. tenax* was "daintier [and] readily crosses with other Pacific irises".

The fourth species used in hybridising programmes, *I. munzii*, is endemic to a small part of California in the foothills of the Sierra Nevada mountains. Plants grow about 600m above sea level and reach almost 1m in height.

"This is the biggy," Mrs Barrell said.

"It is rare in the wild and the true species is very rare in New Zealand, if it exists here at all."

There were half a dozen other species in the Pacific Coast group but they were not well-known.

The species are not difficult to grow if some simple rules are observed.

Neutral to acid soil and good drainage were essential, she said. To her own irises, she added acid fertiliser "and a handful of sheep pellets" annually, plus potash in autumn.

The other important factor in success with Pacific Coast irises was a summer watering programme. Unlike bearded irises, they need a steady supply of water — "erratic watering is a no-no" — and a mulch of pea straw can be beneficial.

Pacific irises are not always easy to divide. Living in the Waikato, Mrs Barrell does this in April or May but Otago growers recommend doing this task in spring.

"Rust is the only disease but it's not a very big problem, in New Zealand" Mrs Barrell said.

Other fungal infection were potentially more serious, turning plants brown. As soon as it was seen, cutting off the infected part and exposing the cut root to the sun could save a damaged plant.

'Princess Blueberry 2'
Photo—Mary Barrell

A keen hybridiser, Mrs Barrell has produced some fine Pacific Coast irises, many with the prefix Karapiro, but two years ago, she was ready to give up, saying: "Out of 600 seedlings, there was not one I was happy with."

'Krackerjack'
Photo—Mary Barrell

She persevered and is working on enhancing the flash of turquoise on the petals of some varieties.

For those who want to try their hand at hybridising Pacific Coast irises, seed pods ripen about Christmas. Seed can be sown immediately, or left until autumn.

'Vanilla Charm'
Photo—Mary Barrell

Hybridiser Mary Barrell sows hers in April in potting mix with a pH of 6.5-7.0. She recommends using a large, deep pot so there is space for roots to develop. Two-thirds fill it with potting mix, then top with a 5cm layer of seed-raising mix. Put about 30 seeds into each pot, pushing them down 2cm. Fresh seed will not need to be soaked but if seed is more than a year old, soaking overnight before sowing is recommended. Cool conditions are needed, as seed will not germinate in temperatures above about 20 degC.

'Wine and Cheese'
Photo—Mary Barrell

Leave pots in a shaded spot — under a shrub is ideal, Mrs Barrell said — and by spring, seedlings should be 10cm-15cm tall and ready to plant into the garden. Flowers can be expected within two years and the thrill is seeing what new varieties have been produced.

AIS YouTube Webinars for 2021

In lieu of a convention during 2021, each section is offering a webinar, which will be posted on AIS's You Tube Channel, https://www.youtube.com/c/TheAmericanIrisSociety or by going to YouTube, and then searching for American Iris Society.
If you subscribe to this channel, you should get a notice when new webinars are posted.

SPCNI's webinar on gardening with PCI and other native plants will feature southern Californian plants, with a presentation by Bob Sussman, President, called *Pacific Coast Irises from Species to Hybrids to your Garden.* For more tips on growing PCI in this climate, check our website, pacificcoastiris.org, and look at the gardening section.

Summer 2021 AIS Webinar Series—Note the dates for live-streaming:
All programs air on Wednesdays at 5:30 p.m. Pacific, 7:30 Central, 8:30 Eastern.

Programs will be uploaded to the AIS YouTube Channel within a short period of time following each presentation. (As long as the quality holds -- sometimes there are connectivity disruptions).

July 7th == Japanese Irises
July 14th == Reblooming Irises
August 4th == Median Irises
August 11th == Dwarf Irises
September 1st == Pacific Coast Irises
September 8th == Historic (TBC)

First SPCNI Board Zoom meeting

Words by Gareth Winter

Unlike most iris societies which are regionally-based, the SPCNI Board has members up and down the west coast of the United States, and an outlier based on the other side of the Pacific in New Zealand.

Board meetings have been very difficult, so President Bob Sussman hosted the first Zoom board meeting on April 30 (or May 1 in New Zealand!).

A number of matters were raised, including the need to fill the Vice-President position. The Board feels it would useful if this position could be responsible for organising field trips and garden tours, either in real life or digitally, through YouTube or similar channels. Board members would be delighted to hear from anyone who thought they could undertake to fill this position.

The Board would also like to instigate a Social Media Chair, someone who could increase our profile on Facebook, YouTube and other social media sites. Again, the Board would love to hear from you if this feels like something you could do for the Society.

The Board will taking a look at our existing by-laws. They were promulgated in 1972, and various state laws and regulations have changed meaning the by-laws may be out of date. Board members will be checking that the by-laws reflect the way the Society is actually operating. They will also be checking with AIS to see if there are any updates that they recommend affiliate organisations follow.

