

GROWING IRISES IN WEST TEXAS*



**Session led by Pug Parris,
Abilene Iris Fanatic**

July 26, 2025

9:00 am

**For Master
Gardeners**

Abilene

***Session Purposes:**

- To provide information about the practicality and ease of growing irises in our climate.**
- To share information about the Centennial Iris Garden at McMurry University, Abilene.**



**TEN
COMMANDMENTS
FOR GROWING
IRISES
IN WEST TEXAS**

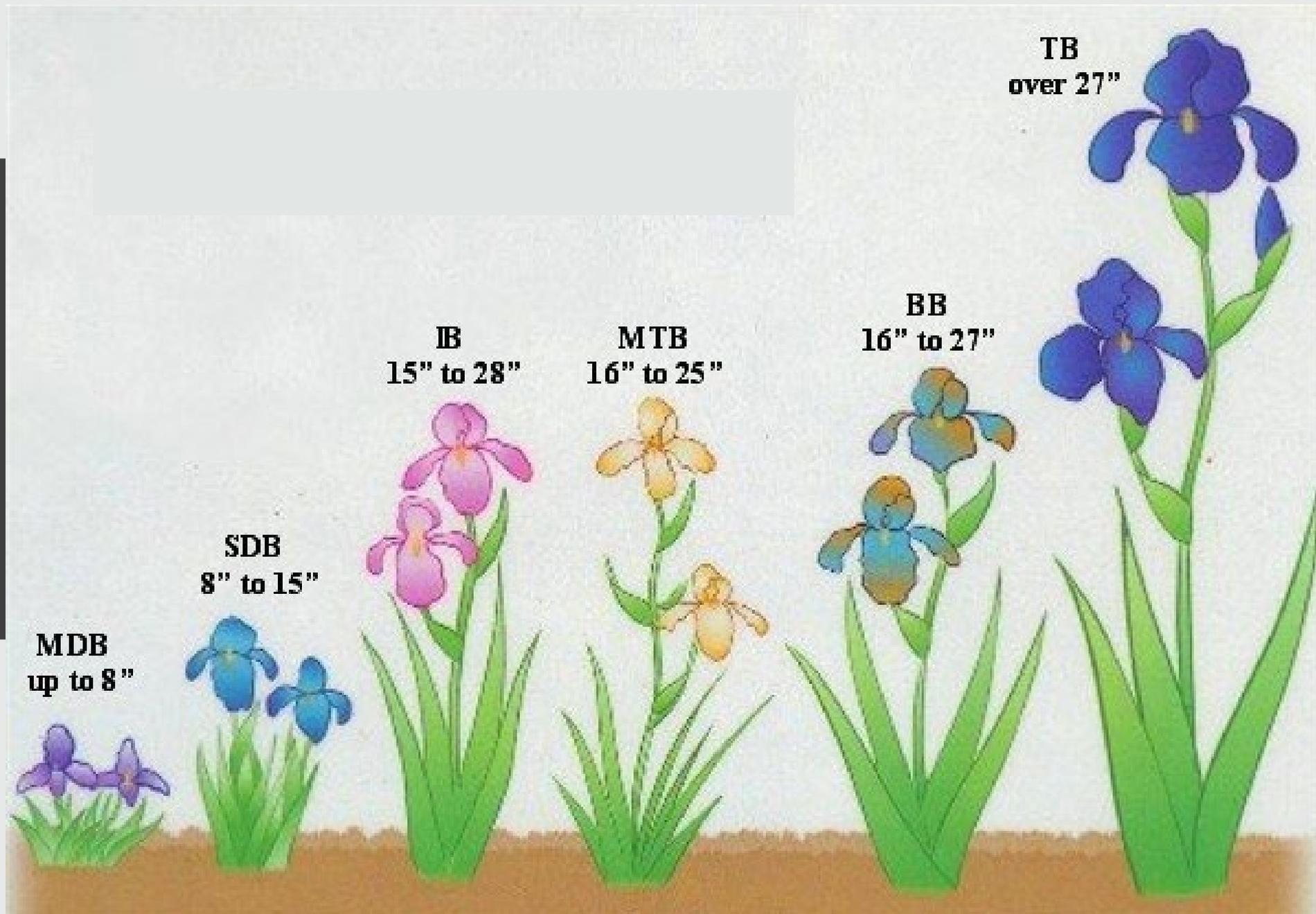




#1

There are many varieties of irises, but the tall-bearded iris is the most popular in West Texas. Honor it.

HEIGHTS & TYPES OF BEARDED IRISES



BEARDLESS IRIS?

- **Spurias**
- **Siberian**
- **Japanese**
- **Louisiana**
- **Pacific Coast Natives**



In addition to those 11 types of irises there are...

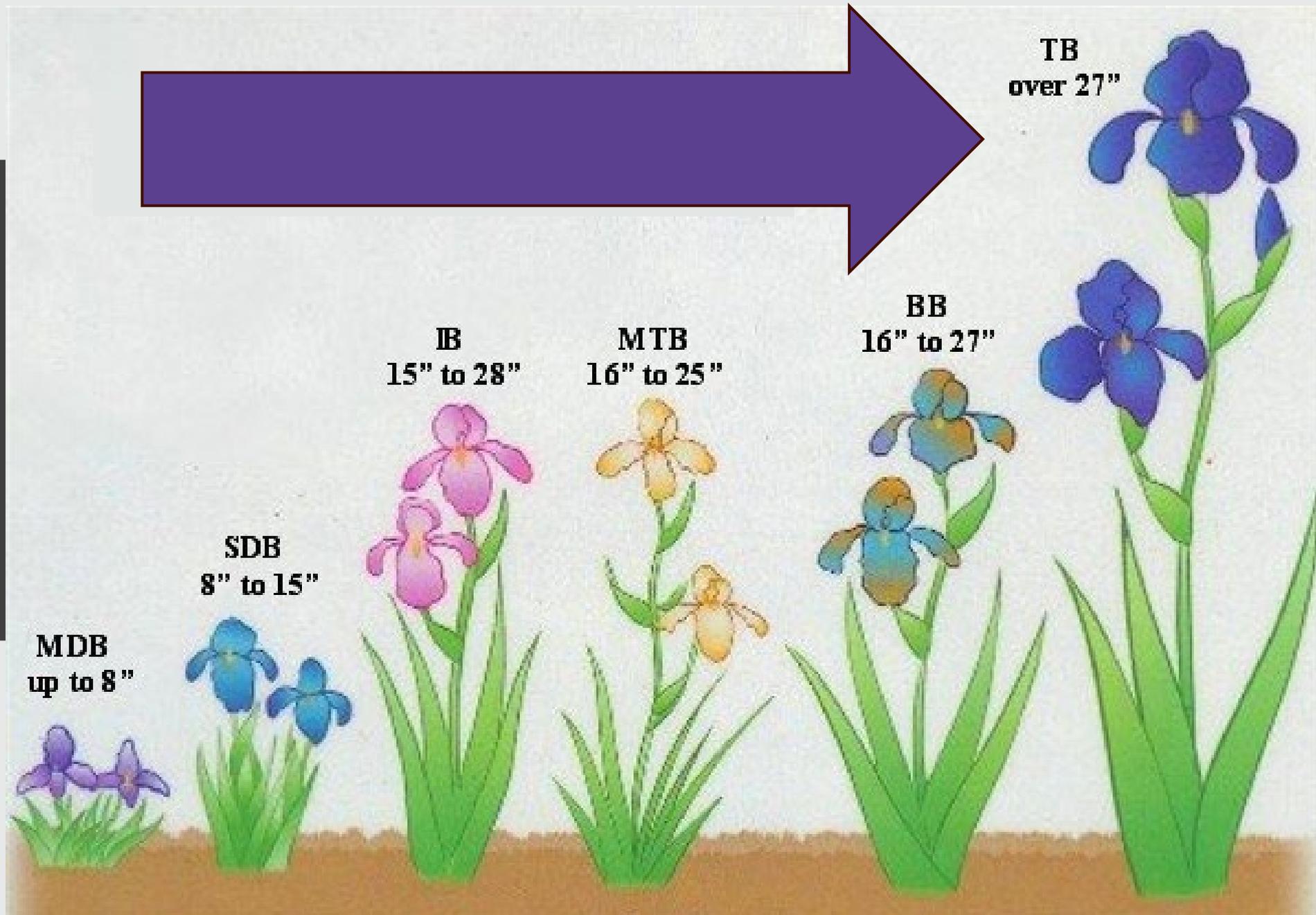
- Aril**
- Arilbred**
- Species**
- Species Hybrids**



