

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

**SPRING, 2004  
Volume XXXII, Number 2**

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## PUBLICATIONS AVAILABLE FROM THE SPCNI TREASURER

Prices listed are for SPCNI members

### Check List of Named PCI Cultivars

Lists and describes Pacific Coast Iris and named hybrids through 2001. ~70 pages. Hardcopy or CD: \$9.00 for USA, \$9.50 for Canada, and 16.00 for Europe. For both a CD and a hard copy, the cost would be \$4.50 less for the CD.

### Diseases of the Pacific Coast Iris

*Lewis & Adele Lawyer:* ALMANAC, Fall 1986. 22 pages, 9 photographs. \$3.50 postage paid.

### A Guide to the Pacific Coast Irises

*Victor A. Cohen:* The British Iris Society 1967. Booklet, 5.5 x 8.5, 40 pages, 16 line drawings, 8 color and 6 black-and-white photographs. Brief description of species and sub-species including their distribution. \$4.00 postpaid

### A Revision of the Pacific Coast Irises

*Lee W. Lenz:* Photocopy of *Aliso* original. Booklet 5.5 x 8.5, 72 pages, 9 line drawings, 14 photographs, and 12 maps. Definitive work on the taxonomic status of the *Californicae*, with a key to the species and sub-species. Detailed maps and accounts of distribution. \$6.00 postage paid.

### Hybridization and Speciation in the Pacific Coast Iris

*Lee W. Lenz:* Photocopy of *Aliso* original. Companion booklet to the above, 5.5 x 8.5, 72 pages, 30 figures, graphs, drawings, and photographs. Definitive work on naturally occurring inter-specific crosses of PCI, including detailed account of distribution. \$6.00 postage paid. If ordered together, both Lenz booklets may be obtained for \$10.00 postage paid.

## MEMBERSHIP & SUBSCRIPTIONS

The Society for Pacific Coast Native Iris is a section of the American Iris Society. Membership in AIS is **not** a requirement for membership in the SPCNI, but is suggested and may be of considerable benefit.

Membership	Individual	Family
Annual	\$ 8.00	\$10.00
Triennial	20.00	23.00
10 year	60.00	75.00
20 year	110.00	125.00

Please send membership monies to the SPCNI Treasurer. Foreign: annual or triennial please add \$4.00 per membership; 10/20 year membership please add \$20/\$40 per membership.

## ALMANAC

DEADLINES: March 1 and September 1.

Back issues are available for \$3.50 each, postpaid. Please address the person listed under **Almanac Back Issues**.

Chronological index \$2.00 postpaid, Index by subject matter, or by author, \$4.00 each. Contact the Editor.

The opinions expressed in articles and letters appearing in this publication are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the views or beliefs of the SPCNI. Remarks about specific irises, companies, products, and services shall not be considered endorsements by the SPCNI.

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## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

It is with both appreciation and sadness that I announce our Editor, Steve Taniguchi, is stepping down from the Editorship as of this issue of the Almanac. The press of job obligations is eating up too much of his time, but he has volunteered to help the new Editor with some of the details of getting the Almanac out two times a year.

Steve took over from Lewis and Adele Lawyer, who had put out a fine publication. That was a hard act to follow, but Steve rolled up his sleeves and put out just as fine a publication. He gave it his unique stamp, and he will be missed as Editor and appreciated for his continuing help with the publication.

We are therefore looking for a new Editor. The position also involves being a Director of the Society. Since Steve is standing by with advice and help, you do not need to have edited a publication before, though some experience would obviously be helpful. If you wish to

serve, please contact me at my email address published elsewhere.

Steve is representative of the many fine people who give their time and enthusiasm in order to further this Society's goals. They are all fine people, and I have been proud to serve as President. We now need another person to step forward and assume a crucial role. You will be helping to spread a knowledge and appreciation of Pacific Coast Irises in a major way. Please volunteer.



Richard

## FROM THE EDITOR

Many years ago, when I was in junior high school, I decided to cross-pollinate my Mother's Dutch iris. She had three or four different colors and I crossed them in various combinations. Three years later the seedlings bloomed and I had Dutch iris in various blends of colors.

Years later, when I started my first real job, my friend Gail was talking about iris, and I mentioned that I had some iris. I brought her a couple of flowers and she liked them but she said there are these "other" irises. We visited Maryott's in San Jose, and we bought some of those "other" (tall bearded) iris. I crossed those iris, but none of the seedlings were very good looking, and some were hideous and hard on the eyes.

After seeing Pacific Coast Iris at a local iris show, I decided to grow those even though I had read that they were difficult to grow. There is nothing like beginner's

luck - only one of the PCIs I bought failed to grow. Of course I had to cross-pollinate my new iris, and the seedlings came out decent. I have been growing and hybridizing PCIs ever since then.

The color combinations and patterns of the PCI are amazing and I always wait anxiously for the next Ghio, Belardi, or Wood hybrids. The Pacific Coast Irises are my favorite flowers.

I encourage all of you who aren't currently growing PCI to try growing them. If you don't think they will transplant successfully to your area, try growing them from seed. We need to expand the range where PCIs will grow. The beauty of the Pacific Coast Iris should be shared by all.

## READ ME

**Membership fees were increased. Refer to the inside front cover for the new fees.**

Membership in the American Iris Society is not required for SPCNI membership. However, AIS membership is suggested and may be of considerable benefit.

Please send membership renewals or inquiries to the Membership Secretary. Do not send them to the President or Editor. Also, if you have a change of address, please remember to send the information to the Membership Secretary. Thank you.

## IMPORTANT INFORMATION FROM THE SECRETARY/TREASURER

### Dues Notices

First dues renewal notices will no longer be sent. Please note the expiration date of your membership on the address label. This date indicates the month and year that your SPCNI dues are due. We will continue to send a final reminder notice if we have not heard from you.

### SPCNI Membership List

The SPCNI will be offering its membership list to individuals for a slight fee to cover the cost of mailing and printing (approximately \$3.00 for the US, \$4.00 for overseas). This list can be used only for contact purposes and cannot be used or sold as a business mailing list. If anybody wants to be excluded from the list, please contact Terri Hudson. If members have e-mail and would like to be on an e-mail list, please contact Terri ([irishud@mcn.org](mailto:irishud@mcn.org)).

### New members and address changes since the last *Almanac*:

Beautiful View Iris Garden  
2048 Hickok Road  
El Dorado Hills Ca 95762  
[harold@directcon.net](mailto:harold@directcon.net)

Stephanie Wilson Blanc  
1000 El Medio Avenue  
Pacific Palisades, CA 90272  
[blancgarden@verizon.net](mailto:blancgarden@verizon.net)

Paul and Carole Buchheim  
27876 Vista Road  
Romoland, CA 92585

Debra Burgess  
1825 111th Drive NE  
Lake Stevens WA 98258

Caroline Chacon  
8075 Utah Avenue  
Oroville CA 95966

Clara B. Rees Iris Society  
c/o Chad Schroter  
15133 Garden Hill Drive  
Los Gatos, CA 95032

Jan Clark  
7 Curtis Street  
Creswick, Victoria 3363  
Australia  
[janolarx@hotmail.com](mailto:janolarx@hotmail.com)

Maureen Corder  
1714 Iris Avenue  
Little Rock AR 72202

Christine Dickinson  
6080 Willowgrove  
Cupertino CA 95014

Nancy Groshong  
997 Palmetto Avenue  
Chico Ca 95926

Evelyn Hensley  
1532 Sunview Court  
Santa Rosa Ca 95401

Marcia Holt  
5204 Greenwood Avenue N.  
Seattle WA 98103

Mrs. C. M. Jacobson  
Rue Ferme Geenen 2  
Renaix 9600 Belgium  
[fa626900@skynet.be](mailto:fa626900@skynet.be)

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205 Navigator Drive  
Scotts Valley CA 95066

