

**Almanac:
Society for
Pacific Coast
Native Iris**

Spring 1980

Volume VII Number 2

FROM THE EDITOR:



**EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE
SOCIETY FOR PACIFIC COAST NATIVE IRIS**

- President Glenn F. Corlew
2388 Cherry Lane
Walnut Creek, CA 94596
(415) 932-1998
- First Vice President Duane Meek
1373 Coventry Road
Concord, CA 94518
(415) 685-6489
- Second Vice President LaRue Boswell
1821 Gross Lane
Concord, CA 94519
(415) 682-0777
- Immediate Past President Francesca Thoolen
255 Manzanita Drive
Orinda, CA 94563
(415) 254-0546
- Secretary Marguerite Hawkinson
4414 Cogswell Road
El Monte, CA 91732
(213) 444-0136
- Treasurer Charles R. Hopson
2312 Calle Las Palmas
San Clemente, CA 92672
(714) 492-5096
- Editor Olive Rice
1914 Napa Avenue
Berkeley, CA 94707
(415) 526-2853

Dear Friends-

Comes now the time to say farewell, with mixed feelings: for friendships made through our journal, to anticipation for work which lies ahead in the iris world.

I'd like to say right now that you're the nicest readers in the world, and the most cooperative. There's nothing I've asked you to do for the *Almanac* that you haven't stretched mightily to perform, with dispatch and finesse. The format of the *Almanac* lends itself to ease of layout, and the many artists in our group have come up with illustrations to please the most particular of readers.

Please continue this atmosphere with our fine new editor-to-be, Jean Erickson, as she begins her tour of duty. Any shirkers are likely to hear from me, so be forewarned!

Olive

Meeting Notice

The Society for Pacific Coast Native Iris will meet from 8:30 to 9:30 a.m. on Wednesday, April 30, 1980, at the Camelot Inn, Tulsa, OK, with Glenn Corlew presiding. The SPCNI is a section of the American Iris Society, which is holding its sixtieth anniversary convention in Tulsa. Newly-elected AIS director Jim Rasmussen is Sections Coordinator, and the meeting announcement comes through him.

The Society for Pacific Coast Native Iris is a section of The American Iris Society. membership in the latter is a prerequisite for membership in the SPCNI

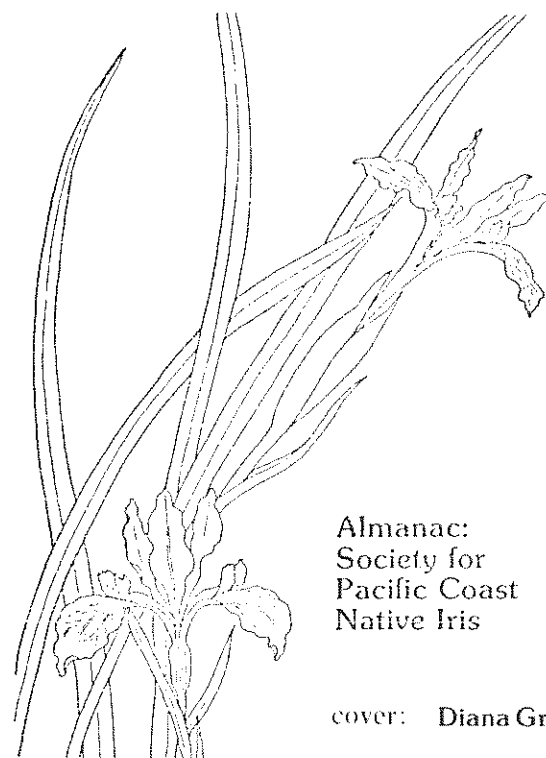
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Annual	\$4.00	\$5.00
Triennial	10.00	12.00
Supporting Annual	6.00	
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PUBLICATION STAFF

- Editor Olive Rice
- Associate Editor George Waters
- Consultant Jean Witt



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cover: Diana Gregory

From the President



Nominating Committee Report

The Nominating Committee is pleased to report the following candidates for the 1980 slate:

President	Virginia Del Judge Sequim, Washington
First Vice President	Duncan Eader Arcadia, California
Second Vice President	LaRue Boswell Concord, California
Secretary-Treasurer	Dorothy Foster Sonoma, California
Editor	Jean Erickson Sebastopol, California
Immediate Past President	Glenn F. Corlew Walnut Creek, California
	Francesca Thoolen, Chm. Nominating Committee



In the Iris Society of Australia's 1979 Year Book, edited by Rita Caldwell, we note a write-up of the Victorian Region's Iris Shows. The illustration for the article is of a lovely bowl of Pacific Coast natives, photographed by Ernie Owen; the PCIs won for S.A. Lott the trophy for best exhibit of beardless species. Reproduced by permission of the photographer and the Year Book editor.

"To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven."

How often in our lives we are reminded of this great truth. Just as two years ago was a time for beginning and a time for taking up responsibilities as your President, now is the time for me to conclude my term of office and to turn those responsibilities over to another. And I must say that the length of time between July 1, 1978 and July 1, 1980 is relative. It depends on whether you are looking forward to 1980 or backward to 1978!

The world of Pacific Coast Native Irises continues to be an interesting one. Significant and rapid advances are being made by our hybridizers as they segregate and recombine the genes of various species. Each season brings reports of the PCNIs being successfully grown and flowered in areas of the country where they have not been previously reported. To encourage this type of pioneering, the Society continues to make seed available to those who might want to try them. It is also a pleasure to know as I leave office that the new Sydney B. Mitchell Award is a reality and available for presentation by the American Iris Society each year to the top rated *Californicae* hybrid.

And before I bow out, I would like to express my appreciation to the Executive Committee and Committee Chairmen who have served with me and without whose help I would never have made it. I would particularly like to commend Olive Rice for her work on the Almanac as she, too, concludes her term of service.

Best Wishes to the new Board and Happy Irising to all!

Glenn F. Corlew

Seeds to Sell

August Phillips, past-president of SPCNI, has saved seed of PCI hybrids; it will be sold to benefit the society's treasury. To order, send \$1.00 for three packets to: LaRue Boswell, 1821 Gross Lane, Concord, CA 94519. If the 1979 seed supply is exhausted, the order will be held until 1980 seed become available.

Marjorie Brummitt, SPCNI honorary life member and winner of the only Dykes medal awarded to a Pacific Coast native iris, has been seriously ill at her home in Banbury, England. We send our best wishes to her for her recovery.

December 1 Meeting Minutes

President Glenn Corlew called the meeting to order at 2 p.m. in the library of the Santa Barbara Botanic Gardens.