There are even novelty cultivars such as this one which is a “space age”.



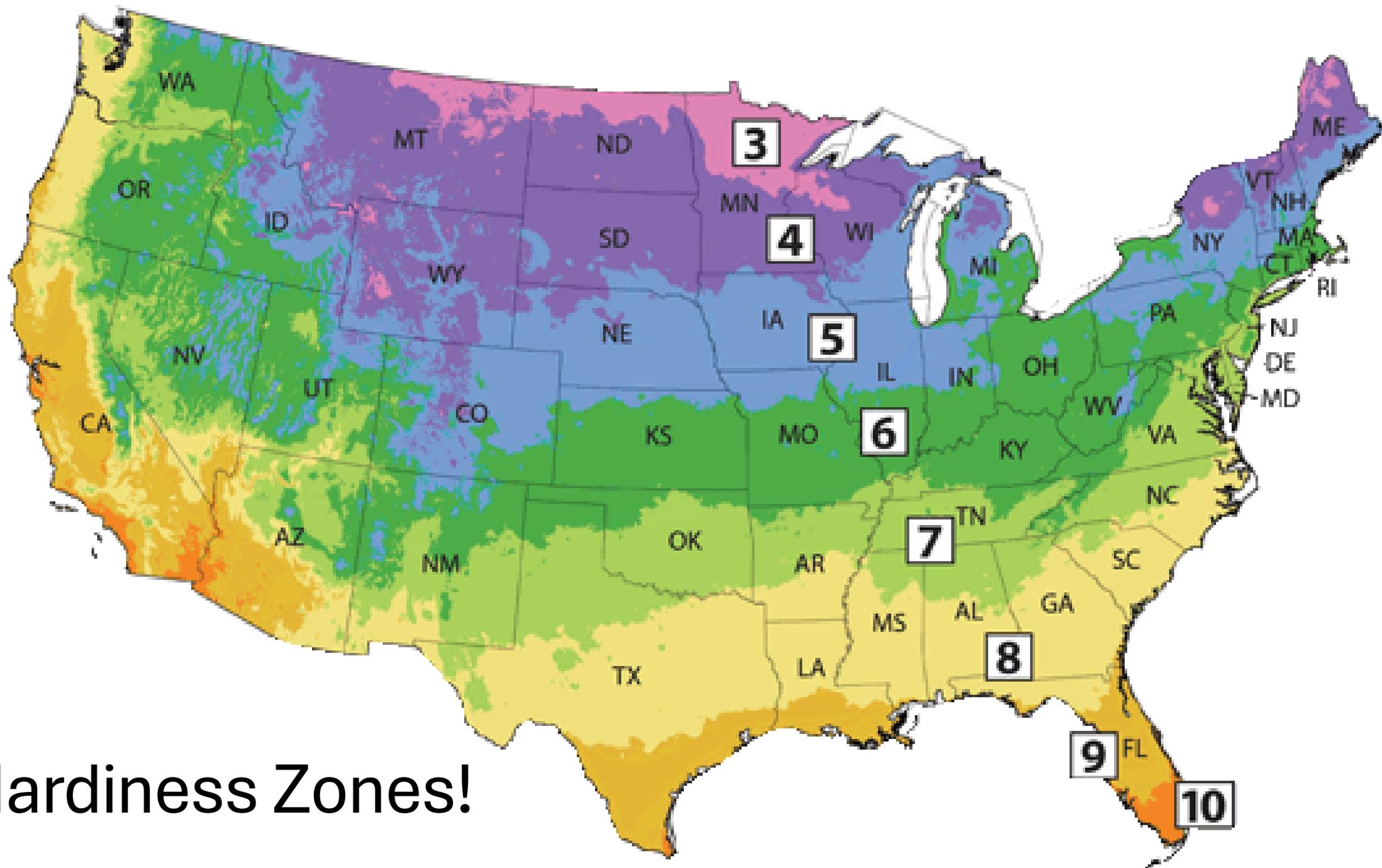
TALL-
BEAREDED
ARE THE
MOST
POPULAR
AROUND
HERE!



**Over 50-inches
tall!
Not bad for a
NOID!**



**WEATHER
MAKES
A
DIFFERENCE!**



Hardiness Zones!

#2



Hybridizers work diligently to develop and register beautiful cultivars with the American Iris Society. Thou should learn names (of irises and hybridizers).



Names!!!

- **Dykes Medal, 2024**
- **Perry Dyer**
- **Paul Black, 2017**
- **Arilbred**



Names!!!

- Dykes Medal, 2023
- Don't Doubt Dalton
- Tom Burseen, 2015
- Tall-Bearded

#3

Historical irises have stood the test of time and make exceptionally durable plants. Thou should honor the elders.



