

Bayou and Marsh

No. 38 News from the Greater New Orleans Iris Society March 2022

Back In The Iris Business

WE'RE NOT KIDDING THIS TIME

We've been trying, in fits and starts, to return to our normal activities. We've done a few things through COVID, but now we have a full slate of spring events on tap.

What's ahead? Well, above all, the iris bloom season. Barring a freak late freeze, the bloom season looks promising. There already have been sporadic blooms in some areas through late winter, and signs of foliage thickening in the center of fans (a bloom scape beginning to emerge) are becoming apparent here and there. Depending on the weather, we should have good bloom in a month.

And there will be many opportunities to enjoy the season, including some GNOIS activities. And, let's be honest, there will be a few places where we

will need a little help from members to prepare. So here is what to expect.

Saturday, March 5, 9:30 – 11:30 AM– Spruce-up and Organize, Island Iris Nursery.

We need the help of members to plan the details of some of the activities that will follow during bloom season and to get our iris plantings in City Park ready for visitors. We can't pull off the events we will enjoy without some preparation, so we urge GNOIS members to assist for a couple of hours on March 5th. It will pay off for us all during the bloom season.

The Island Iris Nursery is behind the police stables in City Park for those who have not been there. Directions, including a map, are online at: <https://tinyurl.com/mr3v6d5u>

Saturday, March 26, 9 AM – Noon – Iris Viewing, and Joint Meeting with the Native Plant Initiative of Greater New Orleans, and Sale for Members.

This will be a big day to see all the irises in bloom, both the native species and our extensive and growing collection of hybrids. The planting covers





around three-quarters of an acre, and that's a lot of irises. We will be meeting jointly with the Native Plant Initiative of Greater New Orleans to tour the iris garden.

GNOIS members will lead a viewing and discussion of the species collection. There

should be flowers on all except *I. brevicaulis*, the latest to bloom. After that, GNOIS and Native Plant Initiative members will discuss native plants that grow well as companions to Louisiana irises.

The Native Plant Initiative has a very informative website. Check it out at <https://www.npi-gno.org/>

GNOIS is not having a potted iris sale for the general public this spring, but we will be offering members the opportunity to purchase some at this meeting. A list of the varieties available is elsewhere in this issue. Expect a little lagniappe, too.

Tuesday, March 29, 4:00 – 7:00 PM, Louisiana Iris Day at Longue Vue.

Longue Vue will be open free to visitors all day but has scheduled the traditional event with GNOIS for late afternoon and early evening. Come enjoy some light refreshments and an eyeful of blooming irises in the Wild Garden. Longue Vue has a nice collection in a beautiful setting.



LONGUE VUE
YOUR HOUSE, YOUR GARDENS

While the event is free, registration is required. You can go to the Longue Vue website www.longuevue.com, click on the Events Calendar, and scroll to March 29. Or you can click on the following link to go there directly: <https://tinyurl.com/34dj57wj>

April 2-3, Spring Garden Show, New Orleans Botanical Garden.

GNOIS will have an informational booth in the Show this year. We have purchased a fancy new tent for the occasion, and we need volunteers to help staff it, hand out material, sign up new members, and the like. We will also need help with setup and breakdown. Please contact Sue Anthony if you can help for a few hours.

Sunday, April 3, 10 AM – 4 PM, Louisiana Iris Rainbow Festival in the Besthoff Sculpture Garden.

The Rainbow Festival is a casual event and a chance to see the many Louisiana irises in bloom throughout the Sculpture Garden. The new section is planted with native species, and the original portion features hybrid cultivars along the lagoon and in the GNOIS Display Garden. We will have a few members on hand to visit with the public and answer questions. Volunteers are needed for this event to work in the information tent.

If you have not seen the new section opened last year in the Sculpture Garden, the Rainbow Festival provides a great opportunity. The blooming irises and fabulous sculptures are a wonderful combination. The Sculpture Garden is free again, and you don't have to visit during the Rainbow Festival only.

April 6-8, Society for Louisiana Convention, Lafayette.

Attending the SLI Convention is a bit of a commitment. The details were published in a section of the Winter 2021 issue of Fleur de Lis. GNOIS members received a link to this publication online. A PDF reprint of the convention section can be found on our website at: <https://tinyurl.com/mshy-pfv2> It contains all the details.