Treasurer Charles Hopson reported \$705.57 in the general fund.

There is \$1227.50 plus interest in the Mitchell Fund. This fund will finance the Mitchell medal honoring a Pacific Coast iris. Contributors to this fund are: Dolores Kassley, Ralph and LaVerne Conrad, Sydney B. Mitchell Iris Society, Elsie Mae Nicholson, Clara B. Rees Iris Society, Westbay Iris Society, Mount Diablo Iris Society, and Santa Rosa Iris Society.

Almanac editor Olive Rice announced that the Fall Almanac was at the printers.

Bob Hubley will update the checklist of Pacific Coast native irises and their hybrids. He will submit the list to the editor when it is completed.

There was some discussion concerning the method of collecting dues. There was general agreement that it would be more efficient if dues for SPCNI were sent directly to the Society rather than being collected along with dues for the American Iris Society. No action was taken on this matter.

Mrs. Charles Hopson commented in the composition of the executive committee of SPCNI. It has been a practice to choose representatives from widespread geographical areas in order to achieve balanced representation. This democratic practice can result in a non-functional committee, since members are too widely separated to meet and conduct business. She suggested that all committee members be selected from the same general area of the country and that the areas be rotated with each term of office. It was agreed that this was a practical suggestion which should be given further consideration.

To promote interest in Pacific Coast native irises, August Phillips offered to provide seed for distribution at Tulsa, Oklahoma during the 1980 AIS Convention. Members are urged to bring blooms to Tulsa so that more iris enthusiasts will become familiar with Pacific Coast native irises.

There was discussion of the possibility of a tour of gardens where Pacific Coast irises are flowering. It was considered difficult to fit such a tour between Regional and National iris meetings, since flowering seasons overlap in various areas. It was suggested that a future tour could be arranged in conjunction with the aril iris show in Region 15.

Acting on behalf of Leon Wolford, president of the American Iris Society, Glenn Corlew presented the Mitchell Award medal to Dara Emery for his beautiful white Californicae selection, CANYON SNOW.

The meeting was then adjourned.

Adele S. Lawyer
Acting Secretary

Seeds to Save

The Species Iris Group Seed Exchange could use more seed of Pacific Coast native iris species. If you have PCI species and can save seed of them, please write to Mary Duvall, Route 1 Box 142, Dassel, MN 55325. To perpetuate pure species is in the best interests of our society, and especially of those members who are actively engaged in interspecies crosses.

Treasurer's Report

March 20, 1980

Cash on hand October 21, 1979 \$648.68

Dues & Receipts—

Dues Collected	\$108.00	
Dues through AIS	102.00	
Sale of Cohens	23.50	
Sale of Back Copies	2.00	
Sale of Checklists	3.50	
Interest on Mitchell Fund	28.50	
	<u>\$267.50</u>	\$916.18

Disbursements—

Printing-Postage & Paper	\$ 24.61	
Evening Dawn Graphics, Type-setting	60.00	
Aardvark, Type-setting	27.00	
Eastshore Instant Printing	109.70	
Treasurer-Postage & Envelopes	10.41	
Editor-Postage	30.00	
	<u>\$261.72</u>	\$654.46

Balance on hand March 20, 1980 \$654.46

Charles R. Hopson, Treasurer

Ghio Wins AIS Hybridizers Medal; Los Gatos Wins Mitchell Medal



Early Show for Iris

One of the first iris shows for 1980 was that of Mt. Diablo Iris Society, held March 29 at St. Paul's Guild Hall, Benicia, California. Of some 130 entries, 85 were Pacific Coast native irises. The cup for best seedling was won by a Bay View Gardens PCI entry.

The year 1980 is a big one for Joe Ghio, mayor of Santa Cruz, California, and proprietor of Bay View Iris Gardens. At the Oklahoma convention of the American Iris Society, he will be awarded not only the Hybridizer's Medal, but the Mitchell award for his Pacific Coast iris, LOS GATOS.

By way of background information for those members not acquainted with Joe, we have adapted material taken from Lily Gartman's article in the Spring, 1980 Region 14, AIS Bulletin.*

Growing things has been a way of life for Joe . . . Early recollections are of huge yellow marigolds and large plantings of vegetables. He saw an article in *Flower Grower* which listed the AIS Symposium results, and was astounded to know that irises came in colors other than purple. Along with the Symposium ballot there was a Schreiners' ad, and using the ballot as a guideline, he selected ten varieties for \$5.00. When the Schreiner catalog came, he was hooked.

In the early sixties Joe's expanding interest in irises was influenced by Jack Craig, who gave irises as awards to those winning blue ribbons at shows. He also gave Joe seeds of Pacific Coast natives, which Joe planted in coffee cans. The resulting seedlings were planted in his garden, and when they bloomed, he selected the pretty ones. Later he began planning and making crosses, one of which, LOMPICO X VIOLET ELF, gave four seedlings surpassing in quality any other PCIs he was growing, multibudded and with substance. Two of these were LOS GATOS and CALIFORNIA NATIVE.

Joe is known in his own region as a "bubble-ruffled" irisarian. He feels that 1979 will surely be known as the year the Pacific Coast hybrids made their impact on the world; flowers became much bigger with a cartwheel type form in many instances, and were more velvety in appearance. Plicatas appeared, fairly pale at present, but expected to become brighter and bolder.

Presently Joe is working with three separate Pacific Coast breeding lines. PT-203 series is (GRUBSTAKE x (OJAI x EMPIRE GRADE)) x SUNDANCE EIGHT) X CASA PACIFICA. These flowers are large and come in mostly red-violet and apricot tones. Their form is not unlike a Japanese iris. Velvet series PS-204 = ((PU-232E (BANBURY VELVET x CALIFORNIA NATIVE) X PV-1631 (PACIFIC MOON x CALIFORNIA NATIVE))). These have purple-black falls and glowing lavender-blue standards veined darker violet. The third line is plicatas ((PV-1631 X PU-210G (SANTA RITA sib x CANYON SNOW))). The plicata markings come from PU-210G.

*To get the Region 14 Bulletin containing Lily's article, send \$2.00 (including postage and handling) to Alleah Haley, Editor, 112 Whitecliff Drive, Vallejo, CA 94590.

A Wild Garden with Natives

DAVID BIGHAM, California

I am a garden maker in the East Bay Hills of the San Francisco Bay area. Although I had early been acquainted with Pacific Coast irises, my experience with them started in earnest with the job of restoring a large, badly damaged grove of coast live oaks (*Quercus agrifolia*).