**2309 Glenwood
in Abilene
became home
for irises and,
specifically
Dykes Medal
winners.**



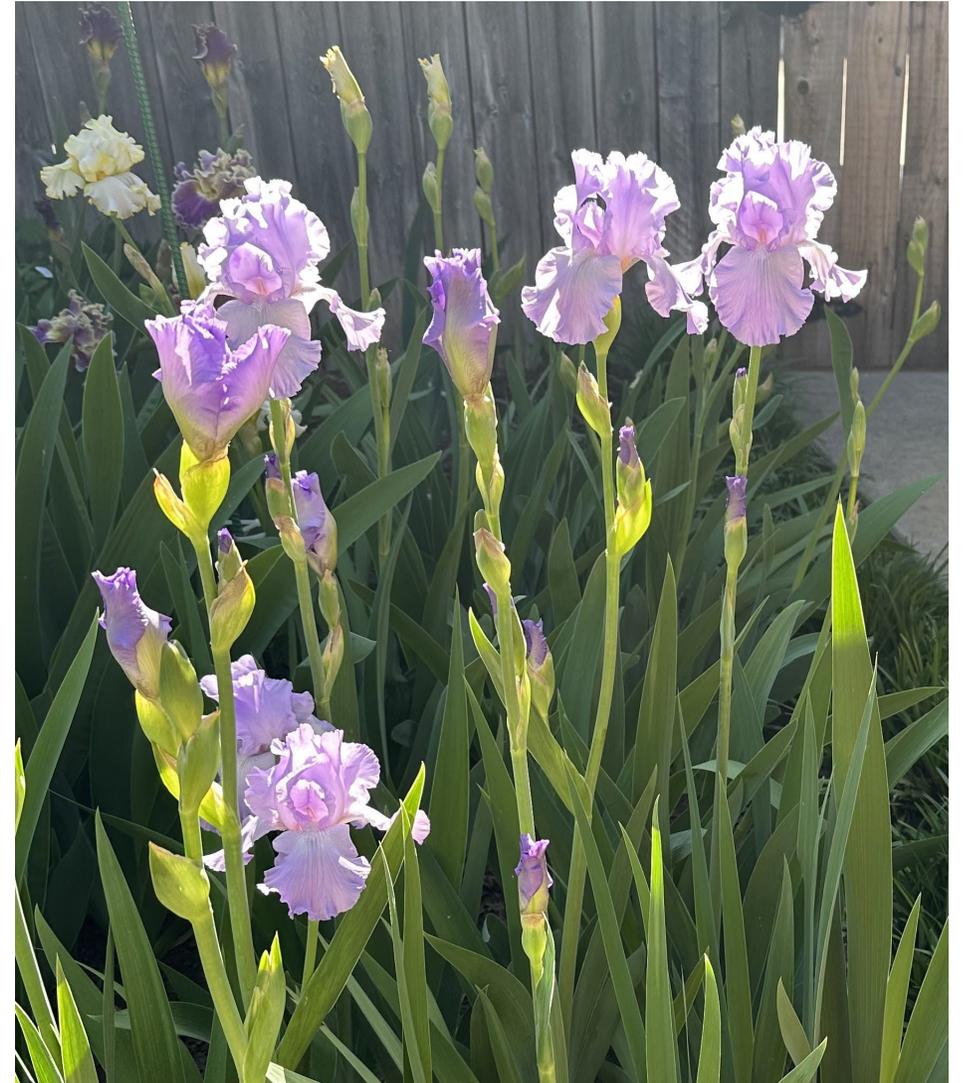
Crimson King

(Barr & Sons, 1893)



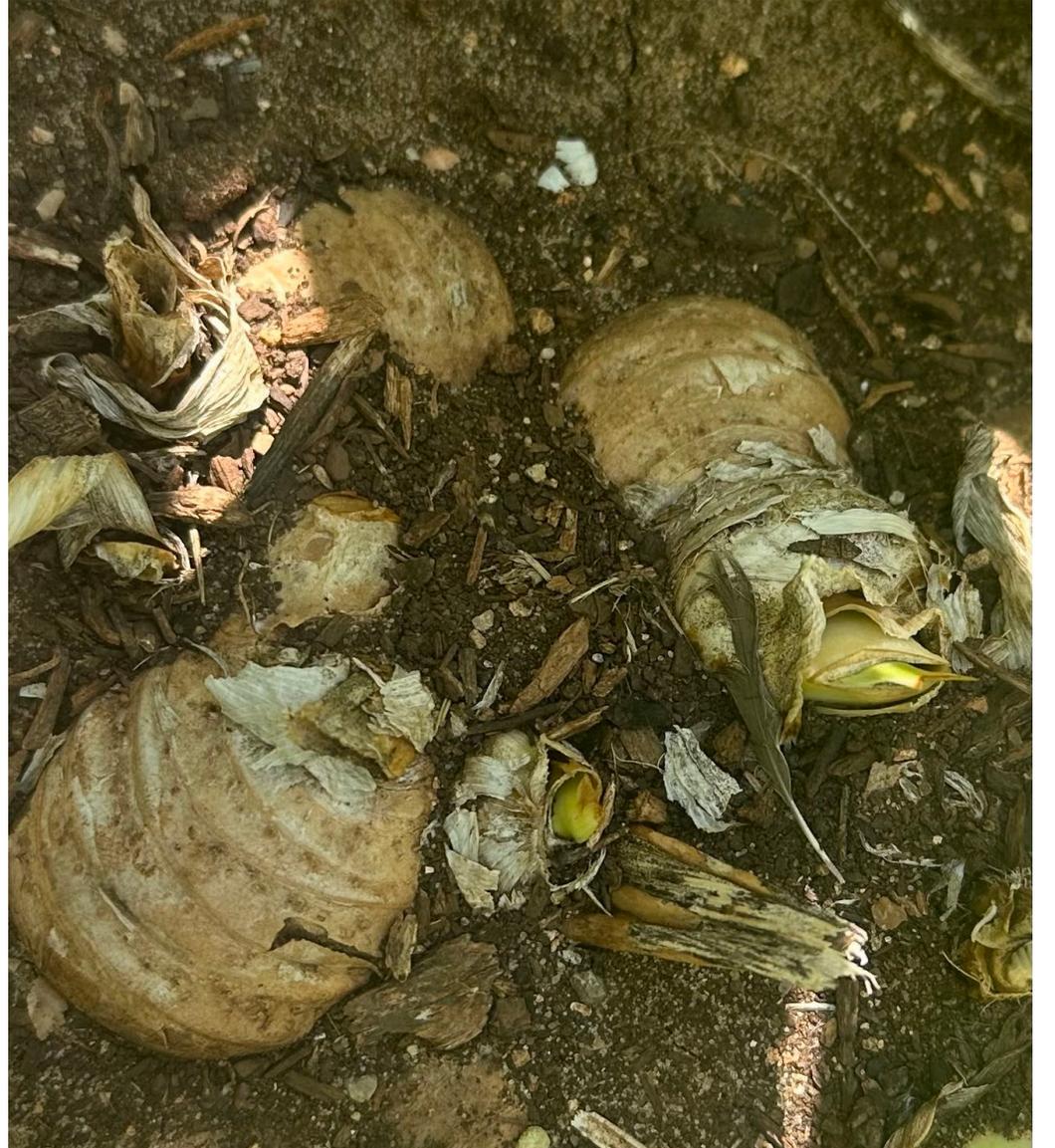
#4

**Thou should try to
give your irises 6-8
hours of sunlight
daily.**



#5

**Thou should thin
your rhizomes
when your iris bed
becomes crowded.**





Bulbs? Rhizomes? What's the Difference?

- **Bulbs and rhizomes are both types of plant structures that serve as storage organs for nutrients and energy.**
- **Bulbs are modified underground stems surrounded by fleshy scales, such as an onion or tulip bulb.**
- **Rhizome is a horizontal underground stem that grows parallel to the soil surface. It produces roots and shoots at various points along its length, allowing for the spread and propagation of the plant.**



#6

Thou should provide your plants with fertilizer up to three times per year.