Immediately after the Convention, on Saturday, April 9, the entries from an accredited Louisiana Iris Show staged by SLI will be on display at the Festival des Fleurs in Blackham Coliseum. The Festival is a major garden event similar to Garden Shows in the Botanical Garden.



GNOIS On The Web
www.LouisianaIrisGNOIS.com
www.facebook.com/Greater-NewOrleansIrisSociety

**Irises Available For Sale
at March 5 Meeting**

Only one or a few pots of some cultivars

Ann Chowning
Aunt Shirley
Avelline
Beausoleil
Bera
Black Gamecock
Blue Splatter
Cajun Merry
Cherry Cup
Colorific
Delta Star
Dixie Country
Edna Claunch
Felician Hills
Flaming Hot
Flare Out
Frank Carroll
Friends Song
Grace Duhon
Great White Hope
Heavenly Glow
Holden's Hit
Honey Star
I. brevicaulis
I. giganteaerulea
Ignatius Riley
King Louis
Kristie G
Lakeview
Laura Louise
Lemon Zest
Lightning Quick
My Friend Dick
Magazine Street
Marie Caillet
Marie Dolores
Monkey Hill
New Basin Canal
Now And Forever
Perfect Match
Praline Festival
Professor Barbara
Sinfonietta
Wine Country

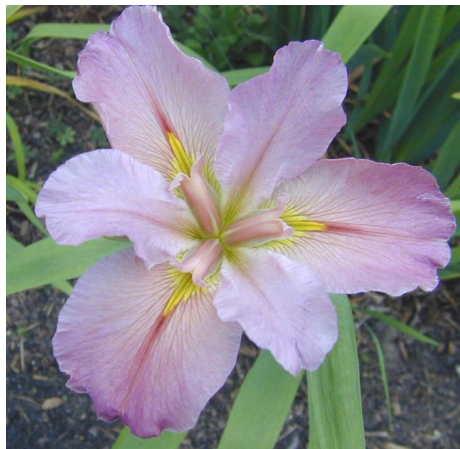
A few of the irises on sale



Blue Splatter



New Basin Canal



Felician Hills



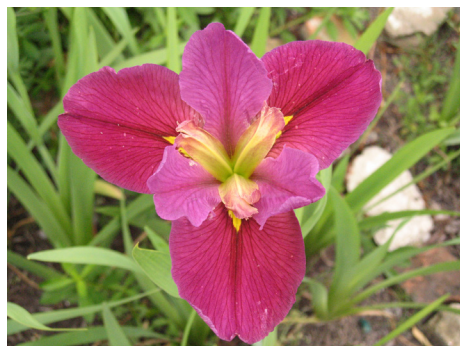
Magazine Street



Flaming Hot



Praline Festival



Lakeview

Wild Irises

Want to see some native irises in bloom? The hybrid cultivars are fantastic, but there is something unsurpassable in seeing the natural wild ones unimproved by unnatural selection. Around South Louisiana, there are many options to do that. Here are some suggestions.

Louisiana Iris Species Preservation Project Collection

Over 150 natural clones of the five basic species assembled as part of a Society for Louisiana Irises Project to preserve the natural forms of the irises. All collected in the wild over the years. These are displayed in a nursery environment, not a natural one, but there is no other place to see the full range of wild irises.

At the GNOIS Island Nursery. On display at the March 26 meeting. See page 1-2.

Directions to the Island Iris Nursery are on the GNOIS website at:

<http://www.LouisianaIrisGNOIS.com/IslandDirections.pdf>

Boardwalks in Parks and Preserves

Many easily accessible locations with wild irises are within easy driving distance of New Orleans. For the most part, they display the species *I. giganticaerulea*, the tall blue irises that grow along the Louisiana coast and that once grew over much of New Orleans before urban development. They are also found in coastal Texas and Mississippi. Wild or naturalistic plantings, in the recommended order based on current iris stands, include:

Joyce. The Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries Joyce Wildlife Management Area south of Ponchartroula. Spectacular stands of irises.
<https://www.wlf.louisiana.gov/page/joyce>

Bayou Sauvage. Bayou Sauvage National Wildlife Refuge, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Located in New Orleans East. https://www.fws.gov/refuge/Bayou_Sauvage/