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Anaheim CA 92805-1131

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4243 Norton Avenue  
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[wmoyles@pacbell.net](mailto:wmoyles@pacbell.net)

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[pandeos@yahoo.com](mailto:pandeos@yahoo.com)

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iris Garden)  
5455 Deer Park Road  
Port Angeles Wa 98362  
[DPDahlia@earthlink.net](mailto:DPDahlia@earthlink.net)

Alison Simpson  
"Limavady" 9.c.4.d.  
Oamaru  
New Zealand

Len J. Suchy  
2760 N. Tyler Road  
Wichita KS 67205-8712

Dale Sullivan  
2115 Talent Avenue  
Talent OR 97540  
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Don Thomas  
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Ben Lomond CA 95005  
[don\\_e\\_thomas@yahoo.com](mailto:don_e_thomas@yahoo.com)

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Symskoy pzoefd 12-3-833  
Moscow 117208 Russia

David Whitney  
P.O. Box 1506  
New Canaan CT 06840

Lyn Wilson  
500 Adair Circle  
Hutchinson KS 67502

## SPCNI SLIDE SETS

Two slide sets are available through SPCNI. Our Slide Chairman, Damon Hill, has produced it and it can be obtained by requesting it from him at 4613 Maddock Road, Sebastopol, CA 95472.

The charge is \$7.50 for either of the two sets. The first set deals with species; the second set is concerned with hybrids. The combination set is no longer

available. The slides in each set will be contained in a Kodak carousel. The carousel will be convenient to use and less likely to be damaged in shipment. Payment (payable to SPCNI) should be sent to Terri Hudson, SPCNI Secretary-Treasurer. See the address on page 2. The person requesting the slides is financially responsible for return of the slides.

## IRIS DOUGLASIANA T-SHIRTS STILL AVAILABLE

Terry Hudson's artist contact, Delo, sketched a group of wild flowers growing on a bank along the beach near Santa Cruz. *Iris douglasiana* is queen of the scene, with beach strawberry, *Fragaria chiloensis*, and blue eyed grass, *Sisyrinchium bellum*, as attendants at her feet.

A picture of the artwork was shown in the Spring 1999 *Almanac*. SPCNI is offering this lovely shirt for \$18.00, which includes shipping. Please send your order to Terry Hudson. [See address on Page 2 of the *Almanac*.] Monies will go towards the slide sets, so that more AIS members and societies will be able to appreciate the beauty of Pacific Coast native iris.

## CHECK LIST AVAILABLE

A new revision of the *Check List of Pacific Coast Native Iris* is available from the Secretary-Treasurer. The new version covers cultivars and species registered and introduced through 2001.

Pricing is as follows: \$9.00 for USA, \$9.50 for Canada, and 16.00 for Europe.

A CD is being offered as well as the hard copy for the same price as the hard copy. If you would like to order both a CD and a hard copy, the cost would be \$4.50 less for the CD.

Please contact Terri Hudson if you want to order a copy.

## WANTED

**From Diane Whitehead, Victoria, British Columbia, Canada:**

I would like to form an email group to discuss hybridizing iris, and perhaps to share pollen. The group would probably be active only twice a year - during the Northern and Southern Hemisphere bloom times, and would not be large enough to require a host like Yahoo. I think we could just exchange letters with a small group using regular email software that has a command similar to "Send to All" or "Reply to All."

When I suggested this to several SPCNI members, some of them said they would be interested in a more general discussion group, particularly for help with seed growing.

Please email me if you would be interested in being part of either group: hybridizing or general growing.  
email address: voltaire@islandnet.com

## EUGENE LOOP

*Adele Lawyer, Walnut Creek, CA*

It is my sad responsibility to inform members of the Society for Pacific Coast Native Iris of the passing of Eugene Loop on October 9th, 2003.

Eugene served as both First and Second Vice President of the Society, and also had a turn as Northern California Representative.

He was a true scientist, and constructed controlled temperature chambers enabling him to establish the best temperatures for germination of Pacifica seed.

In the field, he studied the nature of the soils where native PCIs grew, and the drainage necessary to reproduce these conditions in home garden situations. This

information is available to *Almanac* readers. To summarize: Soil acidity should be on the acid side, between 5.2 and 6.7. Soils in their natural habitats are 60% soil to 40% gravel. This data was obtained by using graduated mesh screens.

On a personal level, Lewis and I enjoyed collecting seed with Gene and Joanne each year so that it could be distributed to our *Almanac* readers in the fall. It is significant, that on Lewis' final birthday, at his request, the Loops were the only non-family members who were invited to attend.

## BOB WARD

*Adele Lawyer, Walnut Creek, CA*

I have just been saddened to hear of the death of Bob Ward of Little Rock, Arkansas.

Bob's horticultural specialty was Bamboo. He had a collection of various species on his property. He was very proud, however, of being able to grow some Pacific Coast native iris varieties in his garden, also. The extreme temperature fluctuations were not ordinarily comfort zones for PCIs! - He told me which varieties he grew, and CANYON SNOW was one I remember.

Bob came on two of the trips Lewis and I organized to see Pacificas in their natural habitat. He was so excited and delighted when he first saw them! It was a pleasure to witness the enthusiasm of his first look. They were growing on a steep, rocky location on a cliff near Crescent City, California. - He came back the next year, 1992, and brought his wife, Janice. I was pleased that he wanted to share his enthusiasm with her.

For those who wish to contact Janet, the address is 54 Belmont Drive, Little Rock, AK 72204.

## PACIFIC COAST IRIS SOURCES

[Editor's advice: If you are mail ordering for the first time, order from a number of sources. Different sources package their plants differently and ship at slightly different times. Some sources may be more suited to your area. Always pay for the quickest shipping possible.]

**Aitken's Salmon Creek Garden**, 608 NW 119th St., Vancouver, WA 98685.

Catalog is \$3.00. Phone: (360) 573-4472, fax: (360) 576-7012, website: [www.flowerfantasy.net](http://www.flowerfantasy.net), e-mail: [aitken@flowerfantasy.net](mailto:aitken@flowerfantasy.net). Twenty-three named cultivars, including varieties from Terry Aitken, and Duane Meek.

**Bay View Gardens**, 1201 Bay Street, Santa Cruz, CA 95060.

Catalog is \$3.00. Phone: (831) 423-3656 (call after dark Pacific Time), fax: (831) 423-7610, e-mail: [ghiobayview@surfnetusa.com](mailto:ghiobayview@surfnetusa.com). Introductions for 2004 from Joe Ghio (9) and Lois Belardi (2), and over 50 other named cultivars, sampler set of 4 named varieties, reselect seedlings, "Landscape Special" (reselect seedlings in lots of 50), and seed of random varieties.

**The Iris Gallery**, 33450 Little Valley Road, Fort Bragg, CA 95437.

Catalog is \$3.00 (has color pictures of PCI). Phone: (707) 964-7971 or 1-800-757-IRIS, fax: (707) 964-3907, website: [www.allthingsiris.com](http://www.allthingsiris.com), e-mail: [theirisgallery@earthlink.net](mailto:theirisgallery@earthlink.net). Year 2004 introductions from Vern Wood (5) and Elena Laborde (1). More than 60 other named cultivars, including older varieties. Collections of named or unnamed varieties available. PCI are shipped in peat pots.

**Wildwood Gardens**, 33326 S. Dickey Prairie Rd., P.O. Box 250, Molalla, OR 97038-0250.

Catalog is \$3.00 (has color pictures of PCI). Phone: (503) 829-3102, e-mail: [gardens@molalla.net](mailto:gardens@molalla.net). 30+ named varieties including some older cultivars. Sample collection of 6 PCIs available.

The following have offered PCI in the past. You will need to contact the proprietors for more information.

**Beautiful View Iris Garden**, 2048 Hickok Road, El Dorado Hills, CA 95762. Phone: (916) 933-2218, e-mail: [harold@directcon.net](mailto:harold@directcon.net), website: [www.beautiful-view-iris.com](http://www.beautiful-view-iris.com).