Fertilize Irises?

Three times each year! Seriously?

One month before blooming
(High Phosphate)

One month after last bloom
(More Nitrogen)

One month before first frost
(Balanced)

VALENTINE'S DAY



FATHER'S DAY



HALLOWEEN



N-P-K

NITROGEN

for green leaves



PHOSPHOROUS

for roots & blooms

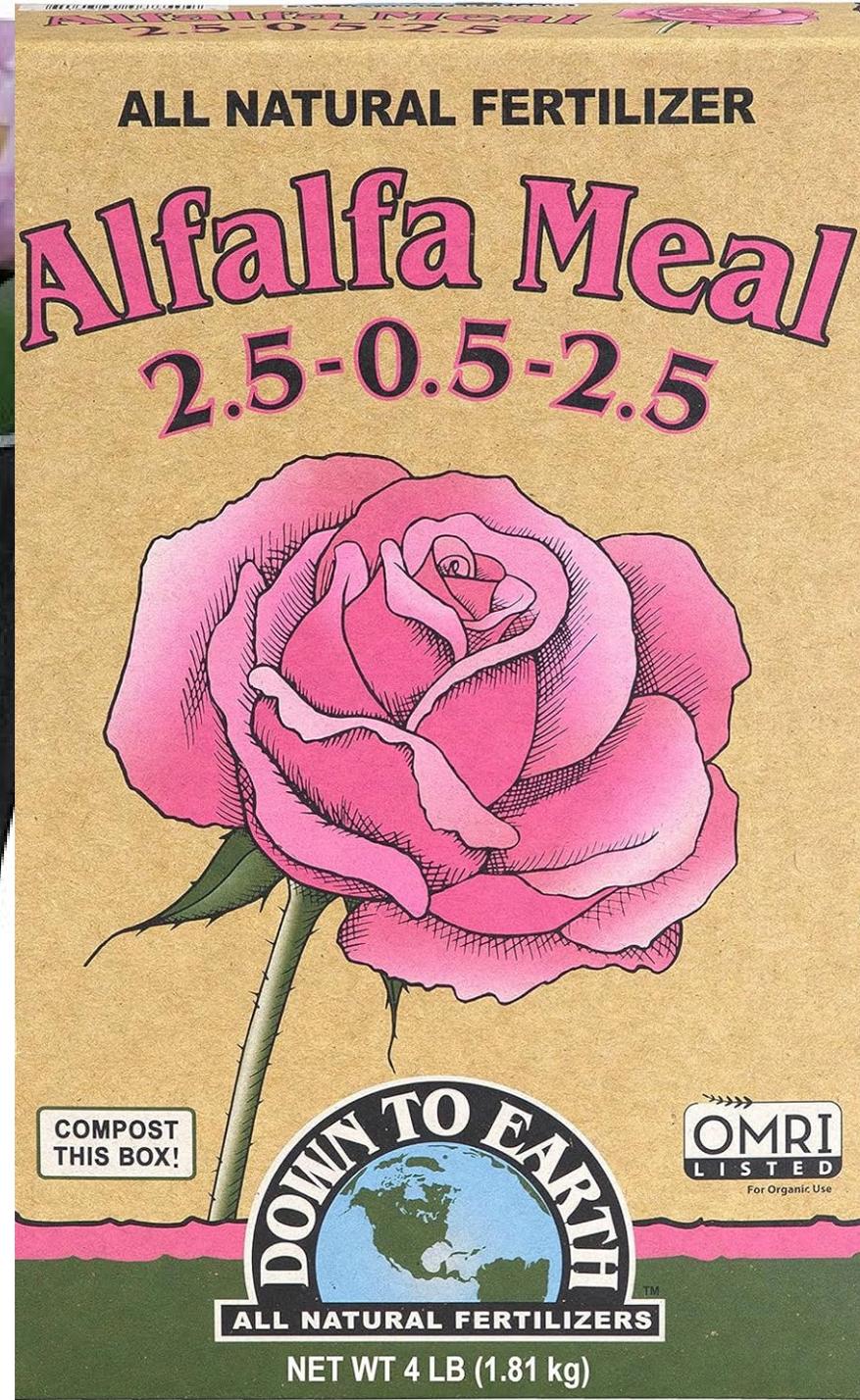


POTASSIUM

for overall plant health



What about organics?



#7

**Thou should plant
your irises in well-
drained areas and
avoid standing
water.**



#8

Thou should plant your rhizomes near the surface and keep your plants free of debris.



**Results
after
three
years:**

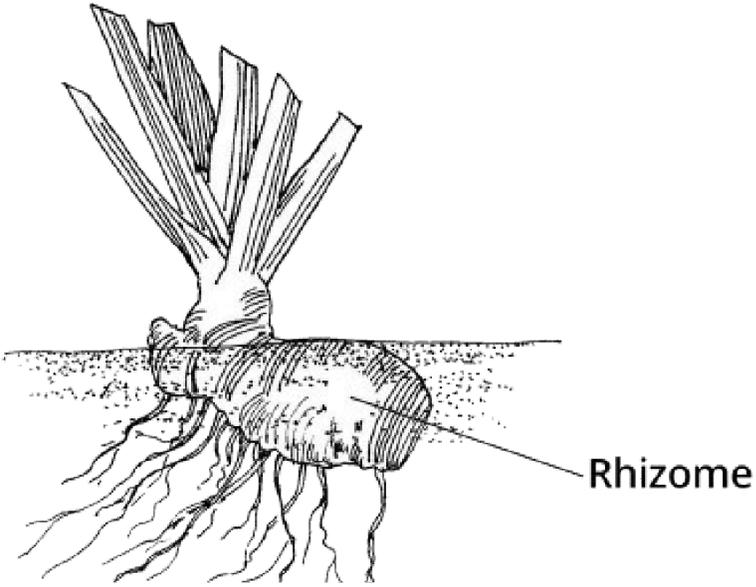
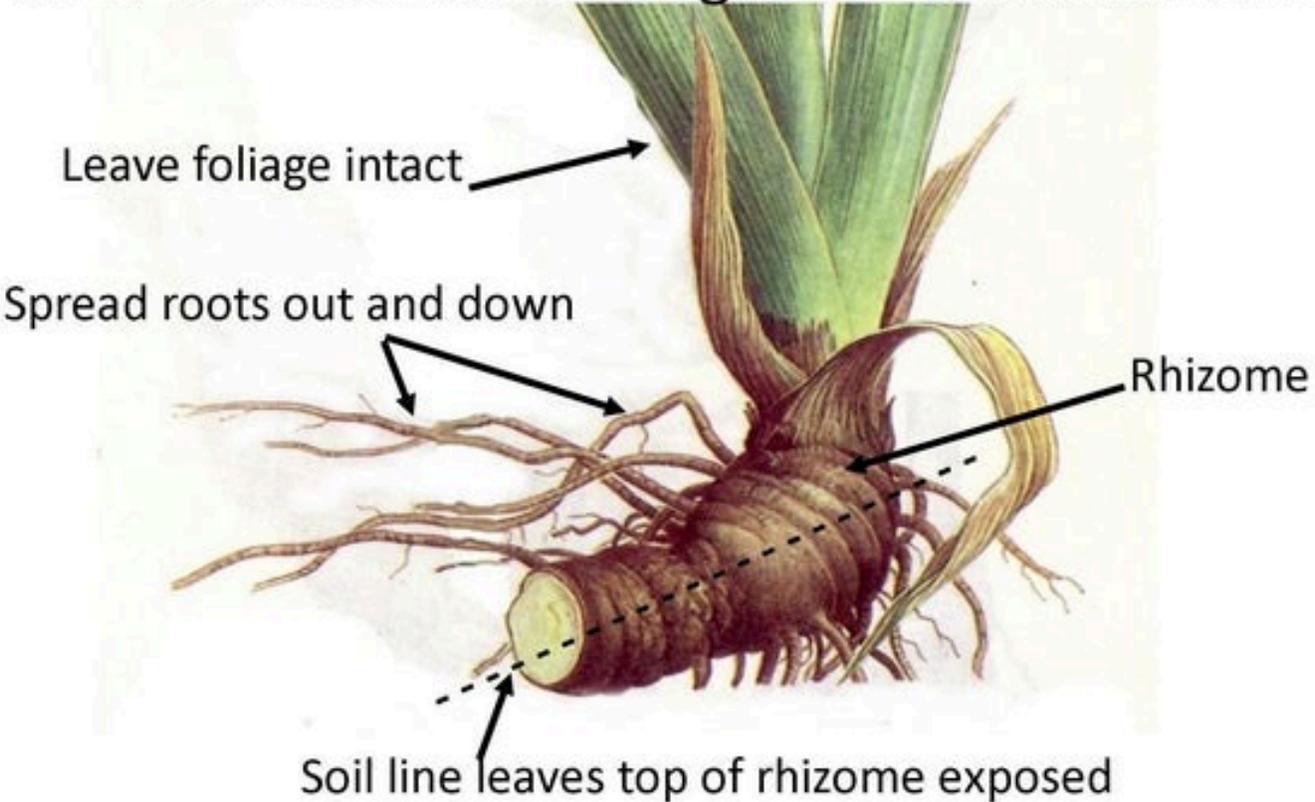