Lockport. The Lockport Elevated Wetlands Boardwalk near Bayou Lafourche is a relatively short (0.3 miles), but a very nice place to see native irises. Off Highway 308 on the east side of the Bayou. Great for birders, too.
<https://tinyurl.com/y3uyus3k>

Jean Lafitte. The irises in the Jean Lafitte National Park and Preserve, Barataria Unit, near Crown Point, was the traditional place to see wild irises, but due to hurricane intrusion, they declined for some years. They are coming back strong. The visitors center and boardwalk system are first-rate. <https://www.nps.gov/jela/>

Other places include:

Fontainebleau State Park. A Louisiana State Park near Mandeville. https://www.lastateparks.com/parks-preserves/Fontainebleau-state-park,Big_Branch

Big Branch Marsh National Wildlife Refuge, Lacombe. Irises along Boy Scout Road and Boardwalk.
https://www.fws.gov/refuge/big_branch_marsh/

Northlake Nature Center. A 400-acre preserve near Mandeville. <https://northlakenature.org/>

See more information on the website of the Louisiana Iris Preservation Initiative
<https://www.licisaveirises.com/>
and the Greater New Orleans Iris Society
http://www.louisianairisgnois.com/Where_the_Irises_Are/

The Sydney and Walda Besthoff Sculpture Garden

The new section of the Besthoff Sculpture Garden opened last year and roughly doubled its size. The more open landscape was planted with many irises, but only the native Louisiana species. Most were donated by GNOIS, and they include *I. giganticaerulea*, *I. fulva*, and *I. brevicaulis*.

Between the new and original sections of the Sculpture Garden, a complete range of Louisiana irises can be seen, from the wild species to recent hybrid cultivars.





Our Island Iris Nursery is a unique asset.

GNOIS produces irises to donate to many public plantings and projects because we have this expansive space. We invite others to enjoy the display, share plants with members, and raise funds to support the nursery operation. Significantly, we help preserve the native species of Louisiana irises.

GNOIS depends on volunteers for upkeep. Irises must be potted, replanted, and weeded. We have invested in creating the infrastructure to keep maintenance work to a minimum, but the bottom line is that we need volunteers to help. Non profits like Limited Vistas help greatly, but we need individuals, too.

We need volunteer help in small increments

GNOIS needs members and others interested in giving us a couple of hours every month or so. If we can spread the work around, it will be a small burden. There are always a variety of tasks, and you can pick one that suits your preferences.

We also need a few Volunteer Leaders

Our Island Nursery Coordinator Mark Schexnayder has done an outstanding job pushing significant improvements in infrastructure and growing conditions. Mark is employed full-time, and continued progress will depend upon developing a few Volunteer Leaders to share responsibility for limited areas or tasks on the island. These might involve particular sections, such as a species area, or it could be organized around some task, such as dividing irises, propagation, or coordinating other volunteers. We are entirely flexible in working within members' interests and time constraints. If you would like to discuss stepping-up your involvement in the Island Iris Nursery, start a conversation with Mark. markschexnayder@gmail.com

The Island Iris Nursery

The site of many GNOIS activities, a resource for preserving irises, and the means to propagate plants for donations

Before the bloom

If there's this much foliage today, how many flowers will we see in a month?



What to expect

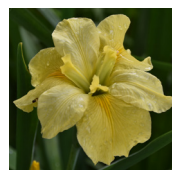
Images from the last couple of years, both species and hybrids



I. nelsonii



White form of *I. giganteaerulea*



Hybrid Louisiana irises. We have a huge collection at the Island Iris Nursery

A Few Recent Changes in GNOIS Membership

The GNOIS board has voted to switch the term of membership from a calendar year basis to a year beginning at the end of the month in which a person joins or renews. If dues for a renewal are paid late, the beginning of the term reverts to the original membership date. If you have already paid for 2021, your term will begin on the date your payment was received. This change will create a stable membership and put all members on a full one-year basis regardless of when they pay their dues.

It's still a deal!! For only ten dollars for an individual or family (or twenty-five dollars for three years), members can support and participate in all the activities of GNOIS.

And there's more!

Through a special arrangement with the **Society for Louisiana Irises**, your dues include an "electronic" membership in SLI. That entitles you to download a pdf version of the quarterly magazine **Fleur de Lis**, an excellent color journal regarded as one of the country's top iris publications. SLI, formed in 1941, is the principal organization dedicated to Louisiana irises.

