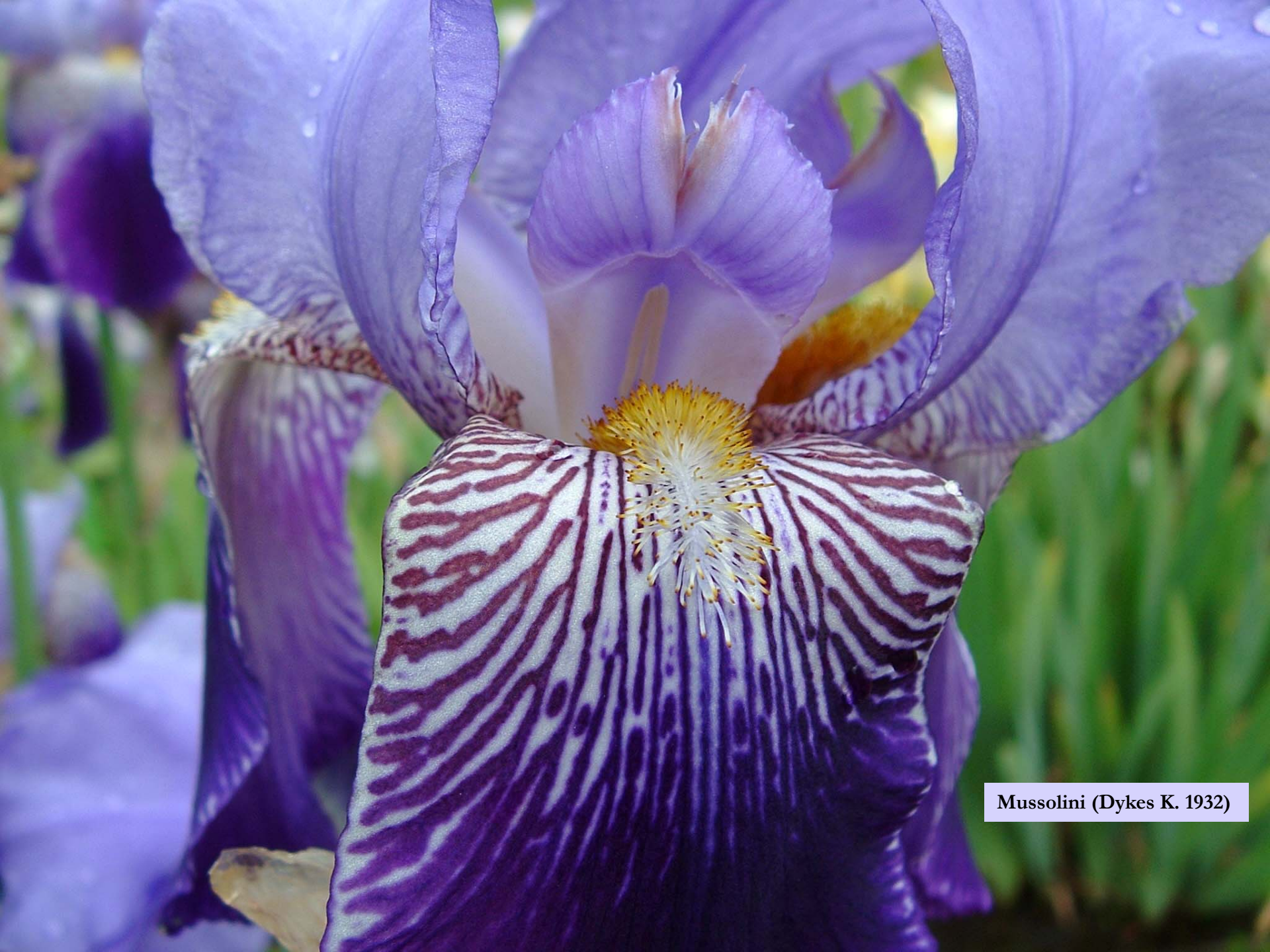


# How to look at historic iris ~ Gesine Lohr ~ May 2009



This slideshow combines three that I've given on historic iris this year – so you'll see some of the images in several slides. See the Spring 2009 issue of *Roots* for a tie-in article on how to look at historic iris.  
~ Gesine

**A flock of iris around  
Moonlit Sea (J. Sass 1942)**



Mussolini (Dykes K. 1932)

*Start* with color, but some things to look at are:

Color of ~

- \*\*standards
- \*\*falls
- \*\*beard
- Reticulations
- style arms
- Purple based foliage?