**Cleaning
debris is
not easy!**

RHIZOME PLANTING DEPTH

How to Plant Reblooming Bearded Iris Rhizomes



#9

**Thou should
admire irises of
your neighbors
and friends and
be willing to grow
some yourself.**





#10

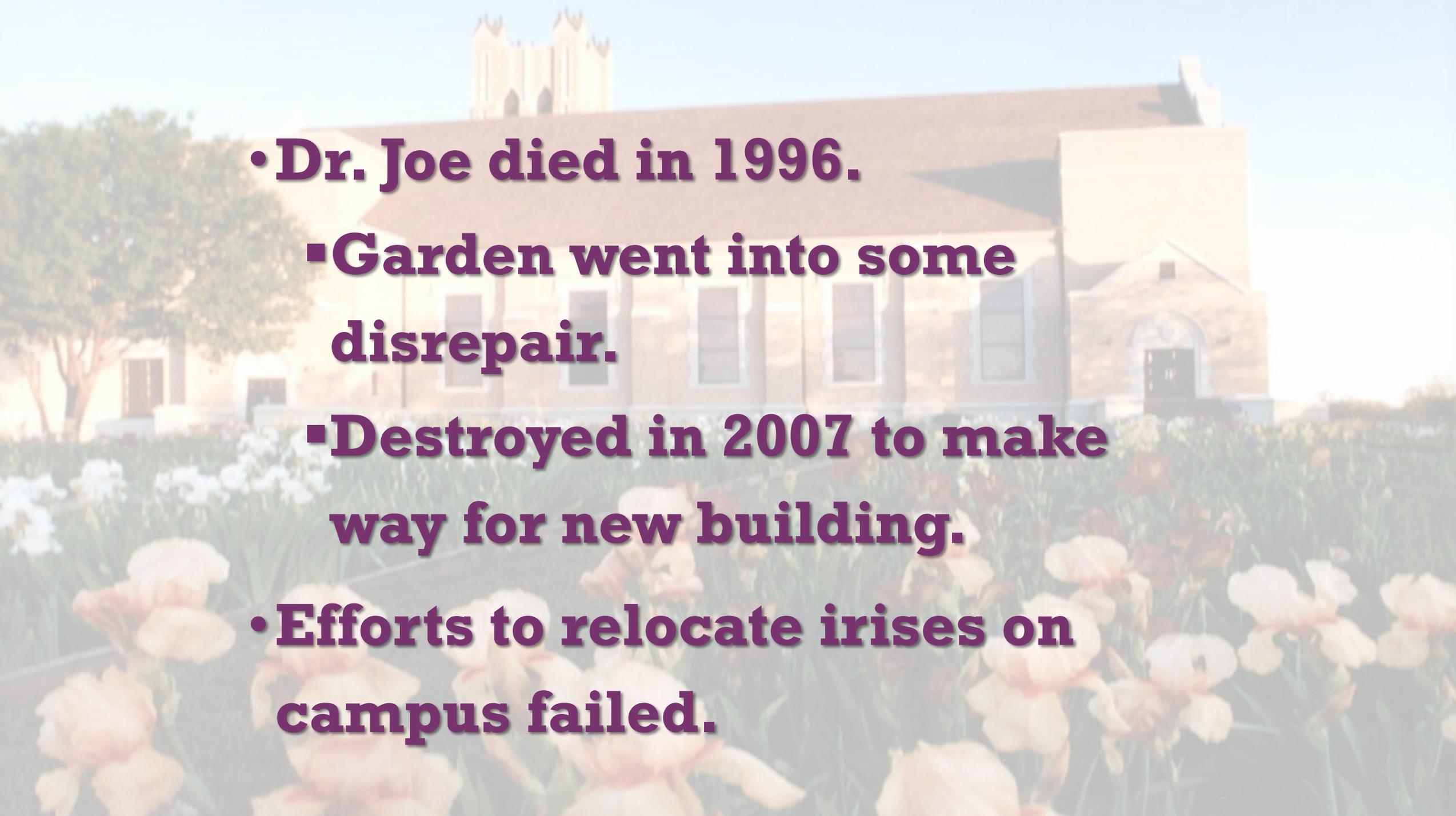
Irises can grow without following the first nine commandments. Give them a chance and you'll soon be sharing your rhizome increases with gardeners everywhere.

