

Gardens Report Fall 2015

## National collections:

Good Morning Bob,

Good to hear from you.

I still have not had opportunity to get out of the garden. A mild fall has given me time to begin moving my entire European and international iris collection into a 1000 sq. ft. of newly prepared beds.

I continue to plug National Collections in my communications and in a talk I gave to the Pierce Co. Iris Society last week. I do not expect to accomplish much until sometime later in November when I have to abandon work in the garden and client commitments abate. At that time I will complete the survey of the MDB class which will be the first contribution to the National Databank and I will begin, once again, communications with the various iris societies about the task of creating data chairs and surveying their respective classes or permitting me access to their membership roles and assembling a team of people to conduct those surveys. I will also begin assembling an ID team with experience and knowledge of the differing classes. That team will work with both HIPS and NC. I have been working with Doug Paschall of the Guardian Gardens initiative. Between he and the HIPS data chair they currently have the most data on which iris still exist but it is a very small amount of data, mostly commercial and public garden inventories. Doug and I have both reached the conclusion independently that in fact most iris are at the very least uncommon and Doug's data has suggested to him that extinction rates across classes may be as high as 80%. While I think that is true of MDB and I have it good authority it is true for JI I am generally more conservative and for the time being hold to 40-60% extinction rates for the other classes. Even this figure suggests to me the wisdom of core class collections and I hope to convince the various societies to consider more how that can play a part in preservation and contribute to assembling core class collections. Societies seems over-focused on the awards system and it seems to me that they hold out awards with one hand and drop the iris into a compost pile with the other. I am baffled that they make no provision for the preservation of the iris they so loudly applaud. I correspond intermittently with a gentleman who collects medal winners and it surprises me how many medal winners he has not been able to locate. How is it that iris societies so sincerely remark on the work of various hybridizers... Cook, Warburton, McEwen, Hager, etc. and then so readily abandon their accomplishments distracted perhaps by the novelty of the moment.

As reported previously I have found individuals to host core class collections of MDB, JI and Spuria and a number of other individuals who want to participate in National Collections focused on TB. I am still considering how we might organize TB collections: by hybridizer and decade, modern and historic are what I most typically think the best systems. With over 38,000 introductions and even with extinction rates of 50% that will be the largest series of collections to manage.

While I regard core class collections as the ideal for NC I recognize collections will vary relative to the interest of individual curators and we must utilize every venue to support iris preservation though I will continue to encourage people at the least to have some very specific collection. By the way my Warburton collection hit 72 (of her 140 introductions) this year and I have tentatively located 12-15

others. I have been joined in my efforts by Bee Warburton's granddaughter, Vicki Ann Flanagan, who has offered to hold a duplicate collection and assist in locating as many of Bee's other introductions as we can. She is corresponding with other family members to enlist their help.

A lot of this is a numbers game for me, an attempt to put preservation in perspective.... trying to calculate how many iris actually still exist, considering what is, on average, a manageable size for a collection and how many duplications of a collection (or any specific introduction) will really assure survival of an iris. Guardian Gardens current goal is 5. To that end I am always asking people how large their collections are. It is surprising how many people have collections of over 500 varieties and up to a 1000 and number have half again that many.

Working with HIPS we have already assembled a good sized list of candidates for the ID Committee.

I am also trying to track down larger collections of iris particularly those more focused on a particular class, with two intentions. First to invite them to consider participating in National Collections (I have a discussion going with a holder of a large Siberian collection) and secondly in the hope of acquiring inventories for a databank to inform the assembling of collections elsewhere.

One of the things I would like you to consider is taking an opportunity to ask the various iris societies to consider how they might contribute financially to iris preservation perhaps via a small addition or optional addition to membership dues or any other mechanism they can imagine. I will do that in introductions I write for various sectional publications this winter.

I want to work on finding a professional level marking system for Identifying cultivars that is inexpensive and readily avail to collection curators.

One other note. I would like to invite the Committee for National Collections to participate in the projects I am working on take on particular tasks with restricted commitments. Can I send that request through you?

I think that is all I have to report. I would be happy to address any questions you have.

Charlie

## **Display Gardens**

To: glenara <glenara@aol.com>

Sent: Wed, Oct 21, 2015 12:08 pm

Subject: Iris Society Plaques Quote

We have only three ( 3 ) applied for and granted AIS Display Gardens. This still needs better placement on the AIS website. Andy Rivarola created a paper certificate to be signed by the AIS President and sent

to the new grantees while we are awaiting the making of garden plaques. I would recommend the below & attached company for these plaques.

George Boyce

Hi George, Sorry, I did not get back to you sooner. I had to up the size of the plaques to 9"W x 7"H to make these work for casting (Minimum text size is 1/4" caps, and 3/8" Upper Lower case). Also had to consult the foundry on this one. Cast Aluminum Plaque 9"W x 7"H Stipple Texture Black Background No Border Bevel Satin Clear Coat 24" Garden Stake: 45 degree angle Recessed Background painted black, Raised Text/art brushed Alum. Price for 10 - \$215 20 - \$198 40 - \$189 These prices include Shipping. Please allow 15-20 Business Days for production after artwork approval. Attached is a rough layout of the plaque. Thanks! A.J. Larson

Awards USA, 5376 260th Street, Wyoming, MN 55092, 651-408-1111 (Office), 651-408-1119 (Fax)