The continuing poor returns on deposits in savings accounts have spurred the Board to investigate other options, such as using a low cost, indexed fund for our savings. The Secretary-Treasurer will report at the next meeting.

A further Zoom meeting is scheduled for late June. Updates on the above issues can be expected in further issues of *Pacific Iris*.

Seed Pool news

Words by Louise Guerin,

This year I processed 24 orders (last year was 19 or 20, the year before was in the mid-20s). The exchange has seen a few new people jumping in to the hobby. Sadly, a similar number of people have disappeared from the seed exchange.

I shipped to the US, England, Australia, New Zealand, Spain, Canada and Belgium. The most orders (after those from the U.S.) were from England. The new BREXIT rules have put a wrench in the works for people who are trying to buy seeds. The UK is pushing for phytosanitary certificates for all plant material, including seeds. If it gets more restrictive, it will surely destroy the sale of seeds.

In all but one year since I've been completing seed orders, I've been lucky enough to have been told that my packages fall into the 'large envelope' category - which means that I haven't had to complete a customs declaration form. So far, there have been no issues with returned seed. All seeds are packaged in clear plastic zip-lock bags (in accordance with international laws for shipping seed - they must be visible and be in a fully sealed pouch or envelope).

Debby Cole and I worked together to set up four categories of seed for this exchange: open pollinated named hybrids, species, garden crosses and specialty items. Bob Seaman had a few suggestions for making the lists better categorized, and we hope to put his suggestions into effect for the next exchange.
Every year I plan to get the whole thing to him earlier than the previous year. With four categories (instead of two), we gave him a bit of a shock on top of all the work and a tight deadline.

The exchange opened on December 3 and was closed on February 10.

We've whittled the seed in the exchange down to 2014 through 2020 (we had a few items that were from 2011 that I finally removed from the seed inventory).
I'll continue weeding out older seed each year now.

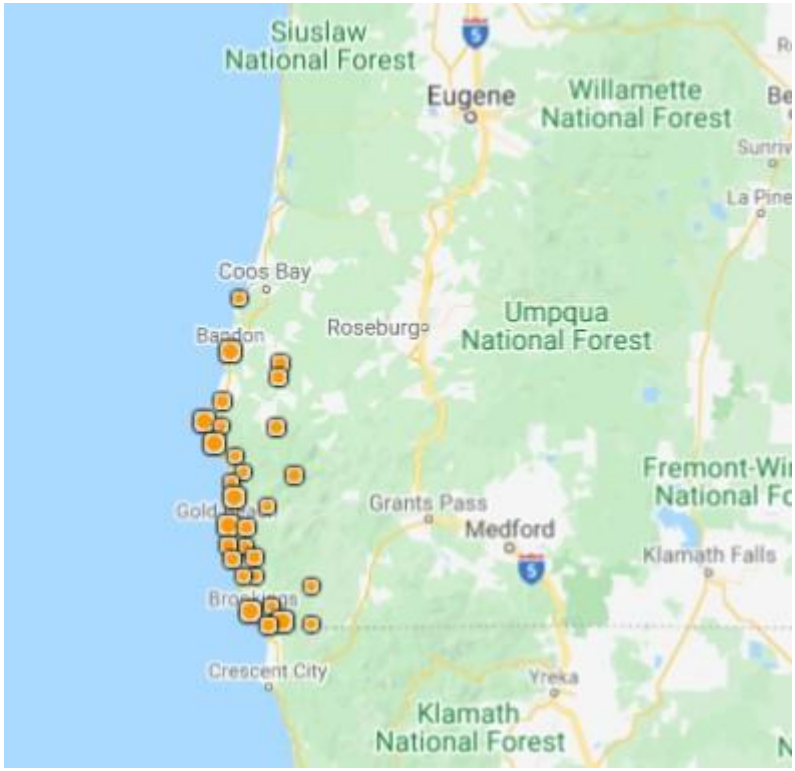
Donations were more limited than usual.
I had seeds from Debby Cole, Garry Knipe, Bob Sussman, Ken Walker and Paul Rogers.
We discuss who we can approach about more seed, but so far, I haven't had much success with that effort. It would be great if more members could donate to the pool.

All seeds were shipped on Feb 17. Thankfully, the postal slow-downs did not seem to affect delivery of the seed orders. For this season, all in-U.S. orders were set up with tracking and all recipients received an email with the tracking information. Large envelopes shipped overseas are not eligible for tracking.