Sachem  
(Loomis 1930)

Type of branching of  
flowering stalk ~

Fragrance? ~

Standards & falls ~

- Shape & carriage
- Substance

Reticulations ~

- How far down?
- thick? thin?
- Changing?

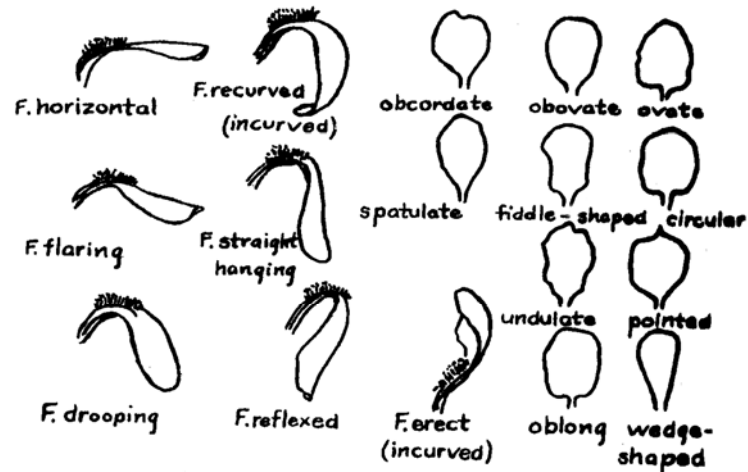
Beard ~

- How far down?
- thick? thin?
- Changing?

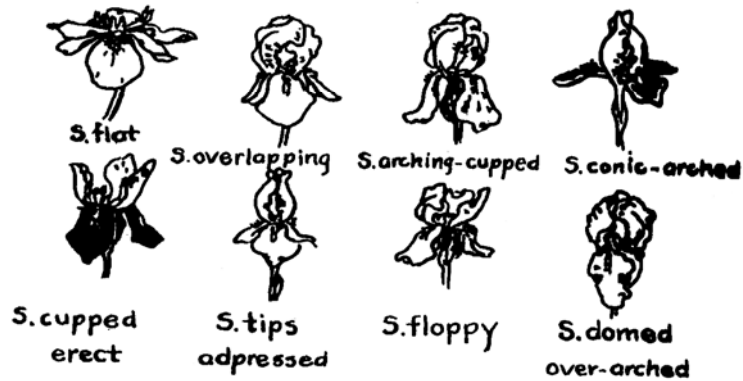
# Shape & carriage of falls and standards – Stalk variations

These two pages are from “Bearded Iris – A Perennial Suited to All Gardens” by Austin W. W. Sand,