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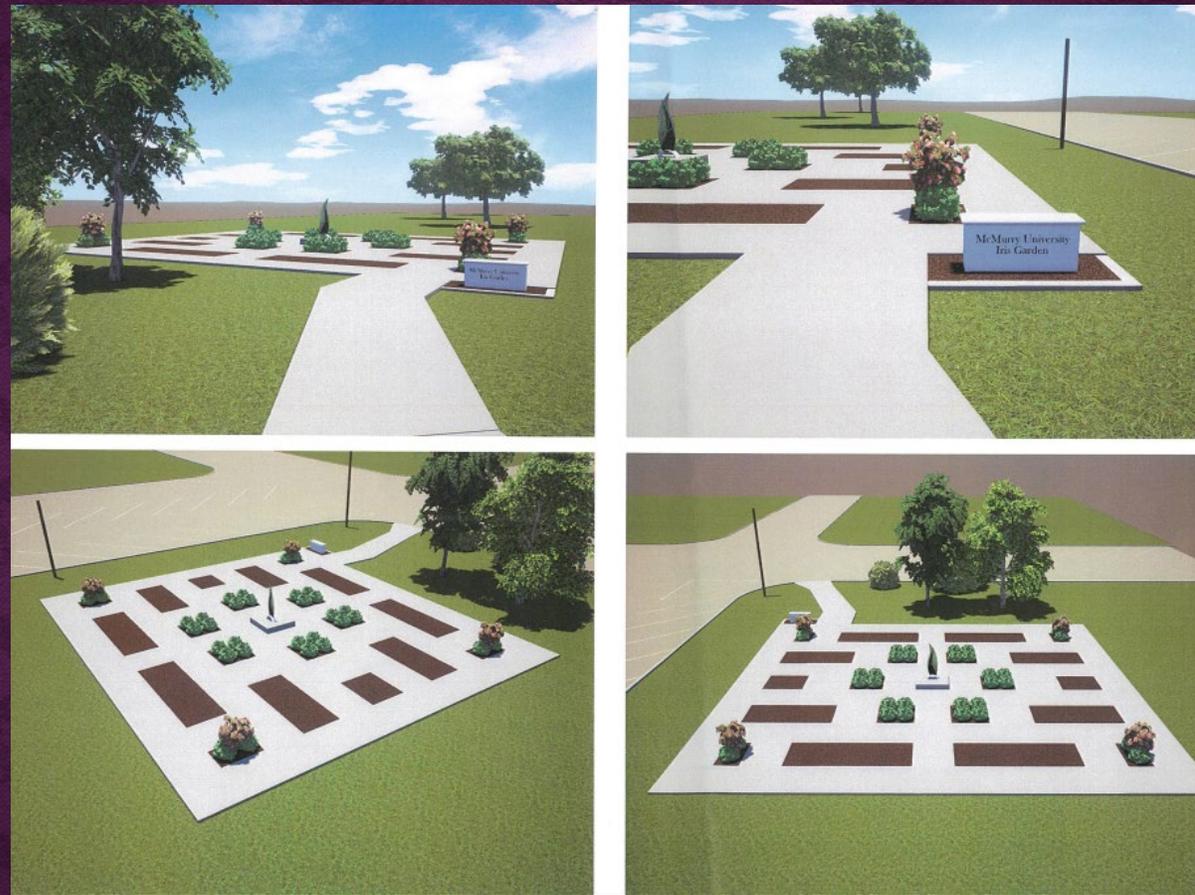
- 
- **Dr. Joe died in 1996.**
 - **Garden went into some disrepair.**
 - **Destroyed in 2007 to make way for new building.**
 - **Efforts to relocate irises on campus failed.**



**The Dykes Medal Winners
of the
American Iris Society**

NATIONAL CHAMPION

**There's only one Dykes
Award given every year by
the American Iris Society.**



Introduction to the Members of the Centennial Iris Garden



ENTRANCE

W

S

N

E



1	2	3	4	5
11	12	13	14	15

6	7	8	9	10
16	17	18	19	20

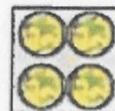


21	22	23	24
29	30	31	32

5'



6'

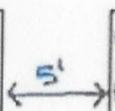
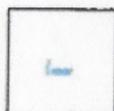
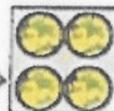


25	26	27	28
33	34	35	36

6'

37	38
41	42

7'



5'

39	40
43	44

7'

45	46	47	48
53	54	55	56

5'



6'



49	50	51	52
57	58	59	60

5' typical



61	62	63	64	65
71	72	73	74	75

66	67	68	69	70
76	77	78	79	80















Jesse's Song is the 1990 DM.
pots=0
rhizomes=5
Garden Space=46

Edith Wolford is the 1993 DM.
pots=3
rhizomes=2
Garden Space=49

Cherie is the 1951 DM.
pots=0
rhizomes=3
Garden Space=17

Sable Night is the 1955 DM.
pots=0
rhizomes=3
Garden Space=19

Titan's Glory is the 1988 DM.

Beverly Sills is the 1985 DM
pots=0
rhizomes=5
Garden Space=13

Dusky Challenger is the 1992 DM.
Everything plus is the 1991 DM.
pots=0
rhizomes=4
Garden Space=17

Truly Yours is the 1953 DM.
pots=3
rhizomes=0
Garden Space=18

Vanity 1982 DM
pots=0
rhizomes=3
Garden Space=13

Elmohr is the 1945 DM.

Great Lakes is the 1942 DM.