Special Bonus

With each new membership or renewal, members will receive a certificate for an iris redeemable at a GNOIS meeting or function. One of the great benefits of our Island Iris Nursery is the availability of plants, and we want our members to share in this bounty.

Our Membership Chair is Catherine Mason

Membership procedures and projects will be headed by the Chair of our new Membership Committee, Cathy Mason. Cathy will send notices when your membership term is about to expire, and she will field any questions you may have about your membership. **If you receive a notice, please rejoin!**



Greater New Orleans Iris Society

GNOIS

PLEASE JOIN OR RENEW!

Dues are \$10 per person or household for one year, or \$25 for three years. Please make checks payable to Greater New Orleans Iris Society, or GNOIS. Please provide the names of those in the household who will participate and, if desired, email addresses for each.

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

PHONE _____

EMAIL _____

(Please provide and email address to receive this newsletter and other information.)

Mail to: Catherine Mason, Membership Chair
P.O. Box #438, Mandeville, LA 70470

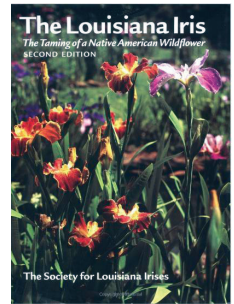
Society for Louisiana Irises Storefront

THE LOUISIANA IRIS: THE TAMING OF AN AMERICAN WILDFLOWER

Contributing Editors: Marie Caillet, J. Farron Campbell, Kevin C. Vaughn, and Dennis Vercher

Details: 254 pp, 111 color photos, 5 watercolors, 21 b/w photos, 14 line drawings, 11 tables, hardcover.

This authoritative treatment by The Society for Louisiana Irises is based on the first edition published by the Society in 1988, but it is considerably expanded. It covers every aspect of the history, botany, and development of these distinctive irises, with particular emphasis on the newest hybrids, hybridizing techniques, and cultural practices, and also includes suggestions for their use in the landscape and in floral arrangements. It should serve to introduce a wider gardening public to these colorful and versatile flowers. - \$30.00



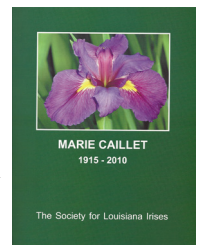
Special Publication of the Society for Louisiana Irises - The History of Hybridizing (2007)

This Special Publication of the Society for Louisiana Irises is a 100-page summary of how the "ditch irises" of Louisiana have been tamed and introduced into American gardens. Contents include informative articles on such early pioneers as Mary Swords DeBallion, Caroline Dormon, and Percy Viosca; the Shreveport and Lake Charles groups, the California hybridizers, and a wide variety of other contributors to the development of the Louisiana iris. Includes 30 color photographs of outstanding cultivars. Paperbound. - \$5.00 plus \$2.00 shipping within U.S.



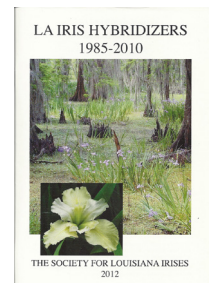
Special Publication of the Society for Louisiana Irises honoring Marie Caillet (1915-2010)

This is a very high quality publication that pays tribute to Marie Caillet, a charter member of SLI, longtime editor of the SLI newsletter, and the "grandmother" of SLI for many of us. This is a 52 page 8.5 x 10 publication in full color with many pictures of Marie, species Louisiana irises, Marie Caillet Cup Winners with pictures, a listing of SLI Distinguished Merit Award winners from 1989 to 2010, and memories of Marie written by several members of SLI. - \$10 plus \$3 shipping within US



Louisiana Iris Hybridizers 1985-2010

This is a paper bound booklet consisting of 99 pages of color pictures, the Marie Caillet Cup Winners from 2001 to 2010 with color pictures, the Mary Swords Deballion Medal winners from 1986 to 2010 with color pictures and many articles written by the hybridizers during the period 1985 to 2010. This is a companion book for the Special Publication of 2007, which contains information on the hybridizers from the beginning to 1984. - \$5 plus \$2 shipping within US



Special Publication of the Society for Louisiana Irises 1995

This paper bound special publication, edited by Marie Caillet and Joseph Mertzweiller, consist of 86 pages and contains "a half-century of progress", information on hybridizers, the development of the tetraploid LA irises, information on LA irises in Australia, culture of LA irises and many beautiful pictures of LA irises. There is a limited supply of this publication remaining so get them while they last. - \$5 plus \$2 shipping within US

The SLI Louisiana Iris Checklist CD!