As *Quercus agrifolia* is especially subject to root rots, the use of little or no water was essential in any approach. Strong interest in the natural California landscape led to using mainly native California plants. The oak trunks formed a major point of interest in the garden. In most cases there was no need for plants taller than a couple of feet.

Sixty years ago, before the house was constructed, the site would have been a perfect place for irises. The soil was a sandy loam with a rapidly developing structure, six to twenty-four inches deep on top of a well broken two-foot deep sub-soil, with a Franciscan formation bed rock below. A high ground-water level throughout half the site provided moisture until late July. The remainder of the site dried to subsoil level in early June.

The exposure, strongly east and south, warmed the site early in the spring. Wind occasionally brought heavy fog in the summer months. The elevated position prevents sharp frosts. A ridge lying to the west blocked the intense heat of afternoon summer sun.

The oak grove, into its second century in its oldest parts, has an average age of seventy-five years. It has formed a dense thirty foot high canopy with a rapidly advancing edge made up of fifteen foot high seedling oaks.

Conditions changed rapidly after the site was made into a watered garden typical of the twenties. Much of the original soil was buried under six inches or more of raw sub-soil generated by house and road construction. Groundwater level over most of the site was raised by off-site irrigation. Much of the garden was subject to summer waterings. Later the grounds were largely abandoned.

Most importantly the oak grove itself, reduced by toppling and overshadowed by large aggressive trees, was seriously injured. Over all, up to the tops of trees, over shrubs, covering paths and beds grew a thick cover of english ivy (*Hedera helix*), blackberry (*Rubus procerus*), poison oak (*Toxicodendron diversiloba*), and Madagascar periwinkle (*Vinca major*). Far from providing an ideal growing situation, the site presented a multitude of problems needing consideration in any planting strategy.

Remedy

Areas were first thoroughly cleared of all exotic material, producing a soil bed broken to a shovel's depth, with all aggressive roots removed. A combination of plants was then selected most able to tolerate existing site damage, to improve and modify site conditions, and to adapt to rapidly changing conditions.

Proceeding from my original concept of using *Iris douglasiana* for structural groupings in low mixed plantings, I developed a number of combinations in which various PCI figured as backbone elements. For instance,



in a deep soil on the edge of the grove where ground-water level was consistently high, a combination might be a pinkish-flowered variety of *Iris douglasiana* called Dorothy's seedling; meadow rue (*Thalictrum polycarpum*), yellow-eyed grass (*Sisyrinchium californicum*), sticky monkey flower (*Diplacus aurantiacus*), and California poppy (*Eschscholzia californica*). In such a combination the easily propagated, rapidly growing poppy and monkey flower would control weeds, enrich and mulch the soil. As conditions improved the iris, rue, and yellow-eyed grass, slower to establish, would displace their shorter lived, less competitive companions.

To implement this strategy I set up a standard planting procedure. First, plants are propagated to give maximum number and minimum size. If the material is to be field placed cuttings, the parent or stock plant is reduced to as many six to eight inch semi-hard-wood cuttings as possible. If the material is to be divisions, the stock plant crown is broken up into as many usable pieces as possible. Both cuttings and divisions are rowed into flats, moistened and stacked in the shade until all material is assembled and ready to plant. Seed is also used if enough is available.

In the case of Pacific Coast irises, the clumps are lifted and broken up into single fans. Originally the tops were cut two to four inches long. As a longer fan is more visible when planted, tops are now only tipped back to four inches. All old, rotted, or dead parts are cut off. The best time for this work seems to be when new white roots are one to two inches long; The divisions do not seem to miss a beat in growth. Harvesting done from September fifteenth until March fifteenth is usually successful, with the period just after the first fall rains until late January being the best.

Some delay in planting processed material is possible but usually it is best done immediately. Irises are planted in a two foot grid over the area, rue in a four foot grid laid on the same area, yellow-eyed grass in a six inch grid added over, monkey flower one foot apart in lines spaced every four feet, poppy is lightly seeded over the area. The irises are planted with rootstocks covered deeply enough to hold the fan upright, no deeper than easily dug with a trowel.

Watering

Aftercare is standardized. If rain is not imminent, one good soaking is given the newly planted area. Otherwise care waits until the first crop of weeds is two to three inches high, at which point the bed is thoroughly weeded. This weeding is followed by a second, when the weeds are two to three inches high. In their less aggressive stages weeds are preferable to a bare soil surface. Fall plantings usually require two or at most three weedings, before desirable growth or summer drought suppresses weed germination.

Newly planted areas are not watered during the drought period, even those planted as late as March. Late plantings on similar sites usually show no difference between losses from drought in unwatered cases and losses from rot in watered.

Watered more than once a month, plantings have reacted with rapid growth often followed by rapid collapse. Watered deeply three times a dry season, plantings seem safe from damage with some increase of first season growth. Artificial watering has drawbacks: it germinates weeds, encourages leaf and root disease, and reduces the number of blooms. Withholding water, while often slowing early growth, seems preferable. Care beyond occasional light weeding has largely been a



matter of neglect. After a few growing seasons plantings have been simplified by removing aging and superfluous plants. In the planting described, these were mainly monkey flower, poppy and some yellow-eyed grass.

Results from planting done over seven years, with an increasing diversity of species in the last four are encouraging. Starting with *Iris douglasiana* varieties in the richest areas, then planting into progressively more stressed areas, and adding *I. innominata*, *I. macrosiphon*, *I. tenax*, *I. bracteata*, *I. fernaldii*, and various hybrids many successful combinations have been developed. The original goal of an iris-dominated mixed planting under a much recovered oak grove is being realized.

Iris douglasiana is the work-horse of the bunch. It combines well with almost all plants and is good in scattered clumps or large drifts. It has tolerance for all but the richest and poorest conditions. One of my favorite combinations for dry shade in subsoil is *I. douglasiana* with island currant (*Ribes viburnifolium*), bush monkey flower (*Diplacus longiflorus*), California strawberry (*Fragaria californica*), and fringe cups (*Tellima grandiflora*). Or in hot raw soil, *I. douglasiana* with sand hill sage (*Artemisia pycnocephala*), scarlet flowered diplacus (*Diplacus puniceus*), bush snapdragon (*Galvezia speciosa*), and campanula flower (*Phacelia campanularia*). *I. innominata* has rated a strong second in over all performance. It succeeds in all but the darkest places. Because of its delicacy, I like to use the purple *I. innominata* in dry broken shade with such fine textured plants as needle grass (*Stipa pulchra*), blue eyed grass (*Sisyrinchium bellum*), hill gooseberry (*Ribes californica*), and Boland's heliotrope (*Phacelia bolanderi*). In a hot, dry, deep loam the yellow *I. innominata* with dwarf coyote brush (*Baccharis pilularis* 'Twin Peaks' #2), soap root (*Chlorogalum pomerideanum*), yarrow (*Achillea lanulosa*), and creeping primrose (*Oenothera cheiranthifolia*) is good.