Wabash is the 1940 DM.
pots=1
rhizomes=3
Garden Space=9

Bride's Haze is the 1978 DM.
pots=0
rhizomes=3
Garden Space=16

Ruby Wings is the 1939 DM.
pots=3
rhizomes=0
Garden Space=8

12



September 17, 2022







• OOOOH

• ANNNN



DM: 1927
San Francisco

• **Mohr, 1927**

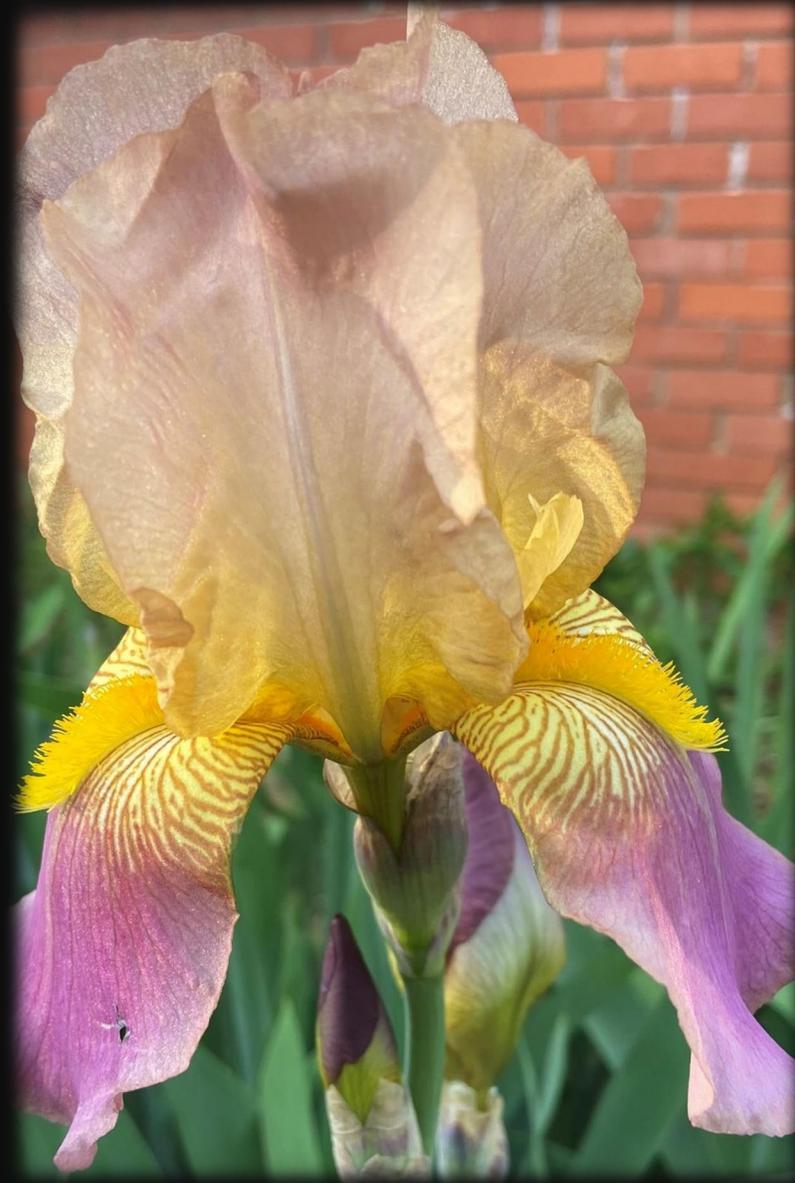


Connell, 1929

DM: 1929
Dauntless

DM: 1932
Rameses

- H. Sass, 1929
-





DM: 1933
Coralie

- Ayres, 1932



DM: 1935
Sierra Blue

- **Essig, 1932**

DM: 1936
Mary Geddes

- **Stahlmann by
Washington, 1931**





DM: 1937 Missouri

- Grinter, 1933



**DM:
1938
Copper
Lustre**

Kirkland, 1934



DM: 1939
Rosy Wings

- Gage, 1935





DM: 1940 Wabash

Williamson, 1936



J. Sass, 1937

**DM: 1941
The Red
Douglas**

DM: 1942 Great Lakes

- Cousins, 1938



DM: 1943
Prairie Sunset

- H.P. Sass, 1939





DM: 1944 Spun Gold

Glutzbeck, 1939

**DM: 1945
Elmohr**

- Loomis, 1942



DM: 1947
Chivalry

- Wills, 1944





DM: 1948
Ola Kala

J. Sass, 1943

**DM: 1949
Helen
McGregor**



Robert J. Graves, 1946



DM: 1950
Blue Rhythm

- Whiting, 1945
-

DM: 1951
Cherie

- **Hall, 1947**
-





• DeForest, 1948

DM: 1952

Argus Pheasant

DM: 1953
Truly Yours

- **Fay, 1948/49**



DM: 1954

Mary Randall



Fay, 1951



DM: 1955
Sable Night

• **P. Cook, 1952**

DM: 1956 First Violet

- DeForest, 1952





DM: 1957
Violet Harmony

- **Lowry, 1952**

DM: 1958
Blue Sapphire

- B. Schreiner, 1953



DM: 1959
Swan Ballet

- **Muhlestein, 1953**





**DM: 1961
Eleanor's Pride**

- **Watkins, 1956**

**DM: 1962
Whole Cloth**

- P. Cook, 1958



**DM: 1963
Amethyst
Flame**



R. Schreiner, 1958

DM: 1964 Allegiance

- P. Cook, 1958



DM: 1965
Pacific
Panorama

- **Sexton, 1960**





DM: 1966
Rippling Waters

- **Fay, 1961**

DM: 1967
Winter Olympics

- O. Brown, 1963



DM: 1968
Stepping Out

- R. Schreiner,
1964



DM: 1970 Sky Watch

-
- Benson, 1964



DM: 1971
Debby
Rairdon

Kuntz, 1965



DM: 1972
Babbling Brook

- Keppel, 1966
-



• **Sexton, 1968**

DM: 1973
New Moon





DM: 1974
Ship Shape

- Babson, 1969



**DM: 1975
Pink Taffeta**

- **Rudolph, 1968**

DM: 1976

Kilt Lilt



Gibson, 1970

DM: 1977
Dream Lover

- E. Tams, 1971





DM: 1978
Bride's Halo

- **H. Mohr, 1971**



DM: 1979
Mary Frances

• **Gaulter, 1973**



DM: 1980
Mystique

• Ghio, 1975