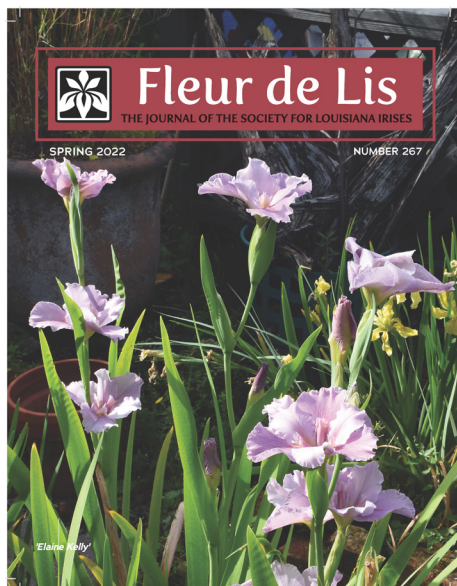
The CD checklist is illustrated with photos of many of the cultivars and it can be displayed in three formats. It has a powerful search feature that allows you to search the checklist by cultivar attributes such as name, date of introduction, hybridizer, parentage and much more. The checklist lists names, descriptions, breeder/introducer and parentage of iris cultivars from the 1920's through the present. The iris are grouped by year of registration and/or introduction. The CD will cost \$10 for delivery to the United States,



Any of these products & other Iris materials can be ordered from the SLI Treasurer Ron Killingsworth.

For shipment outside US please contact Ron Killingsworth directly for pricing

10329 Caddo Lake Road, Mooringsport, LA 71060 318-996-9969 retmiagt@gmail.com



The Spring 2022 issue of the SLI quarterly journal *Fleur de Lis* is at the printer and should be in the hands of SLI members in a few weeks. GNOIS members receive a PDF copy. Look for a link to the issue in an email soon.

Commercial Directory

Aitken's Salmon Creek Garden

Featuring *Beardless and Bearded Irises*

(360) 573-4472
aitken@flowerfantasy.net

flowerfantasy.net

608 NW 119th Street
Vancouver, WA 98685-3802

Bois d'Arc Gardens

Rusty McSparrin

(985) 209-2501
bois@charter.net
bois-darc.com

FULL COLOR CATALOG
ONLINE
Wholesale & Retail Prices

1831 Bull Run Road
Schriever, LA 70395

Cindy's Louisiana Iris

*Hybrid and Native Species
LA Irises*

(713) 922-5967

standardsandfalls@gmail.com
cindyslouisianairis.com

FULL COLOR CATALOG ONLINE
Featuring introductions by
*Ron Betzer, Cindy Dufrene, Joe
Musacchia, Patrick O'Connor and
Keith Pendergraft*

1602 Haver St.
Houston, TX 77006

Collier's Garden

*Louisiana Irises, Rebloom
Bearded Irises, Daylilies*

(816) 580-7116

*Please text this number

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REQUEST**

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Lawson, MO 64062-0032

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email@iriscitygardens.com
iriscitygardens.com

FULL COLOR CATALOG
ONLINE

Catalog text available as
a PDF download
from the website.

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Primm Springs, TN 38476

Louisiana Iris Farms

(337) 277-9930
louisianairis.com

Wholesale & Retail
as per website

Featuring introductions
by *Kevin Vaughn
& Elaine Bourque*

PO Box 82367
Lafayette, LA 70598

Redbud Lane Iris Garden

*Louisiana &
Bearded Irises*

(217) 232-5479
redbud142@gmail.com

Catalog \$1.00

2282 N. 350th Street
Kansas, IL 61933

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*Sustainably Grown
Louisiana Irises*

(410) 487-2796
diversityacres.plants@
gmail.com

[diversity-acres.
square.site](http://diversity-acres.square.site)

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Woodbridge, VA 22195

Bayou and Marsh

NEWSLETTER OF THE
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