Iris macrosiphon, of which I have but one variety, is tough and able to stand the worst, thin, rot-ridden soil in the driest shade. Planted with wood fern (*Dryopteris arguta*), yerba buena (*Satureja douglasii*), bush snapdragon (*Galvezia speciosa*), and redwood rose (*Rosa gymnocarpa*) it makes a good show with the spring growth of its companions providing a good background. The vertical new growth of *I. macrosiphon* makes a good contrast under elderberry (*Sambucus caerulea*) with bee plant (*Scrophularia californica*), wild strawberry (*Fragaria chiloensis*), and pink honeysuckle (*Lonicera hispidula*).

Iris tenax, after a shaky start, has taken hold in deep dry soil under high shade with companions of alum root (*Heuchera maxima*), coast trillium (*Trillium ovatum*), blue witch (*Solanum umbelliferum*), pitcher sage (*Salvia spathacea*), and baby blue eyes (*Nemophila menziesii*). A road cut planting of *I. tenax* on the east edge of the grove is made with snowberry (*Symphoricarpos rivularis*), wild aster (*Aster radulinus*), blue eyed grass (*Sisyrinchium bellum*), wild buckwheat (*Eriogonum latifolium*), and fringe cups (*Tellema grandiflora*).

Many Pacific Coast irises have thoroughly proved their worth as dependable landscape plants. They have shown a capacity to adapt to a wide variety of situations. Admiring the group for its stout heart, I hope to continue learning more of them and their uses in the wild landscape.

In Defense of *Iris chrysophylla*

PANAYOTI PETER CALLAS, Colorado

Iris chrysophylla is not a popular plant. Look through any treatment of the Pacific Coast irises and you will find a thesaurus of unenthusiastic adjectives describing this Oregonian: its flowers are said to be spidery, skimpy, thin, unsubstantial and insignificant. Who could be blamed for avoiding a plant that is reputed, moreover, to be temperamental, short-lived, water-sensitive and hard to establish?

The collecting instinct is universally deplored among rock gardeners. It is just as universally insinuating, however, and I am no exception to those who like to have everything in a series. Like a philatelist who yearns to fill the last few ugly squares in a brightly colored row, I decided *Iris chrysophylla* would have to be added to my expanding collection of wild Pacific Coast irises. Besides, something about it in photographs I'd seen appealed to me.

I obtained starts from two Oregon nurseries sometime in 1975. I remember that the northern nursery sent plants in February when over a foot of snow covered the ground. They were carefully planted in pots and finally moved out of doors in April when the pinkish-based new leaves were sizeable.

The southern Oregon firm sent a single plant in the fall—a plant altogether different from the others. The northern plants had blue-green leaves three-quarters of an inch across. These sprang sporadically from a short creeping rhizome that resulted in a very open clump.



Iris chrysophylla in the garden of author Panayoti Peter Callas; photograph taken by his 16-year-old nephew, Anthony Taylor.

The southern plant had leaves barely a quarter-inch wide. The clump was compact and has remained so.

As is usually the case with Pacific Coast irises in Colorado, both starts spent two years quietly vegetating, trying to decide whether to live or die. Like all the rest, they decided to live and by the spring of 1977, the northern one produced its first few flowers and they pleased me. The grassy, light-gray leaved clump on the other hand, remained quiescent. I really liked the fully evergreen foliage and habit, but knew from the literature that I would be disappointed by the flowers. After all, everyone else was.

I should explain at this point that I plant all new, untested Pacific Coast irises in my miracle bed. This bed is for any non-woodland, non-desert plant I want to succeed with. It is directly to the east of my house receiving several hours of morning sun all year long. The shadow of a distant large maple filters the sun during the heat of the day. The soil is deep and porous. Just about anything will thrive on it including cassiopes, dozens of spring and autumn gentians, *Cypripedium reginae*, dwarf rhododendrons, erythroniums, shooting stars—almost anything that likes a little sun and constant coolness. The pH is approximately 6. The bed is watered every day in dry spells, but drains perfectly. It is carpeted with sun-tolerant mosses and selaginellas which provide a wonderful seedbed and improve drainage.

In 1978—after a typical Colorado winter of intermittent snow and thaw, both starts of *Iris chrysophylla* bloomed. They surprised me by their floriferousness and appealing habit.

I was quite sure that the disastrous winter of 1978-79 would affect the Pacific Coast irises: it never got very cold, but there was constant snow cover for almost six months. Our last snow was heavy and almost twenty-five inches deep in mid-May when all the trees leafed out.

The Pacific Coast irises did not begin to bloom until June, and many extended their flowering season through that hot month into July. *Iris chrysophylla* was the gem of all—producing a constant series of flowers throughout the month of June. In the hot weather, every flower lasted two days—white the first and old-ivory the second. Up to ten flowers were open simultaneously in the center of the cartwheel of silver foliage. These measured a full five inches across—almost twice the size of the nearby *I. innominata*. I was impressed by their delicacy and substance. They were anything but unsubstantial or insignificant, however, although they did have something spidery about them.

For some reason, almost no seed was set on my Californicae last summer. This concerned me primarily because I would like to perpetuate my favorite PCI without risking loss by division.

I suppose the moral of this article is that one should not take the literature too seriously. In the case of *Iris chrysophylla*, at least one plant exists that is a perfect rock plant, with a ratio of flower to foliage to shame any border plant into the bargain. Would that all rock plants were this skimpy and temperamental!

Judging Criteria

In the early days of our society, a committee was formed to draw up judging standards for Pacific Coast native irises. The committee had representatives from Washington, Oregon and California. Dick Richards was chairman and his committee members were Jean Witt, Roy Davidson, Lorena Reid, Joe Ghio, Dara Emery and Lura Roach. "The standards should be considered a working document. Comments should be sent to Dick in preparation for a revision in a year or two."

The criteria proposed by the Richards committee were published in Volume III, Number 1 of *The Almanac*. It's high time to look at the criteria again, and we ask you again to send us your comments.

—Ed.