Cornell Extension Bulletin 112, June 1925



## Carriage of falls and shapes of segments



## Carriage of standards

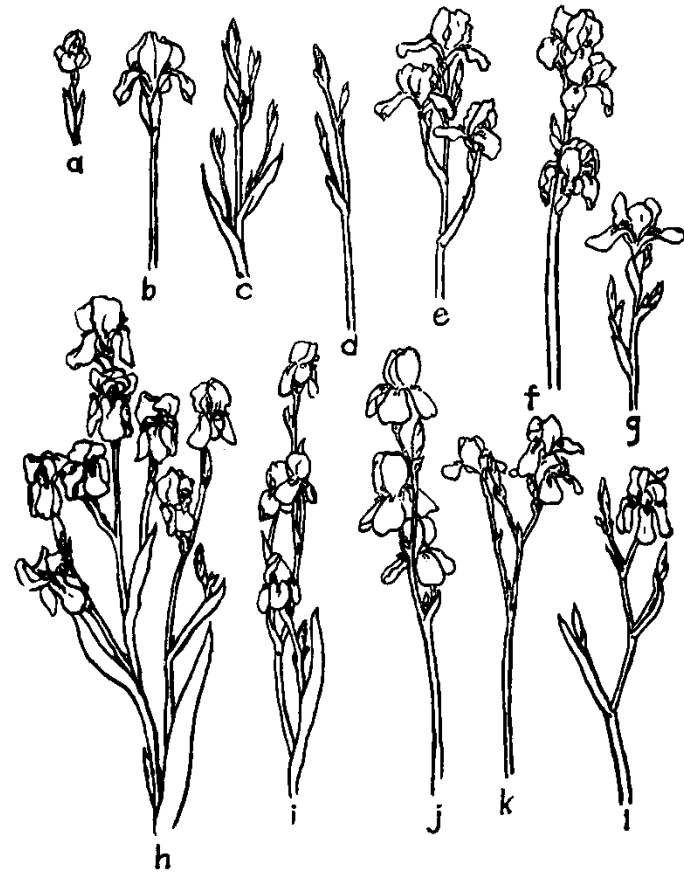


FIGURE 10. DIFFERENT TYPES OF FLOWERING STALKS

a, One-flowered head (pumila); b, two-flowered head (typical of the Onco-pogon); c, low-branched to ground, spathes conspicuous (aphylla); d, few, short-branched, above center, erect (germanica); e, more widely branched (pallida x variegata); f, high, short, close-branched, stiff stem (pallida); g, short, low-branched, below center, erect (variegata); h, well and widely branched (E. H. Jenkins, trojana hybrid); i, fastigate-branching (cypriana, micropetamica); j, flexuous, well-branched, high (cypriana, pallida hybrid); k, flat head, curious branching, giving mass effect (cypriana, variegata hybrid); l, angular stem and branching (trojana)

**OFFICIAL DATA CARD OF AMERICAN IRIS SOCIETY**

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ CLASS \_\_\_\_\_

ORIGINATOR \_\_\_\_\_ INTRODUCER \_\_\_\_\_ YEAR \_\_\_\_\_

PARENTAGE \_\_\_\_\_

USE—Specimen, clump, mass; cut-flower, garden, landscape. Soil: light, heavy. Culture: field, garden.

VALUE—Outstanding qualities. Symposium rating \_\_\_\_\_ Your rating \_\_\_\_\_

Similar to \_\_\_\_\_ but varies in \_\_\_\_\_  
(general impression)

**GROWTH**—Weak, moderate, vigorous, rampant. Increase: Slow, regular, rapid. Habit: Open, regular, compact.

**Foliage**: Stiff, lax; slender, broad; glaucous, blue-green, yellow-g. base tinged. \_\_\_\_\_ in. wide, \_\_\_\_\_ in. long.

**Flowering habit**: Shy, moderate, free; (blooms open at once) few, floriferous. Duration: \_\_\_\_\_ weeks.

**STALK**—Erect, angular, flexuous. \_\_\_\_\_ Height: \_\_\_\_\_ ft. \_\_\_\_\_ in. No. of Buds: (maximum) \_\_\_\_\_

**Branching**: Short, long; fastigiate, widely low (at ground), below center, high. No. (max.) \_\_\_\_\_

**FORM OF FLOWER**—Short, long, spreading, oblong; open, compact, well-balanced, symmetrical.

Size: Small, fair (Queen of May), good, large. Substance: poor, good, extra. Fragrance: \_\_\_\_\_

\*COLOR—Self, blend, plicata, bi-color, solid or veined.

(Remarks)

\*Refer to "Color Standards and Nomenclature" by Robert Ridgway when possible. **OVER**

## Things to notice!

-- Carriage, shape of standards & falls

-- Different types of flowering stalks – what is the branching?

[Look at these things first, before get lost in color!]

-- Get ideas from the AIS iris info card

COLOR of course –

color of standards, falls,

color of reticulations,

color of beard,

color of style arms.

Any reticulations? How far down the fall do they go? further than the end of beard, or where?

Look at the beard --- is it bushy, thin, sparse, patchy, wooly? How far down the fall does it go?

Is the beard one color up near the start and another lower down?

Do the hairs have one color at their base and another at their ends? ("yellow tip't" is often seen in period descriptions).

Remember to notice if purple based foliage or not! (pbf)

Fragrance! Or not? What like? Faint? strong?

WHEN does she bloom? Early, mid, late? Any rebloom? How long in bloom?

Substance of flower -- thin, thick? holds up well to wind, sun, or not?

How prolific, or not, is increase?

How "floriferous"? how many flowers typically?

*And don't forget -- WRITE DOWN your notes!*

Standard	1   (width)	2   (length)	3	4	5
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**NAME** \_\_\_\_\_ **AWARDS** \_\_\_\_\_

**STANDARDS**—Form: (as a set) flat, cupped; conic domed; \_\_\_\_\_ with tips adpressed.

**Carriage**: (in profile); erect, arching, floppy; \_\_\_\_\_ arched; overlapping.

**Shape**: Circular, oval, ovate, obovate, spatulate, fiddle-form. Modifications: Tips, pointed, rounded, notched. (in outline) undulate, sinuate, toothed; (at edge) ruffled, filled; (in cross section) revolute, fluted.