DM: 1981
Brown Lasso

BB

- **Buckles-Niswonger,**
1975





DM: 1982
Vanity

- Hager, 1974

DM: 1983
Ruffled Ballet

- Roderick, 1975



DM: 1984
Victoria Falls

- Schreiner, 1977





DM: 1985
Beverly Sills

- **Hager, 1979**

1986

Song of Norway

- **Luihn, 1977**



DM: 1988
Titan's Glory

- **Schreiner, 1981**



DM: 1990
Jesse's Song

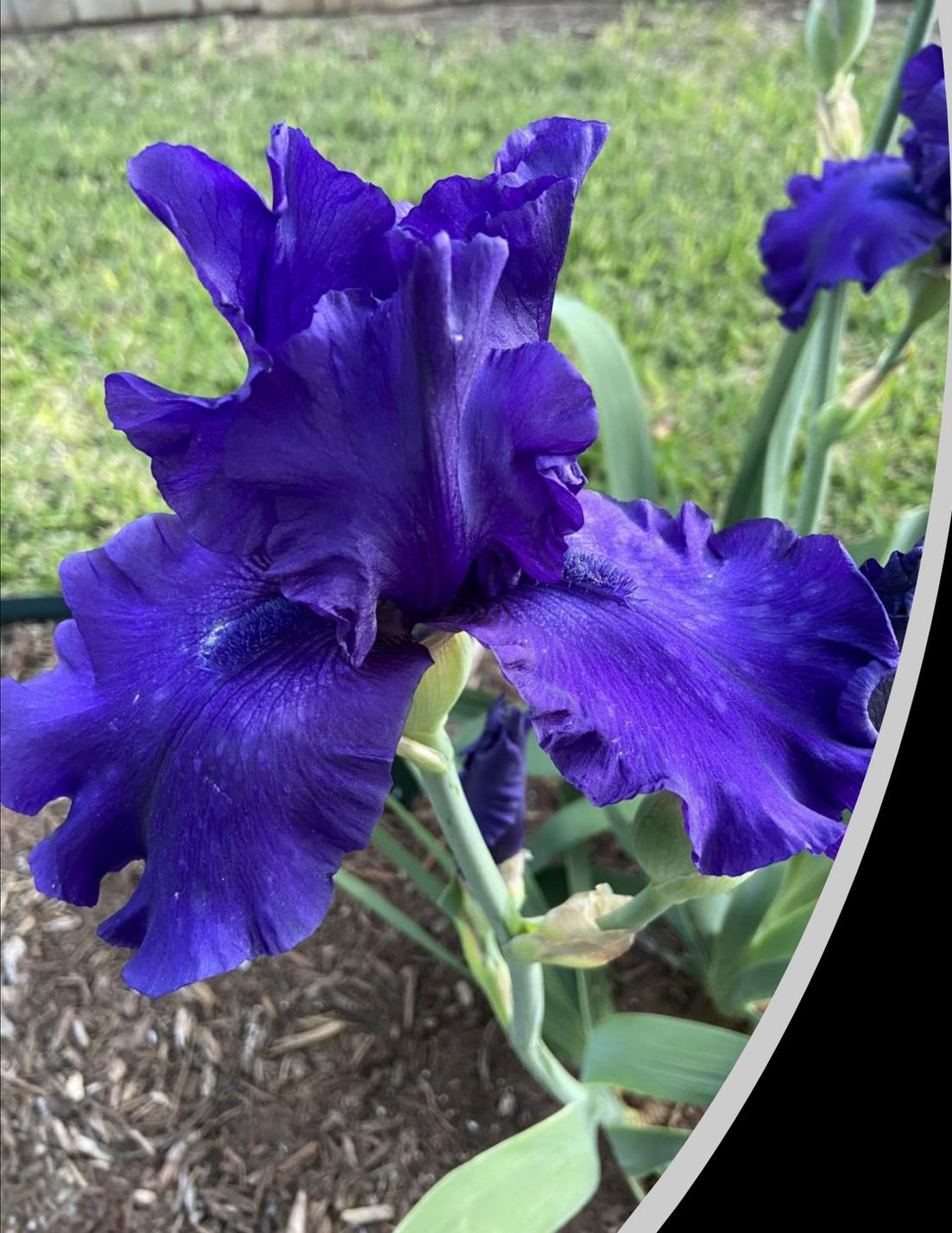
- Williamson, 1983





DM: 1991 Everything Plus

- Niswonger, 1984



DM: 1992
Dusky
Challenger

Schreiner, 1986



DM: 1993
Edith
Wolford

Hager, 1986



DM: 1994
Silverado

- Schreiner, 1987





**DM: 1995
Honky Tonk
Blues**

- **Schreiner, 1988**

DM: 1996 Before the Storm

- Innerst, 1989





**DM: 1997
Thornbird**

Byers, 1989



DM: 1998 Conjuration

Byers, 1988

DM: 1999
Hello Darkness

• Schreiner, 1992



**DM: 2000
Stairway to
Heaven**

- Lauer, 1993



**DM: 2001
Yaquina Blue**

- Schreiner, 1992





DM: 2002 Mesmerizer

- Byers, 1991
-



• **Schreiner, 1993**

**DM: 2003
Celebration Song**

**DM: 2004
Crowned
Heads**

- K. Keppel, 1997



**DM: 2005
Splashacata**

- **Tasco, 1998**





DM: 2006 Sea Power

- **K. Keppel, 1999**



DM: 2007
Queen's Circle

• Kerr, 2000



DM: 2008 Starwoman

- M. Smith, 1998

IB

DM: 2009

Golden Panther



• R. Tasco, 2000



DM: 2010
Paul Black

• T. Johnson, 2003



DM: 2011 Drama Queen

- **K. Keppel, 2002**

DM: 2012
Florentine Silk

- K. Keppel, 2005





DM: 2013 That's All Folks

- **W. Maryott by J. Ghio,
2005**





MTB

**DM: 2014
Dividing Line**

- **C. Bunnell, 2005**



**DM: 2015
Gypsy Lord**

- **K. Keppel, 2006**
-

**DM: 2016
Swans in
Flight**

SIB

- Hollingworth, 2006





DM: 2017 Montmartre

K. Keppel, 2008



DM: 2018
Haunted Heart

- **K. Keppel, 2010**



DM: 2019 Bottle Rocket

• **M. Sutton, 2009**

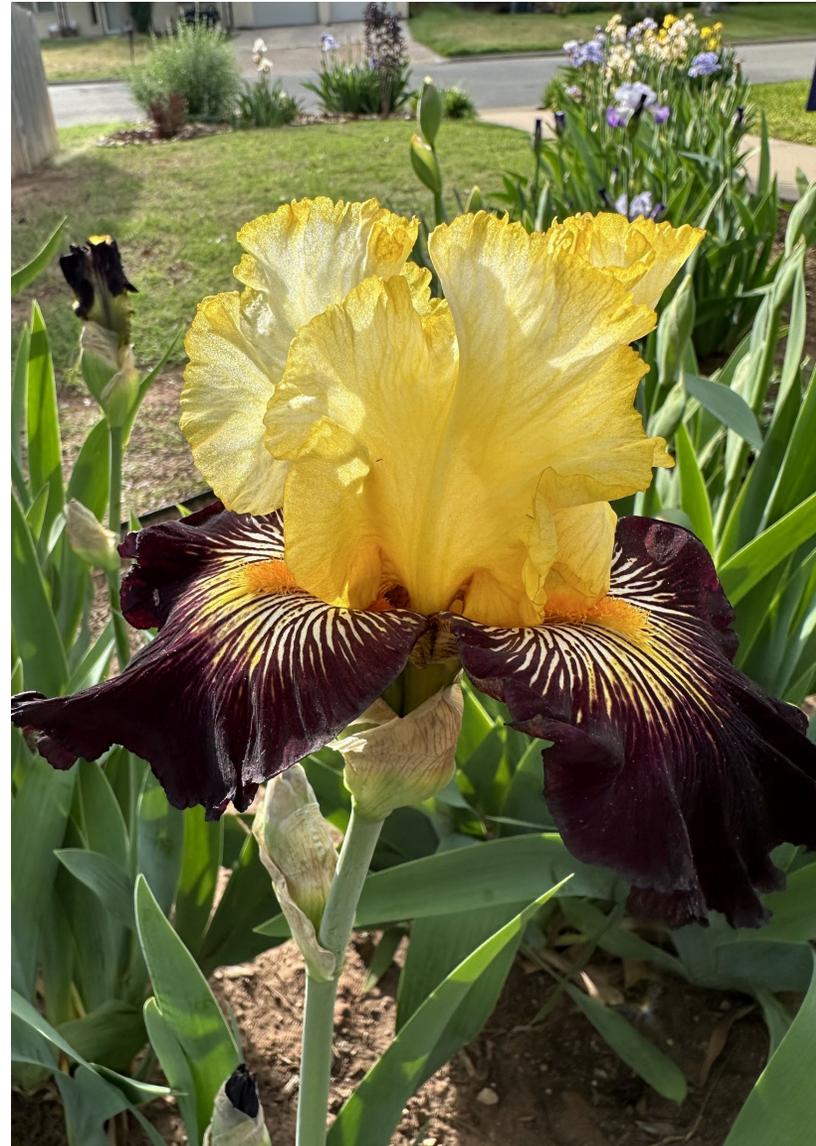


DM: 2021 Daring Deception

- Johnson, 2012

DM: 2021
Reckless
Abandon

K. Keppel, 2010





DM: 2022 Football Hero

• L. Miller, 2015



**DM 2023:
DON'T
DOUBT
DALTON**

- **BURSEEN, 2015**

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- **To share information about the 2023 Centennial Iris Garden at McMurry University.**



BCIS Rhizome & Plant Sale

- **Saturday, Sept. 13**
- **1:00-until gone**
- **McMurry University, Garrison
Campus Center**
- **2292 McMurry Court**