These criteria should not be construed as an attempt to minimize the importance of the well-developed response of the individual judge. There is simply no substitute for sensitive and appreciative judgment. Time, concern and experience are necessary for the development of such judgment, which can also be called good taste. No attempt has been made therefore to suggest the relative importance of the factors mentioned below, except in the case of exhibition judging; there it is necessary to choose a winner. In all cases the criteria are offered merely as guidelines and not as a substitute for the unbiased assessment of the judge.

Garden Judging

In garden judging, it must be remembered that plants in the first year after transplanting are often unreliable. Plants will sulk, not flower, or tend to produce small and distorted flowers. Flower color is affected by the amount of light and the temperature during the time of development of stems and flowers, and may vary from year to year and from locality to locality. Soil conditions may affect flower color also.

The Plant.

Constitution. The plant should be vigorous, hardy in a number of climates where Pacific Coast irises ordinarily grow, and resistant to the diseases and transplanting difficulties to which some of them are susceptible. Some transplant easily during the proper season, while others die or are set back terribly. The plant should be a reliable bloomer every year, once it is established. It is a positive disservice to encourage introduction of a plant which is difficult to establish in gardens. The plant and the flower stem should be able to stand up to adverse weather (excessive heat, cold, wind, or wetness).

Foliage. Foliage should be attractive and, except for deciduous kinds, stay that way most of the year. Shabbiness before winter is a fault. Foliage may vary from extremely narrow to broad and sword-like, and should be in proportion to the rest of the plant. In cold climates some allowance must be made for damage to leaves.

Habit. The plant should form a neat clump. The wandering habit characteristic of some species should be looked upon as a fault in garden hybrids. The plant should be floriferous, whether from many unbranched stems or fewer branched stems matters not. A long period of flower is desirable, but a plant that puts on a short,

extravagant display is not to be faulted. A short, sparse season is a fault. The plant should flower not only under sunny conditions, but also in partial shade and without excessive length of stem. A plant that flourishes in the shade should be given credit. Very early and very late flowering plants are valuable.

Stem and Flower.

The stem. Stems should be in proportion to flowers. Small flowers on large stems are as undesirable as large flowers on thin stems. Branching is of no value if it does not result in floriferousness or long season of flower. It should not result in a top-heavy appearance or loose, relaxed or snaking stems even when grown in semi-shade. Stems should hold the flower away from the ground and above—but not too far above—the foliage. Flowers should not be hidden in the foliage by short stems. Crowding of stems and crowding of flowers on branched stems are faults. Each stem should bear two or more flowers.

The Flower. Size of flower is relatively unimportant. It is important that the size be in proportion to the foliage and stem. Small flowers are out of proportion on plants with large, broad leaves, as are large flowers on plants with grass-like leaves. All other things being equal, the larger the flower, the more color it will project, but the dainty and subtle are as valuable as the large and flamboyant. (Few beauty contests are judged on the basis of mere size.) Shape and color have much greater aesthetic value than size. The flower must above all be aesthetically pleasing, and any number of shapes and sizes can possess this quality. Wideness of flower parts is not of value unless combined with other desirable traits. Large, wide flowers have appeal, but so have slender and more graceful shapes. Standards may be erect or spreading toward the horizontal, but should not flop or show poor substance. Substance is of great importance, and becomes even more so as flowers with wider falls and standards are bred. Flowers must be able to stand up to adverse weather and not lose shape. Flower color may include different color combinations, elaborate and intricate veining, and style arms of a color different from the rest of the flower. The eye spot, or blaze, can be well defined, diffuse, or missing. Streaking occurs occasionally and should not be penalized unless unattractive. Colors should not fade in sunlight, (although with yellow, red and brown colors, color-fastness may take some time to achieve.) Dirty coloring is a fault. Subtle coloring is to be sought as much as striking coloring. Distorted flowers are to be faulted. This includes twisted flowers, or flowers with too many or too few parts. Pleasing ruffling is acceptable, as are smooth petals. Ruffling should never be so pronounced that it hides the shape of the flower or distorts the arrangement of its parts.

New Seedlings.

New seedlings being considered for introduction demand special attention from judges. They must be evaluated for constitution, foliage, habit, stem and flower, but must also be considered for any advance they show in the development of their class.

There are many lavender and yellow flowered Pacific Coast native irises and new seedlings in these color classes

will have to be examined very closely for any improvement they represent. Red, pink, orange, brown and true blue flowers, on the other hand, are few and improvements in these classes are more easily recognized and should be encouraged. Plants of the *Iris innominata* kind—small, with fine foliage and small flowers—are also few, and plants of this kind should also be given encouragement by judges when they display a sufficiently robust constitution. Recognition of any but genuine and worthwhile advances is a disservice to the Society and the community of iris growers.

Exhibition Judging.

Exhibition judging demands a wide knowledge of Pacific Coast native irises—cultivars and plants of the species. Here the plant is not available for examination and even leaves will not be displayed unless they are part of the flower stem. Judges must therefore discern all from flower and stem.

The stem should be in proportion to the flower, neither too large for a small flower nor too small and thin for a large one. It should never be of excessive length. Judges should watch the species and seedling classes for flowers in which one fall petal is parallel to the stem. This is a sign that the stem droops or is of excessive length, and flowers will always be displayed at an odd angle or not in an upright position.

Cultivars.

Here the judge is to select the specimen that most closely represents the cultivar of which it is an example. Aesthetic appeal is of no concern here; adherence to type, cultural perfection, and condition are the only considerations. Judges must be familiar with virtually all of the cultivars in the competition. If color cannot be accurately evaluated in the event that artificial light is being used, the judges should request that the competition be moved to natural light, at least during the final evaluation.

Flower and stem. Conformity to color, form, size, substance of the cultivar is sought. No special credit is to be given to a stem with more than one flower in bloom, since this is typical for some cultivars and not so for others. Multiple flowers will give a specimen an advantage over single flowered examples of the same cultivar, however. **70 pts.**

Condition. The flower or flowers should be fresh, undamaged, unblemished, with no sign of insects or other wildlife. It should be groomed. **30 pts.**

Species and Natural Hybrids.

In judging this class, the judges should be familiar with species and their hybrids. The classification of the series Californicae by Lenz is authoritative (Lenz, Lee W., "A Revision of the Pacific Coast Irises," *Aliso*, Vol. 4, No. 1, pp. 1-72, April 25, 1958; and "Hybridization and Speciation in the Pacific Coast Irises," *Aliso*, Vol. 4, No. 2, pp. 237-309, June 26, 1959); but Cohen's summary is acceptable (Cohen, Victor A., "A Guide to the Pacific Coast Irises," British Iris Society, 1967.) In the event that a judge believes a plant is misclassified, he may request reevaluation or removal of the flower from the judging.