**Broadleigh Gardens**, Bishops Hull, Taunton, Somerset TA4 1AE, England. Website: [www.broadleighbulbs.co.uk](http://www.broadleighbulbs.co.uk). (EC sales only)

**D. and J. Gardens**, 7872 Howell Prairie Road, N. E., Silverton, OR 97381.

**Nature's Garden**, 40611 Hwy 226, Scio, Oregon 97374.

**Otepopo Garden Nursery**, Rural Delivery 120, Oamaru, North Otago, New Zealand (New Zealand sales only).

**Pacific Rim Native Plant Nursery**, Paige and Pat Woodward, 44305 Old Orchard Road, Chilliwack, BC V2R 1A9, Canada. Phone: (604) 792-9279, fax: (604) 792-1891, website [www.hillkeep.ca](http://www.hillkeep.ca), email: [plants@hillkeep.ca](mailto:plants@hillkeep.ca). PCI species. Mail order worldwide. No printed catalog. Garden and nursery visits by appointment.

**Siskiyou Rare Plant Nursery**, 2825 Cummings Road, Medford, OR 97501, website: [www.srpn.net](http://www.srpn.net).

**Westonbirt Plants**, 9 Westonbirt Close, Worcester, WR5 3RX, England. Phone/Fax: 00 44 (0)1905 350429.

## SPCNI TREASURER'S REPORT

1/1/03 through 12/31/03

### Income

'04 Trek Registrations	1650.00	
Back Almanacs	17.50	
Book Sales:		
Checklist	113.00	
Cohen	32.50	
Diseases	3.50	
Lenz-PCI	6.00	
Book Sales - Other	67.50	
Total Book Sales	222.50	
Dues	1212.00	
Interest Earned	44.58	
Misc. Income	5.00	
Seed Exchange	374.91	
Slide Rentals	20.00	
T-Shirt Sales	18.00	
<b>Total Income</b>		<b>3564.49</b>

### Expenses

'04 Trek Expense	150.00	
Almanac (payment for three Almanacs)	2059.00	
Book Expenses:		
Checklist	61.82	
Mitchell Medals	30.00	
Secretary/Treasurer		
Office Supplies	211.36	
Seed Exchange Expenses	8.31	
Slide Program	9.50	
Web Page	95.00	
<b>Total Expenses</b>		<b>2624.99</b>
<b>Total Income/Expenses</b>		<b>939.50</b>

### Assets

CD Account	4592.00	
Checking	2370.38	
<b>Total Cash and Bank Accounts</b>		
<b>Total Assets</b>		<b>6962.38</b>

## WHY DO YOU HYBRIDIZE PACIFIC COAST IRIS?

### Lois Belardi

I bought a few PCNs from Joe Ghio about 20 or more years ago and noticed that there weren't hardly any blues. One of those was SOQUEL COVE which had some blue in it, and Ralph Coleman who was one of the founders of MBIS gave me what he said was a wild PCN from his garden in Bonny Doon (Joe later said that it was one of his seedlings). It was sort of lavender blue, so I crossed those two and from one of those seedlings crossed with RIO DEL MAR came PACIFIC HIGH. Joe Ghio came by that year and looked at my seedlings and told

me to separate it, and it was introduced the next year by Bay View Gardens. Then I was hooked!

I have been very fortunate to pick the right crosses so that now Joe has introduced 12 PCNs for me, 11 of which go back to PACIFIC HIGH. One year I crossed some Tall Bearded but no luck and they take up too much room. I now grow under 200 seedlings each year and it has been a great hobby. We just have a city lot and have to make room for my other iris and Jack's vegetable garden.

### Ryan Grisso

I have just started into my hybridizing endeavor and I think I am hybridizing for the excitement of creating something new and exciting. For ten years (since I was 15) I used to breed Birmingham Roller Pigeons and due to a serious lung allergy in 2000, I had to part with them and start something new. I found that hybridizing Pacific Coast Iris was very similar and intrigued me much in the same way breeding pigeons did. I have just had my first year of seedlings bloom and even though nothing was new or exciting, it was fun to see what I had created.

I chose to hybridize PCIs because I have always been interested in them from my retail nursery working days when I was younger. It started when I went to the San Francisco Flower and Garden Show, with my wife back in March 2002, and the local iris clubs were staffing an AIS booth and they had a bunch of cool Pacific Coast Iris flowers that I hadn't seen before. I asked them who's those were and they told me they were Vern Wood's, from Pinole, California. Since I live very close to Pinole (approximately 1 mile away), I went home that night and looked up Vern's phone number in the book and called him. The next day I went over for a visit and I have been hooked ever since.

### Garry Knipe

I wish I knew. I often wonder what madness has crept over me.

Why someone might want to drift around the yard like a bee carrying pollen from one flower to another. Hanging silly tags from otherwise beautiful flower stalks. Trying to catch seeds before they fall to the ground. Laboriously planting, watering, weeding, waiting (repeat endlessly). Cursing squirrels, cats, and raccoons for digging up my little babies. Keeping track of parentage and resulting characteristics.

Lunacy I tell you. Maybe I am trying to prove how patient I can be. When only 5% of the plants show flower in the second year after making those crosses.

I suppose it is an addiction like gambling. Just one more cross. I'm sure I'll hit the jackpot.

Or is it more like a giant slow game of chess. Deciding what moves to make and waiting a few years to see the outcome. Then making more moves, for as long as the game lasts.

I don't know. But it sure is sweet when I'm strolling the seedling beds in the morning and there sits a beautiful blue flower perched high in the morning sun.

Creativity, beauty, definitely.

Humph, that blue flower sits upon a plant with horrible rust and it looks like it won't survive the summer.

Masochism I tell you.

### Steve Taniguchi

Why do I hybridize Pacific Coast Iris? Why not hybridize roses, corn, peas, dandelions, or bread mold? Ok, you can't hybridize bread mold. I chose PCIs because:

- 1) The flower is easy to pollinate.
- 2) They don't require large amounts of space.
- 3) They will bloom in two or three years from seed.
- 4) The flowers come in a wide range of colors and patterns.
- 5) They yield a good percentage of decent flowers.
- 6) PCIs are my favorite flowers.

But why hybridize at all? Why not sit back and wait for the latest Ghio, Wood, and Belardi hybrids? Mainly, I hybridize to satisfy my curiosity. It is always interesting to find out what colors and patterns you get from crossing two varieties. PCI are a good choice because you often get surprises.

## GARRY KNIPE WINS BEST OF SHOW AT AIS NATIONAL

Garry Knipe won Best-of-Show at the 2004 AIS National Convention for his perfect specimen of *I. douglasiana*!