**Surface and Texture**: Smooth, creped, cockled, crumpled. Size (of blade) \_\_\_\_\_ in. wide, \_\_\_\_\_ in. long.

\*COLOR Including ground color and markings.

**FALL**—Carriage; (in profile) horizontal, flaring, drooping, straight-hanging, incurved, reflexed.

**Shape (of blade)**: circular, oval oblong, ovate spatulate, wedge-shaped. \_\_\_\_\_ waved, ruffled. (in cross section) convex, flat, hollowed, pinched.

**Surface and Texture**: Satiny, velvety, creped, cockled. Size: \_\_\_\_\_ in. wide, \_\_\_\_\_ in. long, (blade or fall?).

**COLOR**—Give ground color and venation.

**Haft**: narrow, broad; conspicuous; Reticulations; fine, heavy; clear, broken; close, medium, or widely spaced.

**Spathes-veles**: green, ½ green, scarious, flushed, infated, with keel.

**Beard**: Fine, solid; sparse, dense; short, projecting, conspicuous; white, bluish, yellow, orange, brown-specked, tips.

**Style-branches**: broad, narrow, erect, over-arching, striking. Crest; fringed, small, large. Pollen; plenty, none.

**Name of person reporting** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date** \_\_\_\_\_ **Address** \_\_\_\_\_

Fill in blank and underline words which describe the Iris named. A line between two terms signifies medium development. Strive to emphasize distinctive points.

RETURN THIS CARD TO R. S. STURTEVANT, Sec., WELLESLEY FARMS, MASS. **OVER**

Fall	1   (width)	2   (length)	3	4	5
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# Purple bitones!



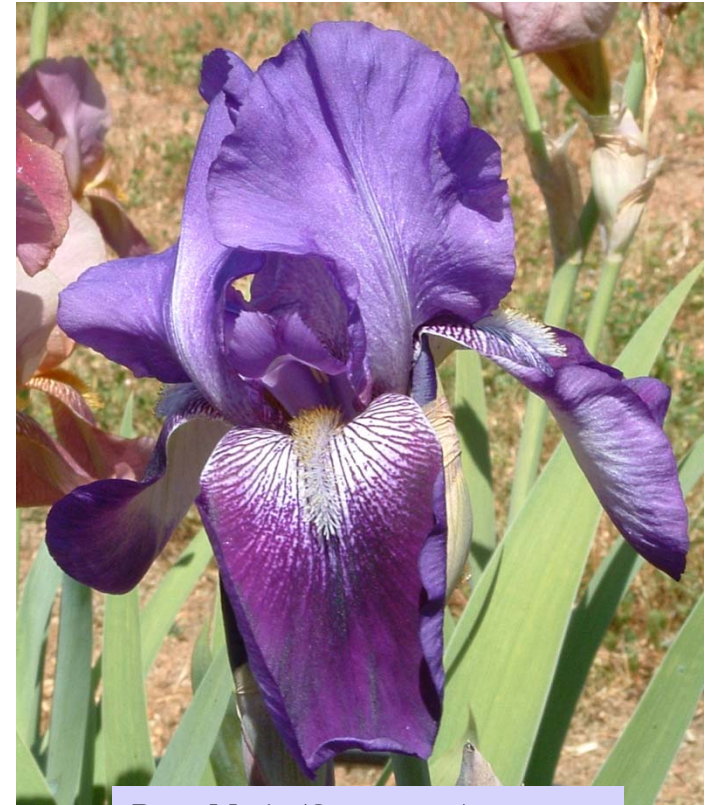
**Alcazar** (Vilmorin 1910)



*Left* **Monsignor**  
(Vilmorin-Andrieux 1907)



**The Black Douglas** (Sass J. 1934)



**Rose-Marie** (Cayeux 1929)



**Dominion (Bliss 1917)**



**Alcazar (Vilmorin 1910)**



Souvenir de Madame Gaudichau  
(Millet 1914)





**Ballerine (Vilmorin 1920)**



**Monsignor (Vilmorin-Andrieux 1907)**



Caterina (Foster M. 1909)



Crusader (Foster 1913)



Tamerlan (Vilmorin 1904)

# Red violet bitones



Sir Michael (Yeld 1925)



Morning Splendor  
(Shull 1923)



Persan  
(Cayeux 1938)