Flower. Unusual or especially good color for the species should be rewarded. **20 pts.**

Form should be consistent with the species, but a pleasing variation of typical form should be rewarded. **20 pts.**

Substance should be typical of the species. Any improvement is to be rewarded, especially in species with weak substance. **20 pts.**

So long as the specimen has good form and balance, the flower can be smaller or larger than is usually seen on plants of the species. **10 pts.**

Stem. Should be typical of the species. Credit should be given for best examples within species limits. This can be ignored in the cases of nearly stemless varieties. **15 pts.**

Condition. Fresh, undamaged, unblemished, with no signs of insects or other wildlife. **15 pts.**

In the event that such a class has a large number of entries, the class can be subdivided as seems best to show officials. For instance, a class might be created specifically for hybrids, or for *Iris douglasiana* flowers only.

Seedling Classes.

The judges must be aware of recent introductions in order to select those seedlings which represent a real advance over those already registered. Judges should award no prizes if there is no outstanding seedling in the competition. Judges should be willing to reward progress in certain less advanced classes even if the seedlings in other classes are better in many ways than the seedlings from the less advanced classes. At present the color classes of red, orange, brown, pink and true blue are weak. Judges should also consider encouragement of a class of miniatures of the *Iris innominata* type. Especially large Californicae of good form and substance are also wanted. On the other hand, judges should be unwilling to reward a lavender or a yellow seedling unless it shows a number of outstanding traits and thus represents a significant advance in those classes. Judges should not assume that a large or a very wide flower is necessarily good; width and size must be combined with pleasing form, and above all, good substance, to be of lasting value. Flowers that are narrow petalled or small are not to be rejected on those grounds. Lack of substance, however, should always be penalized heavily. Condition is of no importance in this class, since the horticultural skill of the grower is secondary to the production of new seedlings. Blemished or torn flowers cannot be properly judged, but the judge should make a sympathetic attempt. Distorted flowers, on the other hand, should be penalized. Insects should be ignored. If necessary, this class should be judged in sunlight.

Flower. Pleasing color or combination of colors is looked for, with veining and streaking, if it is pleasing. Lack of eye, spot or blaze is neither virtue nor fault. Favor color or color combinations that are uncommon or new as long as they are pleasing. **20 pts.**
 Good form to be valued above all. **20 pts.**
 Good substance to be rewarded. **20 pts.**
 Size is important, if special size ranges are to be encouraged. **20 pts.**

Stem. Well proportioned and strong. Sideways flowers to be heavily penalized. **20 pts.**

Checklist Update 1978

ROBERT HUBLEY

Registrations and Introductions

ALEX BACK (A. Back, deceased, by S. Fisk, R. 1978). Sdlg. 5-17. 22" (56cm), E. S. violet-blue (RHS 91D) blushed and finely veined purple; F. purple (between 76B & A) flushed violet-blue (97B) along upper margin, changing to purple-violet (81B) on lower half. *I. douglasiana* x *I. bracteata*. HC (Wisley) 1977.

BANBURY DREAM (M. Brummitt, R. 1978). Sdlg. 221. 12" (30cm), M. S. tinted pink; F. dusky pink. Banbury Festival x Ojai. S.T. (Wisley) 1978.

CALIFORNIAN (J. Ghio, R. 1978). Sdlg. PV-177KS. 10" (25 cm), EM. S. glowing purple; F. cream, royal purple overlay. Corralitos x Restless Native. EC, 1977, 1978, HC 1978. Bay View 1979.

CALIFORNIA SUNSHINE (J. McCaskill, R. 1977). McCaskill Gdns. 1978.

CALIFORNIA YANKEE (J. McCaskill, R. 1977). McCaskill Gdns. 1978.

CASA PACIFICA (J. Ghio, R. 1977). Bay View 1978.

CITY HALL (J. Ghio, R. 1977). Bay View 1978.

CLEO LOUISE (C. McDonald, R. 1978). Sdlg. 127. 8" (20cm), E. S. plum speckled; F. dark plum with large golden patch on hafts. Unknown parentage.

DEL REY (J. Ghio, R. 1978). Sdlg. PU-220P. 12" (30cm), E. Lavender-blue with turquoise flush on F. ((Pasatiempo x collected *I. munzii*) x (Aptos x Ojai)) x (Los Gatos x (Sierra Sapphire x Cabrillo)). HC 1978. Bay View 1979.

FINE LINE (J. Witt, CA-SIB, R. 1977). Witt 1978.

GEORGE'S GORGEOUS (G. Stambach by J. Norton, selector, R. 1978) 12-14" (30-36cm), EM. S. creamy yellow with slight wash of burgundy, gold at hafts; F. creamy yellow with deep gold wash at base, heavily striped all over with deep burgundy; gold beard with touch of burgundy. Unknown parentage. EC 1974.

HALF TIME (J. Ghio, R. 1978). Sdlg. PV-190N. 10" (25cm), EM. S. bright ochre-gold; F. ochre-gold with solid lance-shaped magenta signal. Councilman x Banbury Gnome. Bay View 1979.

HIDDEN SHADOWS (V. McCaskill, R. 1978). Sdlg. 72-66. 18" (46cm), M. S. buff with overlay of pastel mauve, darker veining. lightly ruffled; F. pastel mauve with darker veining, maroon veining in area of small gold signal, ruffled buff edges; pastel mauve stylearms with darker line at midrib. Unknown parentage.

JOEY (J. Gatty, R. 1978). Sdlg. CA-1. 10" (25cm), M. S. apricot buff (M&P 10-G-6) with very faint garnet venation at midribs; F. deeper buff (11-H-7) with garnet (7-J-6) blotch and veining beyond deep chrome-yellow (9-L-7) signal. Unknown parentage. Bay View Gardens 1978.

KAWEAH MAIDEN (V. McCaskill, R. 1978). Sdlg. 72-13. 18" (46cm) E-M. S. finely ruffled pale amber yellow; F. pale amber yellow with veining blending from black to dark grey-blue, light flush of grey-blue around lower part of small Indian yellow signal; pale amber yellow stylearms with darker lines at midribs, fimbriated. Unknown parentage. McCaskill Gardens 1979.