## PATTERNS AND FORMS

Joe Ghio, Santa Cruz, CA

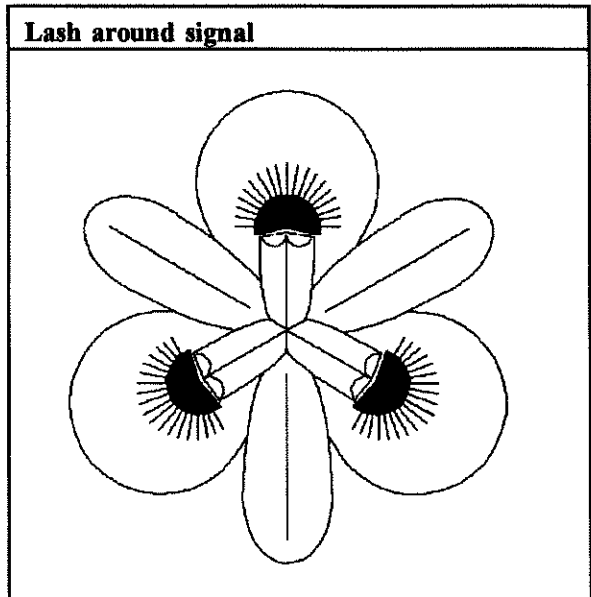
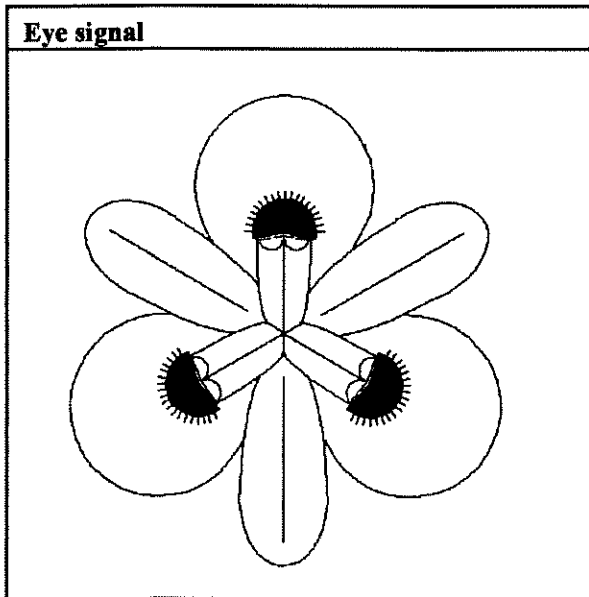
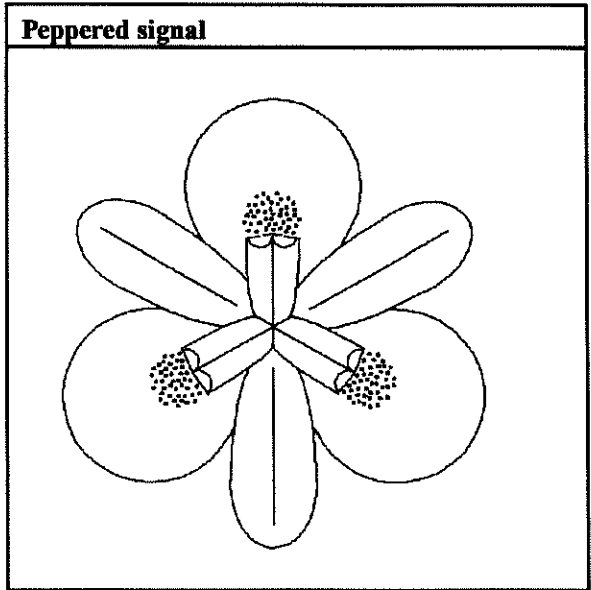
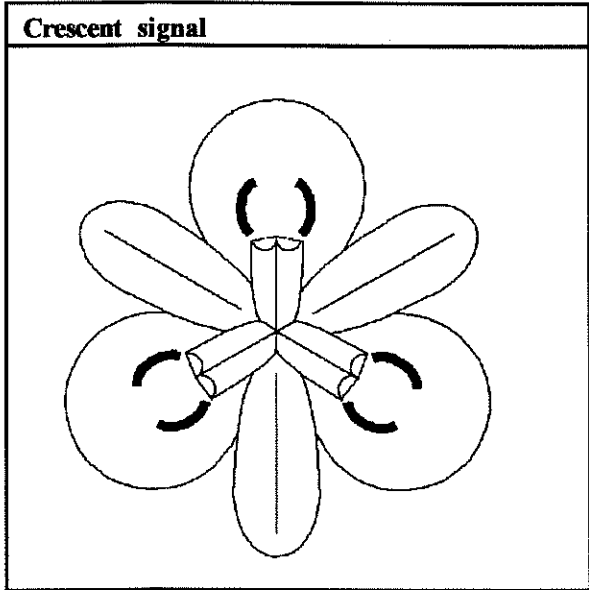
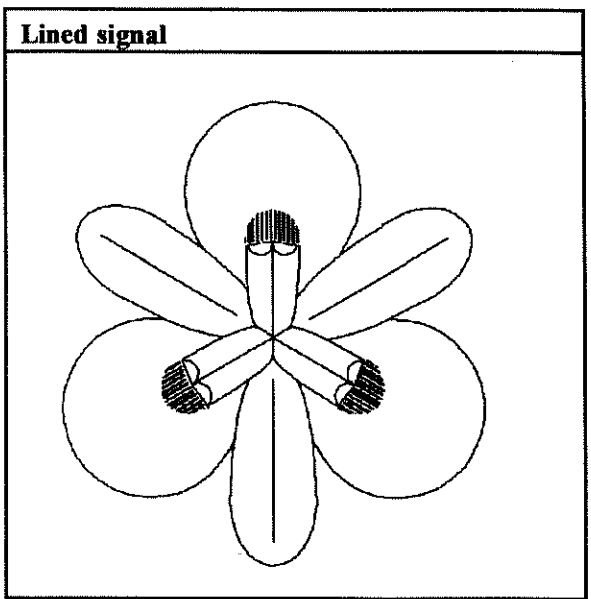
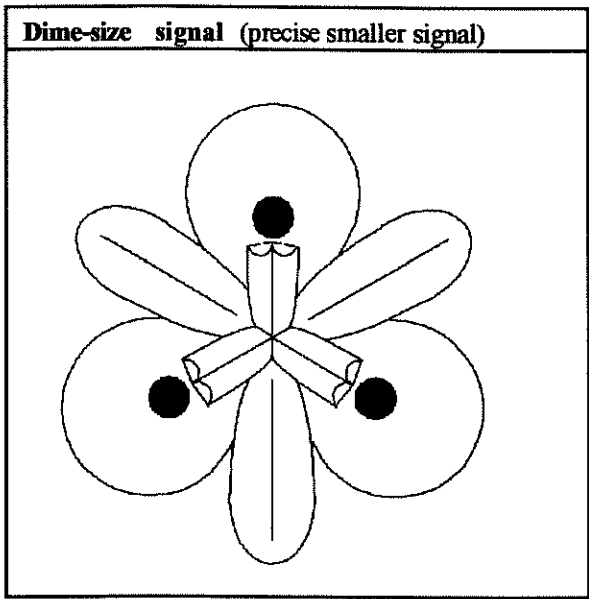
[Editor's note: In the Fall 2003 Issue of the *Almanac*, Jean Witt defined terms for describing PCIs in an article titled *Do We Speak The Same Language?* I asked Joe Ghio if he uses the same terms that Jean Witt used in the article, and Joe sent me some information on terms he uses to describe his iris. This article is based on information I received from Joe Ghio. The primitive (and ugly) line drawings used to illustrate this article were created by your artistically-challenged Editor.]

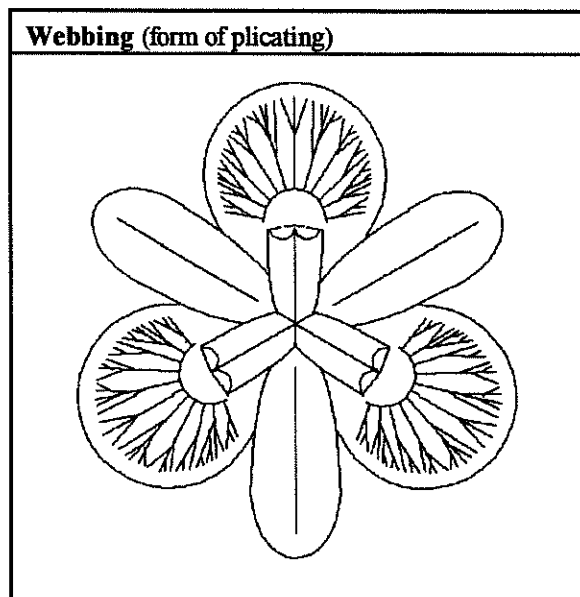
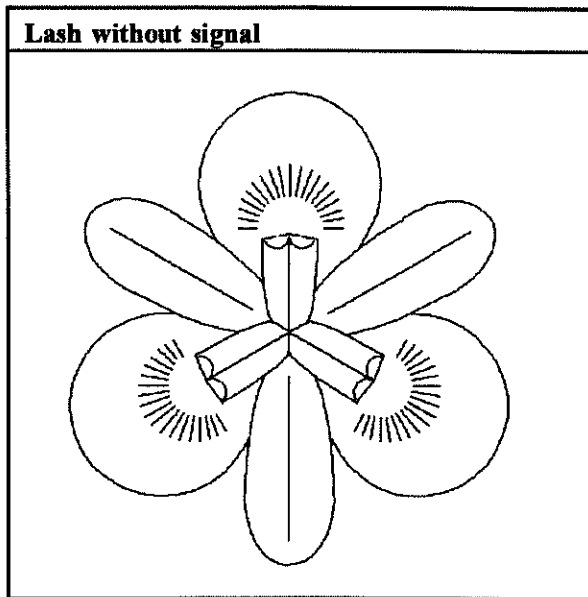
In general, I use the same terms as those described by Jean Witt. In addition to Jean's definition of "halo", I have used "halo" to describe a thin band around the petal edge as in the TB, BRIDE'S HALO. I also use the following descriptive terms.