Jacquesiana (Lemon  
1840) & Ambassadeur  
(Vilmorin 1920)



Voltigeur  
(Cayeux 1934)



Morning Splendor (Shull 1923)



Romance (Murrell 1928)



My Maryland (Sheets 1930)



Kate Izzard (Meyer 1939)



Orelia (De Forest 1947)



Lantern Magique (Cayeux 1957)



Tea Rose (Whiting 1942)

# Flaring falls



**Rose Unique** (Farr 1910)



**Zingara IB**  
(Williamson  
1928)



**Broadway Star** (Schreiner 1957)



**Golden Flare** (Insole 1931)

*right*

**Pink Jadu** (Sturtevant 1931)  
TB M R8L A very lovely white 'Plicata', with beautifully frilled and ruffled white standards, edged soft violet and with flaring falls of the same color and marking, with deep maroon veins at the throat and a deep orange beard. The color on the edge of the falls is in the form of a feather stitching, and on the standards the color is in the form of a soft flush and peppering. Altogether lovely. (Robert Wayman 1940)





## Some long hanging falls



**W. R. Dykes** (Dykes-Orpington 1926) 38" M  
Immense yellow blooms with long broad F, sometimes  
dappled in red-purple splotches, orange B. (*Superstition  
Iris Gardens*)



**Mussolini** (Dykes K. 1932)  
Unusual! Large flowers with  
elongated petals, lilac-lavender S,  
medium violet F with white  
veining; from England.  
(*Superstition Iris Gardens*)



**Broceliande** (Cayeux 1935)



**Jumbo Rose (Austin 1964)**



**Broceliande (Cayeux 1935)**



**Byzantium (Ayres 1934)**



**Cours-la-Reine (Cayeux 1938)**

## Some beard variations ~



**White Unicorn**  
(Lloyd Austin, R. 1961)



**Butterfly Wings** (C. G. White, R. 1945)



**Horned Mystery**  
(Lloyd Austin, R. 1960)



**The Black Douglas**  
(Sass J. 1934)



**Red Butterfly** (Linse, R. 1955) TB 40" M  
Reverse bicolor. S. rose-red, F. white lined  
dahlia-purple, dark lilac-purple at tips of  
F; barium-yellow beard. Fertile both  
ways. Butterfly Wings X Spellbound.  
(*Easy Breeze* 1956)

## Blends



**Easter Bonnet** (Maxwell 1943) TB, 40, M, Blend, S:  
pink with yellow rim, F: pink, blue blaze, yellow at  
haft with maroon lines, edged gold, B: orange  
(*Bluebird Haven Iris Garden*)



**ÉVOLUTION.** — In our opinion this Iris denote a real progression in the chromatic scale of new colourings. Flowers of excellent shape and of good size. Standards of a warm hue of coppery-bronze. Falls spreading of same colour well marked with a large central zone rosy-blue or pigeon throat like. A strong growing and free-flowering plant producing well branched stems over 3 feet tall, the basis of the leaves are strongly tinged purplish-brown as in some variegata. *each* 200 fr.

Description  
from Cayeux  
et Le Clerc  
1930



**Sindjka** (Sturtevant 1918)  
& **Serenite** (Cayeux 1931)

**YVES LASSAILLY.** — Up to the present time, we have not seen anything yet in the way of this fine distinct Iris; the delightful colours, the enormous size and the perfect shape of its flowers are unrivalled. *S.* pure white. *F.* wide, almost flat spreaded with a suffusion of soft sky-blue on the center; large throat strongly reticulated fawn; the whole of an exquisitely fresh appearance. As seen on the figure, the firm stems 4 feet high, well branched, bears 4 to 5 flowers expended at the time. Exceedingly free, a grand toned Iris for landscape. (*Cayeux et Le Clerc 1930*)



**Caterina** (Foster 1909) Color effect a light lavender-violet self, veined on the outer haft. *S.* light lavender, veined olive on the outer haft. *F.* lavender-violet, widely veined olive on white outer haft. The beard is very coarse tho sparse, white, and yellow tipped. The bloom is large, delicately colored, and most fragrant. The variety is exceptional for its tall, many-flowered spikes and persistant winter foliage. (*Cornell Bull. 112*)



Sindjka (Sturtevant 1918)  
and Serenite (Cayeux 1931)



**Chantilly (Hall 1943)**



**Evolution (Cayeux 1929)**





Beotie (Cayeux 1932)



Nuee d'Orage (Verdier 1905)



**Rose Unique (Farr 1910)**




**Sindjkha (Sturtevant 1918)**



Easter Bonnet (Maxwell 1943)

A close-up photograph of a large iris flower with a soft pink and peach color palette. The petals are ruffled and have a delicate texture. Numerous water droplets are scattered across the surface of the petals, catching the light. The background consists of green, blade-like leaves.