KAWEAH SUNRISE (V. McCaskill, R. 1978). Sdlg. 72-14. 15" (38cm) M. S. pale Naples yellow with gold veining in midrib, lightly ruffled; F. pale Naples yellow, dark gold to reddish veining at outer part, gold signal with darker gold dotting, slightly ruffled; pale Naples yellow stylearms, slightly darker at midrib. Unknown parentage. McCaskill Gardens 1979.

LA SELVA (J. Ghio, R. 1977). Bay View 1978.

MISSION MUSIC (J. McCaskill, R. 1977). McCaskill Gardens 1978.

PAPER BOY (G. Stambach, R. 1978). Sdlg. #2. 6" (15cm), E. S. root beer tan; F. tan, washed dusty red. Unknown parentage. Bay View 1978.

PERSIAN SHAWL (J. McCaskill, R. 1977). McCaskill Gardens 1978.

PHILLIP BENSON (C. McDonald, R. 1978). Sdlg. 12. 10" (25cm), E. S. cream with light brown midrib; F. coffee brown; brown beard. Sdlg. x Claremont Indian.

ROVING EYE (G. Stambach, R. 1978). Sdlg. #4. 12" (30cm), EM. S. light lavender-blue; F. lavender-blue with white ray pattern in center. Sdlg. 68-243-8 (*I. munzii* breeding) x unknown. Bay View Gardens 1978.

SARAH M (C. McDonald, R. 1978). Sdlg. 31. 11" (28cm), E. S. light grey; F. chrome yellow with brown veining; brown beard. *I. innominata* x unknown.

SHOWERS OF FLOWERS (V. McCaskill, R. 1978). Sdlg. 70-17. 12" (30cm), E-L. S. pale rose-purple with violet veining, pale yellow through midrib; F. mauve with darker violet being, pale yellow and gold signal, pale rose-purple edges; pale rose-purple stylearms with darker violet at midrib. Unknown parentage. McCaskill 1979.

VELVET PENNANT (J. Witt, CA-SIB, R. 1977). Witt 1978.

Some Commercial Sources of Pacific Coast Native Irises

- Alpenflora Gardens* 17985 -40th Avenue, Surrey BC Canada V3S 4N8
Retail, wholesale, mail order, list.
- Bay View Gardens* 1201 Bay Street, Santa Cruz CA 95060. Send 50¢
for catalog listing many cultivars; seed available.
- Cook's Gardens* 2924 Pacific Highway East, Tacoma WA 98424.
Hundreds of iris seedlings & new named hybrids.
Send for list or visit us!
- Foster Iris* 850 Ora Avo Drive, Vista CA 92083 Doris Foster's
hybrids and stationery designs.

cont. on next page-

Checklist Update 1979

ROBERT HUBLEY

Registrations and Introductions

CANYON SNOW (R. 1974). Correction of selector to: Dara E. Emery, Horticulturist, Santa Barbara Botanic Garden.

CARRIE DAWN (P. Farmer, R. 1979). Sdlg. 603. CA-SIB, 19" (48cm), M. white with violet veining; full violet stylearms. From AIS species seed exchange. Valley Banner x MC R1-2.

CLAREMONT BLUEBIRD (L. Lenz, R. 1979). Sdlg. 96-21. CA, 18" (46cm), E-M. S. French blue (RHS 100D), veined darker blue (100C); F. French blue, washed purplish blue (91A) and veined darker purplish blue (96B); small yellow signal. Alma Abell x Lenz "Big Purple" sdlg. Longview Iris Gardens 1980.

CLAREMONT DARK VIOLET (L. Lenz, R. 1979). Sdlg. 76-7. CA, 16-18" (41-46cm), E-M. S. hyacinth blue (RHS 91B), washed and veined purplish blue (91A); F. aster violet (87A) with darker violet (86A) veining and rimmed light blue; small yellow signal with spot of fluorescent turquoise below. Alma Abell x Lenz "Big Purple" sdlg. Longview Iris Gardens 1980.

CLAREMONT ROYAL PURPLE (L. Lenz, R. 1979). Sdlg. 76-26. CA, 18" (46cm), E-M. S. deep royal purple (RHS 87B); lighter stylearms with blue midline, F. deep royal purple (83C), washed and veined 83A. Alma Abell x Lenz "Big Purple" sdlg. Longview Iris Gardens 1980.

CLAREMONT SIERRA BLUE (L. Lenz, R. 1979). Sdlg. 76-25. CA, 18-22" (46-56cm), E-M. S. light blue (RHS 97C); F. same, washed darker blue (97A) and veined purplish blue (96C); fluorescent turquoise spot below and around small white-yellow signal. Alma Abell x Lenz "Big Purple" sdlg. Longview Iris Gardens 1980.

CLAREMONT SPRINGTIME (L. Lenz, R. 1979). Sdlg. 76-8. CA, 20-22" (51-56cm), E-M. S. light purplish blue (RHS 97C) veined darker blue (97A); F. darker purplish blue (92A), veined 93B; small yellow signal. Alma Abell x Lenz "Big Purple" sdlg. Longview Iris Gardens 1980.

CLAREMONT TRAILBLAZER (L. Lenz, R. 1979). Sdlg. 76-22. CA, 18" (46cm), E-M. S. light blue (RHS 100D), veined violet (87A); F. violet (87A) with blue wash at end of yellow signal. Alma Abell x Lenz "Big Purple" sdlg. Longview Iris Gardens 1980.

DEL REY (J. Ghio, CA, R. 1978). Bay View Gardens 1979.

FOR RUTH (B. L. Davidson, R. 1979). CA, 10-12" (25-30cm), EM. S. buckskin, finely feathered medium purple; F. fawn with henna-rose halo pattern around golden signal. From two lines of *I. douglasiana-innominata* sdgls.

GOLDEN WAVES (J. Witt, R. 1979). Sdlg. 78-11-XC. CAL-SIB, 24" (61cm), VL. lightly ruffled clear light yellow (Nickerson 5Y9/9) with darker yellow signal spot, outlined with few black freckles. Yellow 40-chr. seedling x lemon *innominata* sdlg.

HALF TIME (J. Ghio, CA, R. 1978). Bay View Gardens 1979.

HIDDEN SHADOWS (V. McCaskill, CA, R. 1979). McCaskill Gardens 1979.

KAWEAH MAIDEN (V. McCaskill, CA, R. 1978). McCaskill Gardens 1979.

KAWEAH SUNRISE (V. McCaskill, CA, R. 1978). McCaskill Gardens 1979.

LAS FLORES (J. Ghio, R. 1979). Sdlg. PV-153C. CA, 10" (25cm), E. S. gold apricot; F. wine with slight signal. Sundance Eight x California Native. HC 1978. Bay View 1979.