**Neon signal:** A signal that is a bright shiny color, usually dark violet or maroon, any size and shape.

**Crystal edge:** A translucent band on the petal edges. Other terms are dot signal, webbing, peppered signal, lined signal, lash, eye signal, and dime-size signal.







In addition, I use the terms listed below to describe flower form.

**Dinnerplate form:** Flat, with all petals in one plane.

**Fountain form:** All petals droop downward as in a fountain.

**Triangular form:** Standards close as in a triangle, falls downward.

**Pie crust ruffling:** Precise sculpture edge ruffling as in a pie crust.

**Bubble ruffling:** Intense undulations.

**Stipple ruffling:** Precise even, rather than informal ruffles as in bubble ruffling.

**45 degree standards:** Angle of the standards.

**Wavy ruffles:** Gentle ruffling compared to heavy intense bubble ruffling.

**Full form:** Round, overlapping petals.

**Corrugated ruffling:** Large, precise undulations.

**Recurved form:** Petals, particularly the falls, fountain and curl under at edges.

**Semi-flaring form:** Refers to falls that flare at a 45 degree angle.

**Flat form:** All petals are on one flat plane - like dinnerplate (but reserved for very large blooms).

I use the terms above, but I am always creating new terms to fit new needs. I can also see, for example, "Classic Form" to describe the plain, more species appearance.

## ***IRIS MUNZII* TREK, 25 APRIL 2004**

*Steve Taniguchi, Santa Clara, CA*

We had a large turnout for the *Iris munzii* trek, and as a result, we split into two groups. The first group visited the iris in the morning, then headed back to the hotel in the afternoon. The second group spent the morning among the sequoias, and visited the iris in the afternoon.

I was part of the first group of about a dozen people. Our two guides, Cheryl Bartlett and Jennifer Atkins, led the way in a rugged (4WD I presume) pickup truck, and we followed in our van. Although the pickup truck seemed to have no problems, we soon found out that vans are not the best vehicles for unpaved roads. Jay Hudson drove slowly and carefully, but every time we hit a big bump, Adele Lawyer would yell, "Do it again, Daddy!" We also saw a rattlesnake sunning itself on the

road as we drove to the iris location. This was definitely an "e-ticket" ride.

Once we arrived at the iris location, we were advised to take our lunches with us, because bears might break into the van to get the food. (Wait a minute, bears want food and I'm carrying my lunch with me?) The bears and rattlesnakes turned out to be the least of our worries, as a more sinister, bloodthirsty creature was waiting for us at our first stop.

At the first area, we were reminded that poison oak grew all over the place, and we should be careful where we stepped. As I scanned for *I. munzii* and avoided the poison oak, I heard a familiar high pitched sound. Mosquitoes! Great. Despite the rule about not feeding

the wildlife, I (involuntarily) ended up feeding several mosquitoes.

Our timing was a bit off, and we were at the end of the bloom season. Cheryl said that normally this would be the best time of year to see *I. munzii* in bloom, but this season the iris decided to bloom early. Nevertheless, we saw some nice examples of *I. munzii* flowers, and several flowers that had been chewed upon by some hungry animals. The flowers were large and colored in various shades of pale lavender and violet. Many of the flowers attracted insects and spiders. The flower stems were long, and in some cases, snakey.

In addition to flowers, we also saw flower buds and seed pods. The flower buds were long, narrow, and pointed. The plants seemed to be very fertile as I saw many seedpods, and in one case there were four seed pods developing on one stem. The *I. munzii* plants were tall, green, and healthy looking, in stark contrast to the drought-ravaged *I. hartwegii australis* plants we saw two years ago in the San Bernardino Mountains.

We returned to the Visitor Center to finish our lunches and wait for the second group to return from the sequoias. After we said our good-byes, Jay tried to start our van. Oh no, the van wouldn't start; the steering wheel was locked. Several other people tried to start the

van, and a bunch of us tried to rock the van away from the curb, but nothing would work. It appeared our pleasant trek would be ruined by mechanical problems. Then, in a flash of Einsteinian genius, Jay took the correct set of keys from his pocket and started the van. (Sorry Jay, but Glenn Corlew forced me to write this paragraph.)

We all enjoyed the time we spent among the *I. munzii* in Sequoia National Park and the SPCNI thanks: The National Park Service for allowing us to visit the *Iris munzii* in a closed area of Sequoia National Park, Park Ranger Erik Oberg for facilitating approval of our visit, and Cheryl Bartlett and Jennifer Atkins for guiding us to the *I. munzii*.

Trek participants would also like to thank: Richard Richards and Terri Hudson for planning, organizing, and executing the trip, and Steve Ayala, Jay Hudson, and Richard Richards for driving the three vans.

[Editor's note: See the color page for some photos of *Iris munzii*. The SPCNI website also has some excellent photos of the trek. I hope someone from the second group write about their experience for the next *Almanac*.]

## INTERVIEW WITH COLIN RIGBY

[This interview was conducted via e-mail. Garry Knipe, Ryan Grisso, and Steve Taniguchi sent questions to Colin Rigby who graciously answered them.]

Colin Rigby is a long-time member of SPCNI. He has been SPCNI Seed Exchange Chairman, he organized one of the SPCNI Treks to see wild PCI, and he was owner of Portable Acres which sold PCI and all sorts of other iris species. Colin has also hybridized iris and won a Mitchell Medal for his PCI, JEAN ERICKSON.

**Steve:** How did you get interested in PCI?

**Colin:** Some years ago, Teresa and Jean Erickson went to a Fall Region 14 meeting where Duane Meek was passing out small packets of PCI seed from his garden. I had a few other plants from local nurseries but planting the seed was probably the thing that got everything going.

**Garry:** When did you first start growing Pacificas?

**Colin:** We have a 'family' cabin up near Mt. Lassen and there is a wild iris growing there. I still do not know for sure what the species is. I had tried to transplant this iris to the garden when we lived in San Francisco but neither plants nor seed survived. Plants from coastal regions, of course, did better.

**Garry:** Please name some of your favorite Pacificas and tell us what you like about them.

**Colin:** BANBURY GNOME is still one of my favorites because of the velvety texture on the falls. CLARICE RICHARDS because of its clear coloring and AGNES JAMES for its garden value. This is an iris that was collected from the wild in 1939 and is still hanging around. It blooms so heavily that one can hardly see leaves for flowers. These are all old irises and can't be compared to the modern hybrids but each has a unique quality.