A little bit about phytosanitary certificates: I need them to send plant material within the US for 10 states. Because of the pandemic, taking seed to the local inspection station (which is not really local at all) had to be curtailed. The agriculture office only offered inspections via a visit to my work office. The fees for them to come to my office start with: $130.00 for the first certificate + $29.50 per 15 minutes of travel.
I charge recipients of ISI (International Succulent Introduction) material $40.00 for the certificate - which means I have to have at least eight orders on the dock to be inspected - and they all have to be done within 30 minutes of the inspector's arrival - or they continue to add fees for how long they are on the property. I do all of the paperwork for the certificates via an on-line portal. I have to ensure that there are sufficient funds in the portal to produce the certificates. Trying to do this for seeds headed to the U.K. would be too expensive for it to be worthwhile for anyone to buy seeds from the exchange. If the large envelope system fails, we may need to rethink selling seed to anyone in a UK country.

Douglas iris in the wild ...

Iris douglasiana in its many forms



The Douglas iris, *I. douglasiana*, has the largest geographic spread of all the Pacific Coast Iris, growing in a narrow coastal band extending 700 miles between central Oregon and Santa Barbara, California.

Kathleen Sayce sourced two maps for us, showing the spread of the species. The one on the left came from the Consortium of Pacific Northwest Herbaria, https://www.pnwherbaria.org/while the one below was provided by the Jepson Herbarium at University of California, Berkeley, https://ucjeps.berkeley.edu/eflora

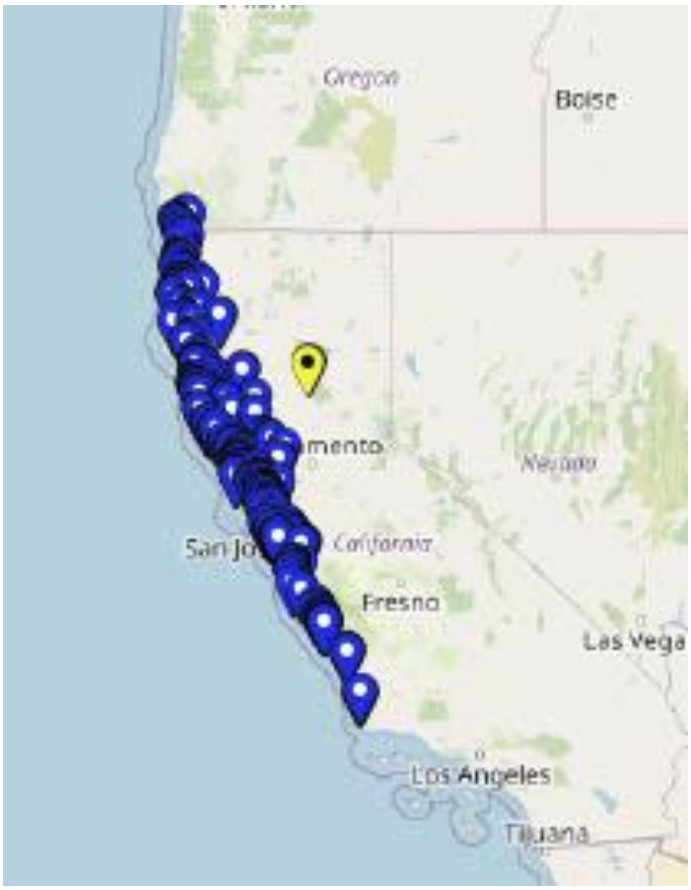
The type species was discovered by David Douglas in the Monterey Bay area in the early 1830s., and was named in his honour by the Rev George Herbert.

Douglas iris is common in coastal areas, and readily crosses with other PCI species when their growing ranges overlap. When growing away from its usual coastal haunts, it has often crossed with another species better adapted to more shade and less exposure to the elements.

This tough species is in the breeding of almost all garden cultivars. Selected wild-found specimens have also made their way into the garden, and they and their descendants are very popular - the tough white flowering form 'Canyon Snow'; 'Amiguita', a blue bi-toned form with a purple signal spot, and 'Mendocino Banner', a white with strong purple veining and purple style crests.

Kenneth Walker has been photographing various forms of Douglas iris, both in the wild, and in botanic gardens from eco-sourced seed.

We are proud to be able to share these images.



Limekiln Creek Highway,
Monterey County, Ca

Near Half Moon Bay,
San Mateo County, Ca

Arcata Airport,
Humboldt County, Ca

Limantour Beach,
Marin County, Ca

Soulajule Resourvior,
Marin County, Ca

Arcata Airport,
Humboldt County, Ca

Lands End,
San Francisco County, Caa

Skyline Blvd,
Alameda County, Ca

Near Thorn,
Humboldt County, Ca

The genius of Ghio

Joe Ghio continues his exciting work on breeding and releasing new PCI varieties.

This year he will be releasing six new cultivars via a list that will be sent out this summer.

Send a first class stamp to BAY VIEW GARDENS, 1201 Bay St., Santa Cruz, CA 95060.

We show a mix of seedlings, reselect seedlings, and cultivars on track for introduction in the next few years.

All are sourced from the Bay View Gardens' Facebook page.

Photographs by Joe Ghio.