**Pink Clover (Whiting R. 1953)**

A photograph of a smaller iris flower with a vibrant, deep purple color. The petals are ruffled and have a smooth, satin-like texture. Water droplets are visible on the petals. The background shows green foliage.

**Pink Satin (Sass J. 1930)**

A large, detailed photograph of an iris flower with a complex color pattern. The petals are primarily light purple and white, with prominent yellow and reddish-brown markings and veins. The flower is covered in water droplets. The background is filled with green leaves.

**Pink Jadu (Sturtevant 1931)**

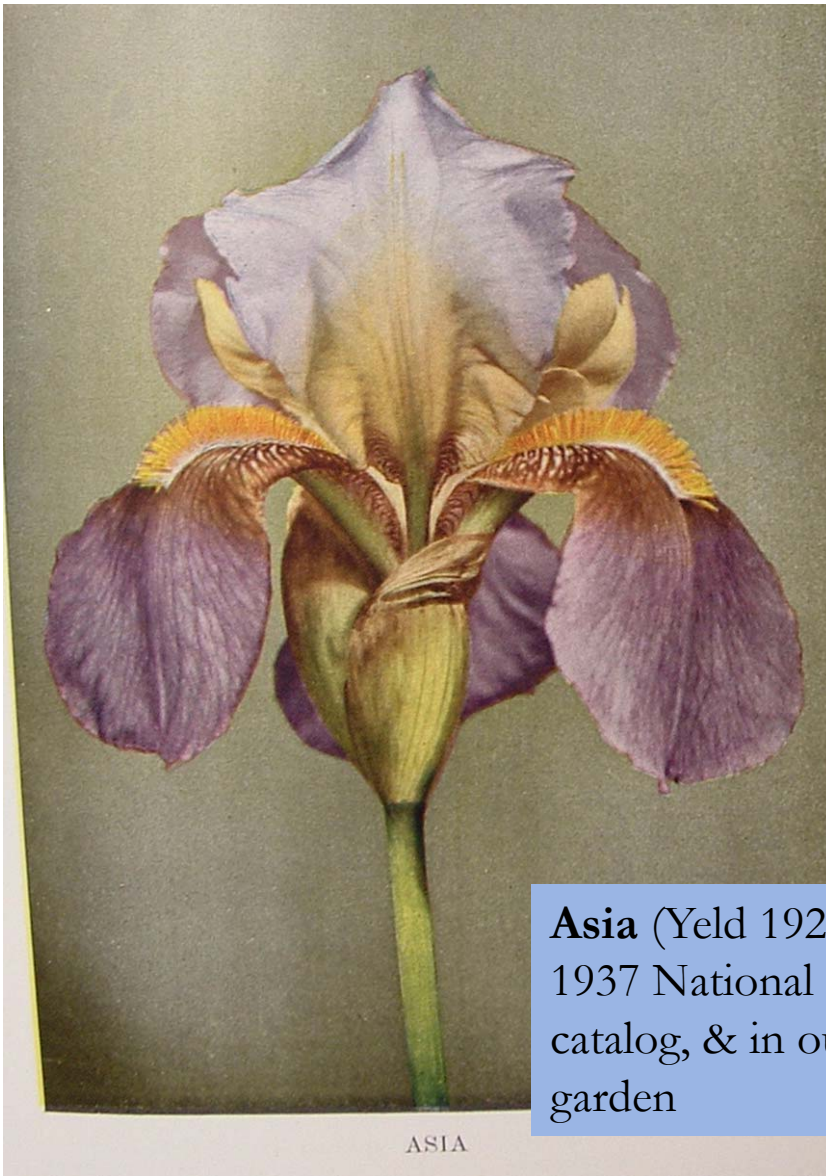


Nuee D'Orange (Verdier 1905)



Andromede (Vilmorin 1926) //

Some old iris catalog pictures are very helpful...