**Garry:** What about some of your own introductions. Which are your favorites?

**Colin:** JEAN ERICKSON, of course, and some of the irises that came out of the cross of RED BLUFF by GOLD DUSTED.

- Steve:** I know you are interested in species iris. Do you find the PCI species more interesting than the PCI hybrids? What are your favorite PCI species, and why do you like them?
- Colin:** The species and the hybrids are both distinctive and cannot be compared. I have never felt that 'bigger was better' and personally prefer the delicate look of the species to the 'dinner plates' of some of the hybrids. *I. tenax* does so well in this climate that it just spreads around 'doing its thing'.
- Steve:** You once mentioned to me that *I. tenax* did better for you (when you were in California) when you grew it in the shade. Do the PCI species require special care in the garden to survive?
- Colin:** No. *Tenax* and *I. innominata* both did better in California in shade as Penngrove would get into the high 90's at times in the summer without the cooling influence of coastal fog.
- Garry:** Did you hybridize any other Iris or non-Iris species?
- Colin:** Yes, I dabbled a little with the 40 chromosome Sino-Siberians (lots of doggies here), the Cal-Sibs and *I. unguicularis*, one of which I registered and was introduced.
- Steve:** The Hudsons have commented that RAFFLES is a long bloomer. Did you have that goal in mind when you were hybridizing RAFFLES? If not, what was your goal with RAFFLES?
- Colin:** No. RAFFLES appeared out of an unlikely cross that I was looking for reds. It was a good plant with a nice clean flower so it was saved.
- Ryan:** What is your seedling schedule (when do you plant your seeds, when do you transplant the seedlings, how many seedlings per year, how many seeds per cross, how many crosses, what type of soil mixture)?
- Colin:** When we lived in California, getting the seed to germinate was much easier than in the colder, wetter climate of Washington State. I always planted the seed from each pod together in one pot but never counted the number of seed in that pod. Each pot was recorded with the pod and pollen parent and whatever came up was it. I have always used SuperSoil as a potting medium; although, it seems to me that several years ago, the mixture didn't have as many 'sticks' as it has now. In California, if I were diligent and watchful, I would plant the seedpod as soon as it started to crack open. I usually had germination by that fall. If the pod was allowed to harden and the seed to get brown, seed would not germinate until the following spring. It seems that the longer the seed is kept before planting, the more inhibitor it has and the longer it takes for the seed to leach out that inhibitor. I have always just put the seed pots out and hope for the best. Here in Rochester with our heavy rains and freezes, I put a little chicken grit on the pot to keep the seed from floating away. Yes, it has happened. I have never had the place nor taken the time to 'baby' the pots, which is probably the proper way of doing things. I would line out the seedling when they were about three inches high.
- Garry:** What is it that makes hybridizing such an interesting pastime?
- Colin:** There is nothing like the thrill of rushing out to see the 'doggies' when they first open. Once in a while you get a good one and it is worth all the effort.
- Steve:** Do you have any advice for beginning hybridizers?
- Colin:** Yes, jump right in! The rewards are tremendous. When I first started, I had no idea how, what or where to go. Jim McWhirter offered some good advice that I have always followed. He said that as a rule of thumb, the pod parent was the plant and the pollen parent was the flower. If you have a good plant to start with, you can get some interesting flowers from the pollen parent. For me, it was good advice.
- Steve:** How did Portable Acres come about? Tell us the story about how "Portable Acres" got its name.
- Colin:** When Jean Erickson and her late husband, Gus, lived in Sebastopol, they built a terrace and planter boxes for Jean's irises. One day, while moving dirt in the wheelbarrow, Gus said, "we should call this place portable acres"! Seemed like a good name for a mail order business.
- Steve:** I had the best success with PCI that I ordered from Portable Acres. I think I only lost two PCI from Portable Acres. Did you have some special process for digging and shipping PCI?

- Colin:** No, but we never tried to send out plants unless the white roots were at least two inches long. Of course, when we potted the plants up, in SuperSoil, and held them until spring shipment, they had a good root system going.
- Garry:** Before moving North to the cooler and wetter state of Washington, you grew Pacificas in California. Have you noticed any differences in the growth and bloom characteristics of particular cultivars?
- Colin:** Not really. There are certain cultivars that seem to prefer a cooler or warmer climate while there are others that are adaptable to both. In California, for example, I had a hard time keeping MONTEREY SNOW going because of the heat. Here, in this cooler climate, it grows like a weed and has survived years of neglect, snow and freezes. Ben Hager's PCIs did well in California heat but did not seem to like my climate. Others like Bob Hubley's SMOKEY WINE and Denney's CANYON ORCHID just keep going and going. They are both from Southern California.
- Garry:** Do you recommend any different procedures for growing, transplanting, or raising seeds of the Pacificas in these different regions?
- Colin:** Both here and in California, the PCIs have had to survive in the open without good protection from sun, wind and lots of TLC. In California, transplanting was done in the fall/winter, anytime after active growth up until the last of February. Here, transplanting is best done in the spring. Have successfully moved plants in flower here.
- Ryan:** What kind of fertilizing do you practice, and what time of year do you apply it?
- Colin:** Triple 15, 16 or 18 in the 50# bags, whatever is available and the cheapest. Once in the fall and once in early spring just before bloom. Everything in the garden gets the same treatment, nothing special.
- Ryan:** Do you have problems with crown rot or rust? If so, do you use anything to prevent or treat crown rot or rust?
- Colin:** Had very little problem with rot. I think that some cultivars are more susceptible than others are, however. I always watered the PCIs after the sun went down in California. By morning, the plant seemed to be dry around the crown. Here, they get the same sprinkler along with everything else. We dipped the plants for shipment in Subdue for a few years but that didn't last long.
- Steve:** Have you noticed any PCI varieties that are resistant to crown rot and/or rust?
- Colin:** Not really. Rust was never a problem with me on the PCIs. I think good circulation around plants is important.
- Garry:** Since you were the SPCNI Seed Chairman, I suppose you have grown quite a few species and open pollinated varieties from donated seed. Please describe some of the more interesting plants that you have grown from the SPCNI seed exchange.
- Colin:** Only seed I have grown from the Exchange have been species. Each one is distinctive.
- Steve:** Speaking of seeds, have you made any interesting observations about PCI seeds?
- Colin:** No.
- Garry:** In a recent Almanac, Richard Richards mentioned a possible link between warmer temperatures and better blue colored flowers. Do you have any thoughts on this? Does CACHE CREEK exhibit deeper blues under warmer weather?
- Colin:** This is interesting. CACHE CREEK was a very, very pale blue in the heat of Penngrove. It is slightly deeper in color here and holds its color longer.
- Steve:** Have you noticed any relationship between temperature and color (not just blue)?
- Colin:** Yes, colors seem to be more intense in our cooler weather. I often thought that the sun faded the colors in the flower in California.

- Garry:** After viewing the SPCNI slide show and seeing some very tall style crests on *I. chrysophylla*, Steve and I were wondering how easily those long style crests might be inherited. Have you observed these in any *I. chrysophylla* offspring?
- Colin:** Not the long style crests of *I. chrysophylla*. However, this species is a fun species to hybridize with. This species crossed with *I. tenax* gives us the VALLY BANNER pattern. Duane Meek once said this iris 'throws some weird stuff'!
- Garry:** I have seen a few Duane Meek seedlings in the parentage of your introductions. What characteristics did those plants have that you wanted to include in your seedlings?
- Colin:** Both RED BLUFF and PEACOCK GAP came out of that little packet of Duane's seed. Both irises were distinctive; RED BLUFF was a terrific plant parent and PEACOCK GAP for its coloring. Flowers on both plants could have been better.
- Garry:** I have recently become interested in Pacificas that have red coloring on various parts of the plant. For example, Ghio's BABY BLANKET when grown under shade sometimes has a very red stem. Are there any named varieties or species that have particularly good red coloring on the plant?
- Colin:** I think the red stem coloring comes from *I. douglasiana* just as *I. virginica* shows red-based foliage. Years ago, we used to guess that the color of the flower was purple if the plant had red at the base of the foliage. Parentage has become so complex now that it would be hard to tell.
- Garry:** What are your favorite companion plants for the Pacificas?
- Colin:** Anything! PCIs are wonderful garden plants and go with anything.
- Steve:** Do you have any thoughts on how to increase interest in PCI?
- Colin:** Advertise and get the plants distributed. Not everything grows everywhere but there are a lot of good plants that just don't get the distribution. CANYON ORCHID was gusted and in bloom at the AIS National Convention in Seattle in 1984 and is still going strong up here. And, it has *I. munzii* in its background! We desperately need more hybridizers in various locations. "Pollen Daubing" can be a lot of fun and very rewarding. No one will ever match the contributions that Joe Ghio has made to the PCIs, but it is just the beginning. We've just reached the tip of the iceberg so to speak and the field is wide open.
- Steve:** What are your thoughts on genetic engineering of PCI? Should we do it? Why or why not?
- Colin:** Mother Nature knows what she is doing and when you have something as perfect as the Pacific Coast Irises, why foul it up? No, I'm not for it.
- Colin,** thank you for letting us interview you for the *Almanac*.