RIO DEL MAR (J. Ghio, R. 1979). Sdlg. PV-197H. CA, 12" (30cm); E. S. light blue; F. light to mid-blue. PY-173G: (Sierra Sapphire x Cabrillo) x PW-189: (Las Gatos x (Sierra Sapphire x Cabrillo)

SHOWERS OF FLOWERS (V. McCaskill, CA, R. 1978). McCaskill Gardens 1979.

SUNDANCE EIGHT (B. Davidson, selector, R. 1979). Sdlg. Molseed 68-8. CA, 10" (25cm), M. Tailored gold with heavy, diffused mahogany veins and orange spot on F. Unknown Mitchell *douglasiana - innominata* sdlg. x probably *I. bracteata*. Laurie's Garden 1973.

Commercial Sources (Cont.)*

- Cooper's Gardens* 212 West County Road C, St. Paul MN 55113.
- Laurie's Gardens* 41886 MacKenzie Highway, Springfield OR 97477. well-grown species and natives.
- Longview Gardens* Bob Hubley, 9230 Colorado Avenue, Arlington CA 92503. PCN hybrids from Lenz, Hubley, Stambach, Ghio, McCaskill and Foster.
- Northwest Hybridizers* Jean G. Witt and John Taylor. Seed grown species and hybrids, Cal-Sibe hybrids. Send for list: 16516 -25th NE, Seattle WA 98155.
- Western Hills Nursery* Lester Hawkins & Marshall Ollbrich. 16250 Coleman Valley Road, Occidental CA 95465.
- Wild Garden* George Schenk. Box 487, Bothell WA 98011.
- McCaskill's Nursery* No shipping. 25 South Michillinda, Pasadena CA 91107.

*If you know of others, please write to the editor.

Letters

Excerpts from a letter to the editor
from Panyoti Peter Callas.

I don't believe that there has been a single article on the storage, viability, germination or rearing of Pacific Coast iris seed. The reason this matter concerns me is that I've not been able to grow them intentionally from seed; either they never germinate or a few wispy seedlings commit suicide a few weeks after emerging. I grow literally hundreds of seedlings every year including many rare and difficult plants, so it can't altogether be my talent or lack of it.

I find irises to be difficult generally. I have grown *Iris prismatica* spectacularly from seed, *I. forrestii* too and also *I. setosa*. Most others simply don't germinate no matter how many years I keep the pots, what compost I use, or how I treat the little creeps.

The matter worries me, since I know they grow by the million for some people, but then, most people go to Pacific Coast irises from culture of tall-bearded irises and of course the latter are notorious in their demands. For rock gardeners, however, the matter is different. We tend to sow seed in February or March, let it stratify in four inch pots and grow seedlings on in greenhouses or cold frames, potting in May and planting out in late summer. We vary the regimen somewhat (of course) for many plants—but I suspect something in this rhythm is unsatisfactory for PCI s.

I find seedlings here and there all around my garden and I can't for the life of me figure out why they'll volunteer and not act normal in pots. Do they prefer to emerge in the fall? Should the compost be moister than for (say) primulas? Should they receive heavy doses of nutrients every few weeks? I think a detailed account by several growers who succeed with seed, telling what they use, when they sow, when they fertilize, when they transplant, how they transplant and how quickly the plants grow, would be very useful for the still benighted growers like myself. I would dearly like to grow PCI's by the hundreds to share and grow in order to rogue.

Since climatic conditions in California are so different from those elsewhere, an article or two from PC northwest growers might be good. This is only a suggestion; perhaps the literature has already treated the subject exhaustively, in which case, please let me know where to look. I suspect this isn't the case however, and that there are plenty more people who share my predicament!

Good Spring,
Panayoti

We've asked Roy Davidson from Washington state, Dara Emery from southern California and Roy Oliphant from northern California to accommodate Panayoti's request for another issue. Ed.

Dividing Iris Tenax

From the Spring 1980 issue of *Horticulture Northwest*, edited by Sallie Allen, comes this paragraph:

Pacific Coast native irises, particularly *Iris tenax*, can be divided in early spring. Check for plenty of live white roots and observe the precaution of moving only half a choice clump in any one year. Deal with the remainder of the clump another season, after the first divisions have become well established.

SPONI Cumulative Check List, with 1978-79 Registrations and Introductions appended: \$3.00. Inquire of your nearest Executive Committee member (see Page 2) or write to the Editor.

Please announce this offer to your local iris society and your friends. Each check-list can be accompanied by a sample issue of *The Almanac* as our inventory permits.

Additions to Membership

Jack & Phyllis Borden
120 Mains Rd.
Sequim, WA 98382

Evelyn B. Gordon
17193 Mountainside Dr.
Soulsbyville, CA 95372

Eleanor Hill
1577 East 22nd St.
Tulsa, OK 74114

Akira Horinaka
17 Kitamomodani
Minami-Ku
Osaka, Japan

Sterling Leisz
P.O. Box CC
Davis, CA 95616

Naoma Neyerlin
P.O. Box 783
Winston, OR 97496

Robert Parker
2645 Longwood
Los Angeles, CA 90016

Richard Pettijohn
2510 South - 148th Ave.
Omaha, NB 68144

New Address—

Joe & Virginia Del Judge
121A Victoria View Dr.
Sequim, WA 98382

Contents

From the Editor	2
Meeting Notice	2
From the President	3
Nominating Report	3
Seeds to Sell	3
Seeds to Save	4
Minutes	4
Treasurer's Report	4
Ghio Wins Medals	5
A Wild Garden	6
Iris Chrysophylla	8
Judging Criteria	9
Checklist Update '78	11
Commercial Sources	11
Checklist Update '79	12
Letters	13
Membership	13



LOS GATOS, new winner of the Sydney B. Mitchell medal, registered by Joe Ghio in 1973 and introduced by Bay View Gardens in 1974; drawing by Virginia Del Judge. LOS GATOS is a slate violet self, with a slight yellow thumbprint on the falls. It won the HM in 1975, and the JC in both 1975 and 1976.

THE ALMANAC has the following item FOR SALE.
Please write to the editor.

Cohen, Victor A.,
A Guide to the Pacific Coast Irises
London: The British Iris Society, 1967. \$2.50 each.

The *Almanac* of the
Society for Pacific Coast Native Iris
Olive Rice, Editor
1914 Napa Avenue
Berkeley, CA 94707 USA

THIRD CLASS
TIME VALUE MAIL