**Asia** (Yeld 1920)  
1937 National  
catalog, & in our  
garden



*...and some are not!*

**Green Chance** (Murray, R. 1954)  
Sdlg. 139-50. TB, 40" M  
Yellow-toned bitone. Light  
chartreuse and olive green, some  
reticulations. Appointee x Green  
Pastures. Tell 1955





Minnesota Mixed-Up Kid (unk., ca. 1970)  
Chimeras!





**Vingolf**  
(Goos & Koenemann 1924)



**Anne Leslie**  
(Sturtevant 1917)





Drady (unknown hybridizer before 1960)



Wabash (Williamson 1936)



**Maid of Astolat** (Sass J. 1936)  
(photo by Bonnie Petheram)



**Fairy** (Kennicott 1905)

## Plicatas, often confused but quite distinct



**Los Angeles** (Mohr-Mitchell 1927) 46" M Snowy white S faintly edged pale lavender blue; white F beautifully reticulated red-brown at the base; yellow-gold B; large flowers. AM 44 (*Superstition Iris Gardens* 2007)



**San Francisco** (Mohr 1927) *From the 1936 Carl Salbach catalog:* Tall stems, branching low and wide like a candelabrum, carry large white flowers, of which both standards and falls are distinctly edged lavender....similar to Los Angeles but with wider blue edging. Mid-season, 40-inch



Seduction (Cayeux 1933)



True Charm (Sturtevant 1920)



**True Delight**  
(Sturtevant  
1924)



**Swerti** (Collected in 1612) Diploid—blue and white plicata; smaller flower. Was on the Official AIS Black List in 1925!  
(*Superstition Iris Gardens*)  
Plicata, very dainty, miniature light lavender and white plicata; edges of falls curl under; delightful grape fragrance. (*Bluebird Haven Iris Garden*)

Luminatas are usually distinctive



**Bertha Gersdorff** (Sass J. 1942)(possibly the first luminata)



**Moonlit Sea** (Sass 1942)



At Dawning (Kirkland 1935)



Bertha Gersdorff (J. Sass 1942)



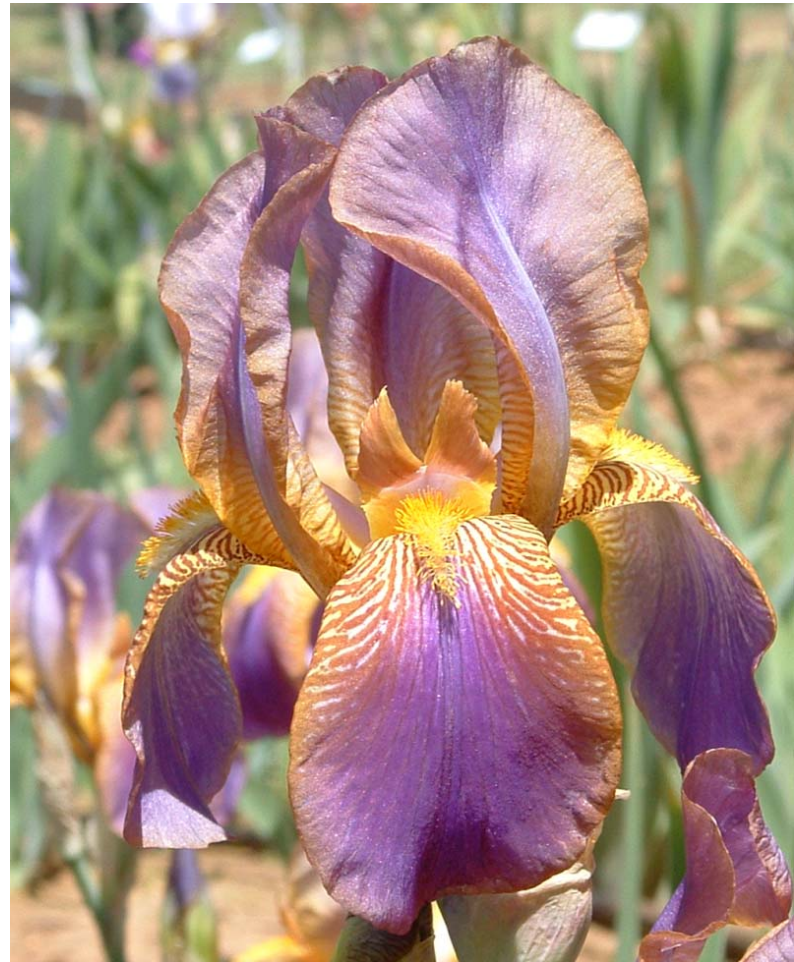
Moonlit Sea (J. Sass 1942)