## EDITOR'S FAVORITES

Steve Taniguchi, Santa Clara, CA

I have to confess that I like the brighter bolder colors on my PCI. Pastel colors look fine on PCI, but I usually shell out money for bright colors, deep colors, velvety colors, or eye-catching color combinations. My list here consists of PCI that I have personally grown or seen in iris shows. I've also restricted it to named cultivars. If your favorite doesn't appear here, it might be because we have different tastes, or it might be because I haven't seen your favorite. I've separated my list by color. Please note that my list here is a pure beauty contest - if I had to list my favorites in terms of growth, vigor, and appearance, it would be different.

My favorite white PCIs are CANYON SNOW and TIDY WHITE. Both are solid white selfs with yellow signals. If you compare the two, TIDY WHITE has cleaner colors. The yellow signal of CANYON SNOW contains some miniscule darker dots.

BIG SMILE is my favorite yellow PCI. BIG SMILE is a clean yellow self with a lighter yellow signal. I like it because there is no brown in it (many yellows have brown in them, or brown veins), and because it has the most perfect eye-pleasing form of any PCI I have seen. [See the color page of the Spring 2003 *Almanac*] BIG SMILE's round falls are horizontal so all of the color is

directed at your eyes as you look down toward the flower. My second choice for yellow PCI is GORDOLA. GORDOLA is a deep yellow (often called gold) with even deeper yellow veins. An interesting thing I've noticed about yellow PCI is that they seem to glow if you look at them at dusk.

I haven't seen a PCI that I would call orange. I've seen orange-browns and yellow-oranges, but no real oranges. Among the yellow-oranges, my favorites are COZUMEL and EAGLE EYES.

Although it is registered as "smoky orchid", FACE VALUE looks pinkish to me. So I guess FACE VALUE is my favorite "pink" PCI. FACE VALUE also has what Joe Ghio calls a "neon signal" that adds an interesting touch. (I saw a couple of beautiful "strawberry milkshake" pink PCIs with darker signals when SPCNI toured Joe Ghio's garden in 1994, but I guess those were never introduced)

My favorite red was COMMON SENSE. It was the closest thing to red that I've seen in a PCI. Unfortunately my two plants bloomed out and I haven't been able to reacquire it. My current favorite red is WINE AND CHEESE. The standards and falls are deep red, and the styles are yellow - a really neat color combination. The species-looking BANBURY GNOME is a nice dark red. BATTLE LINE is a nice dark red that I saw at this year's Monterey Bay Iris Society show.

Blue purists may not consider some of my favorite "blue" PCI as blue since many blues are actually blue-violet. Anyway, my favorite blue is PACIFIC HIGH, which is a pale blue with a dark blue border around the signal. Close behind is PACIFIC MISS, which is light blue with a dark blue signal. Other blues that I have trouble turning away from are MARINE MAGIC and BLUE PLATE SPECIAL.

I found myself stuck when deciding on a favorite red-purple PCI, so I've listed four of them in alphabetic order: CUPERTINO, MANTRA, PESCADERO, and RARE REWARD.

Of the dark purples and violets, my two favorites are DEEP MAGIC and SAN ARDO, followed closely by SEA ADMIRAL, SAN ANDREAS, and FAULT ZONE. I like the velvety appearance of DEEP MAGIC, and I like the lighter edges on FAULT ZONE and SEA ADMIRAL. I usually write down the names of varieties that I like when I visit iris shows. In 1995, I recorded "93-51 (Wood)". That Vernon Wood seedling became SEA ADMIRAL, which became the Mitchell Medal winner for 2003.

I'm usually not much of a fan for brown flowers, but I must say that STAR OF WONDER is impressive (it is actually registered as "bronze apricot, F. with mahogany shading on shoulders and edge"). The Bay View Gardens 2002 catalog description of STAR OF WONDER includes the statement "Stunning coloring" and I agree.

There are many PCI that do not fit into a color category. These are PCI that have unusual patterns or color combinations. The most famous pattern is probably the "Valley Banner" pattern of purple veins on white falls and purple styles. My favorites of this pattern are FOOTHILL BANNER and STAR OF EVENING. Joe Ghio and Lois Belardi have new introductions this year that are variations on this pattern, but I haven't seen them yet, so I may be adding names to my favorites list in the near future.

Another color pattern I like is the Joe Ghio "neon signal" that I mentioned earlier. OXYMORON is a striking example of this pattern. I also like EYES HAVE IT which is lavender with darker veins with a "neon signal".

An unnamed pattern of yellow signal, surrounded by a darker color, followed by dark veins on a light background, ending in a darker colored band around the outside can be found on the wonderfully colored WILDER THAN EVER and SIERRA TAPESTRY.

I can't wait to see next year's PCI so that I can add to my list of favorites.

## LEAVES

*Diane Whitehead, Victoria, BC, Canada*

Read the detailed descriptions of Pacific Coast iris in the Checklist. Whoever wrote each one did it with the flower right beside them. Eyed, washed, veined, bordered, opalescent, speckled, flushed, ruffled. Aren't they wonderful? But is there ever a mention of the part of the plant that we enjoy for the ten or eleven months they are not flowering? Yes, I mean the leaves. The only mention I have seen is this:

HARLAND HAND ... reddish base on foliage..

It's true that most of the PC Iris I grow form clumps of dark green or yellowish green evergreen leaves along my paths, in front of rhododendrons. In fact, the colors of the leaves are similar to those of the average rhododendron leaf. Many rhodos have fantastic leaves, though, and PCIs can show some variability.

Occasionally some of my seedlings have had leaves distinctive enough that I made note of them.

MINI MA seedlings have short, wide, recurved leaves. OSOCALES X BIG SMILE produced neat, short leaves. POMPONIO seedlings' leaves were limp, narrow, pale green. SAN TOMAS seedlings were grayish, with pink bases. Some had very wide leaf fans, and others were wedge-shaped so the plants were imbricated, like French braided hair. TURQUOISE TOUCH seedlings have shiny medium green leaves.

That sent me to the books, particularly Lenz, to see where the variations in leaves were coming from, and what other possibilities there might be.

Clumping is characteristic of *tenax*, *innominata*, and *douglasiana*. Some of the clumps can get huge. Maybe

if you have a small garden, or don't want an iris monoculture, some of the species that grow as individual plants would be a better choice to share space in a mixed border.

The common dark green leaves, varying in width and shine, often with a red or pink base, are legacies of *Iris innominata* and *douglasiana*. Their leaves often curve outwards. *Macrosiphon*'s leaves are strongly upright.

Most species have evergreen leaves, but both *tenax* and *hartwegii* are deciduous. I can't imagine wanting bare ground rather than leaves during the winter, but there may be a labor-saving advantage. I spend a fair bit of time on my knees in front of my plants, cutting dead leaves with scissors. Maybe deciduous leaves remove themselves from the plants and just need to be quickly raked away.

Three species have blue-green leaves: *hartwegii*, *munzii* and *macrosiphon*. *Purdyi* and *fernaldii* leaves are gray-green.

Perhaps the likeliest characteristic to exploit for breeding plants with beautiful leaves is the red staining of several species. Many have colored leaf bases, but *bracteata*, *fernaldii* and *purdyi* can have brilliant pink, red or purple leaf bases, stems, bracts and spathes. I have just scrutinized the pictures of these species on our website, and don't notice any such brilliance. I guess it will need to be selected for. Collection site and flower color have sometimes been described in the seedlist, but leaves are never mentioned. Perhaps seed collectors could note if the plants had distinctive leaves or red bracts and spathes.

## SEEDS OF CHAOS

Debby Cole, SPCNI Seed Distribution Chairman

Friends, we have very little wild-collected seed of PC species left, and I feel we are failing our self-imposed responsibilities as stewards of the PCI. The Cohen and Lenz pamphlets are quite clear on where the various species were last found, and old SPCNI issues detail where the field trips went. Please, do make an effort to see PCI in the wild this spring if at all possible (and make notes so you can describe them and their location accurately!), and return 6-8 weeks later to gather 10% of the seed pods. If they're on private land, please seek consent from the owner; if the land is public, state or federal, please file any necessary paperwork – but please, please, please get serious about collecting seed!

Seed of modern hybrids is also much in demand, especially that of honors-winners or of cultivars not previously included. If you're sending seed of a seedling,

please do your best to describe it and list its parentage! Seed of deliberate crosses that you think are interesting, but don't have room to grow, is always welcome, and we'd appreciate your comments on why it's interesting. Or, if it's grown from seed sold in a previous exchange, please say so, and from which lot if possible. There's no sense reinventing the wheel eternally.

Seed donations, or description of material to be sent later, must be in to the Exchange Chair (me) by October 1, to be included in the year's exchange listing. And please remember to report back on seed you've already sown and grown – techniques, germination percentages, survivor percentages, and seedling descriptions – SOMEONE will want to hear it.

Thank you, in advance, for all your efforts.

## SORTING OUT THE SEED EXCHANGE

Debby Cole, SPCNI Seed Distribution Chairman

Our Beloved Editor insists that the members are avid to hear the inner details of the latest SPCNI Seed Exchange, so here's the story, in all its gory glory.

Thirty-eight members, myself included (how could I see all those wonderful opportunities and not partake?), purchased 754 packets of seed for a total of \$522.50. Supplies cost \$33.49, and postage expense was \$37.38, so SPCNI earned \$451.63, thanks to our greed—and also to our generosity; \$29.50 of that total was donation.

Our new credit-card-payment feature, courtesy of the Hudsons and the Iris Gallery, was well received. Seven orders (five foreign) for \$15 or more were charged to major credit cards for a total of \$150.50. Twenty-eight

orders were paid by check (\$335.00) and three with cash (\$37.00, the least ever).

Twelve of the 38 orders were for 25 or more packets, and three of those were for more than 50 packets. Five orders were for less than 10 packets. Seeds were mailed out on January 25, 2004.

As was true last year also, our largest number of orders (18) was for SEA GAL seed; this time we ran only a few packets short! And although they weren't as heavily ordered, we also ran short of FOOTHILL BANNER, SOJOURNER and SUNBURN, so if you grow any of the above, please harvest their seed this summer for the Exchange. Other named varieties whose seed was ultra-popular included ESCALONA and



LIFELINE (16 orders each) and DRIP DROP, MENDOCINO BLUE, NIGHT EDITOR and SAN ANDREAS (15 orders apiece).

In other categories, demand was lighter. Garry Knipe's crosses with fragrant *I. macrosiphon* and hybrids involving *I. munzii* were the most popular seedling offering with 9 orders. Of the deliberate crosses, all new

seed from two named parents was equally most ordered. All the new wild-collected seed was also ordered to the same extent, as were old seeds of *I. bracteata*, *I. purdyi*, and *I. innominata* (China Flat). Have a wonderful time hatching them, and please report back!

## THE LAST WORD

*From the Editor*

My reign of terror as *Almanac* Editor has come to an end after five years. I am resigning as Editor because I recently switched jobs, and most of my previous "free time" has been absorbed by my job. I no longer have time to do a decent job editing the *Almanac*. You probably noticed that this "spring" issue is more of a "summer" issue.

I hope someone will volunteer to become the new Editor. Being Editor of the *Almanac* can be time consuming, so why do it? If a person has the time, being Editor can be rewarding. You will make new friends, learn more about PCI, and receive a sense of satisfaction from producing the *Almanac*. The Editor also decides what topics to cover in the *Almanac*. The Editor position is not a lifetime job; you can resign at any time. If you only want to do it for a year or two, that's fine.

If you are apprehensive about being Editor because you think you don't know anything about PCI, well, you don't need to know anything - I think I proved that! There are many people who will help you. I have had plenty of help with this job, and it is only right that they get some recognition. I thank Adele and the late Lewis Lawyer for encouraging my interest in PCI and for having confidence in my ability to take over as Editor. I would also like to thank Adele for supplying photos and articles whenever I asked. Thanks also to Terri and Jay Hudson for making my transition to Editor quick and easy. Richard Richards has been indispensable both as a contributor of articles and as our current President. Debby Cole has been very helpful, and is doing a fantastic job running our Seed Exchange and providing the Seed Exchange information for the *Almanac*. Steve Ayala has always kept me informed about updates he's made to the SPCNI website. I'd like to thank Garry Knipe for arranging visits with Vernon Wood and Lois Belardi, and for supplying articles and photos. Thanks to Joe Ghio and Lois Belardi for providing information and photos. I appreciate the support I've received from our *Almanac* Representatives: Jean Witt, David Pettenski, Harry Hill, Bill Ferrell, Garry Knipe, Mike Monninger, the late Bob Ward, and John White. Thank you to all who have submitted articles, letters, and photos for the *Almanac*.

What can all of us do to help the next Editor? Those of us who enjoy writing can submit articles for publication. We can send letters to the Editor; we can share our PCI growing experiences (both good and bad); we can share tips on displaying PCI at shows; we can share hybridizing tips; we can share our experiences looking for species PCI in the wild; we can submit photos for publication. You can always contact the new Editor and ask what you can do to help.

There are several things we can do to help popularize PCIs: 1) Patronize the PCI suppliers. If they don't make money selling PCI, they will stop selling PCI. 2) Enter PCI in iris shows. If I hadn't seen PCI at an iris show I wouldn't be growing them today. 3) Distribute PCI seeds to your friends and family. Distribute PCI seeds at iris shows. 4) If you live outside the prime area for PCIs, try growing them. We need to expand the range where PCI will grow. An inexpensive way to do this is to grow them from seeds.

What would I like to see SPCNI do? Even though we are a poor society, I think we should provide more financial support to graduate students who are studying *Californicae*. In the five years that I've been Editor, I think SPCNI has provided financial support to only one student.

What can we all do for SPCNI? We can increase membership. Membership has fallen quite a bit from the time I started editing the *Almanac* (I hope it isn't due to my editorial style). If our membership falls too low, we won't be able to publish the *Almanac* and organize treks to visit PCI in their native habitats.

Have a great summer!

## COLOR PAGE

**Top:** *Iris munzii* flower buds.  
Sequoia National Park,  
25 April 2004

**Middle  
Left:** *Iris munzii* flower.  
Sequoia National Park,  
25 April 2004.

**Middle  
Right:** *Iris munzii* seed pods.  
Sequoia National Park,  
25 April 2004.  
Note the length of the pedicels.

**Bottom  
Left:** Three flowers open on one  
stem of Garry Knipe's  
seedling, BCMS 2: (BLUE  
COCKATIEL X MAGIC SEA)

**Bottom  
Right:** Amazing Joe Ghio seedling  
GP-20PLC photographed at  
the Monterey Bay Iris Society  
Show.

All photographs by S. Taniguchi