# Some iris are quite distinctive, hard to confuse with others

**Eldorado** (Vilmorin 1910) Color effect a bronzed lilac and purple blend. S. livid purple bronzing aniline yellow. F. raisin purple bronzed, fading to light phlox purple. The beard is dense, projecting, and conspicuously orange, contrasting strongly with the showy, light violet crests. This is a distinct variety, of moderate growth and excellent as a cut flower. Rating 76. (*Cornell Bulletin 112*)

Exotic and unusual diploid from France; yellowish-bronze S shaded heliotrope; bright petunia purple F touched bronze at the sides; open form! (*Superstition Iris Gardens 2007 catalog*)



Left ~ **Magic Rosette** (Austin 1966)(!)

**Blue Tulip** (Knocke, R. 1962) Sdlg. K-S. TB, 38" (97 cm), M Fancy, blue self with green mid-ribs; tulip-shaped, no beard or anthers. Cliffs of Dover X Harbor Blue. Tell 1964



(yes, this iris *is* open!)



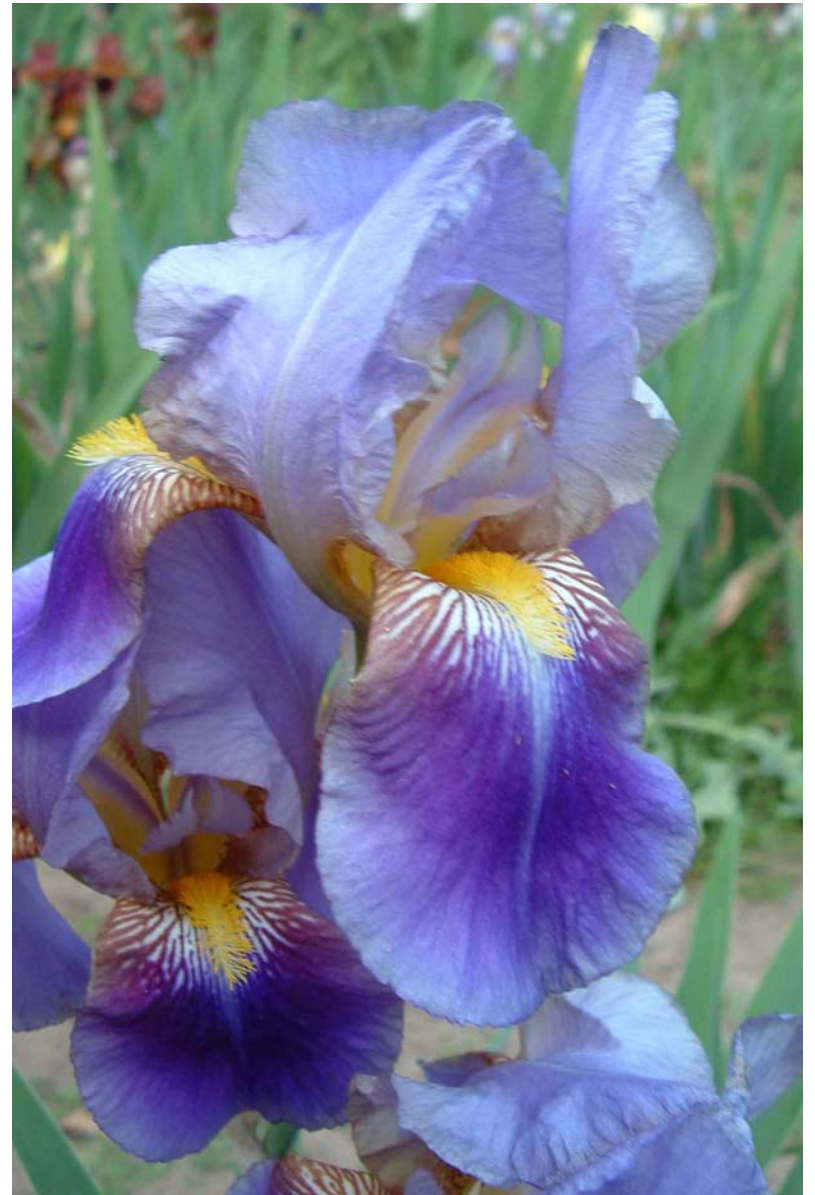
**Full House** (D. Meek, R. 1976) Sdlg. 66-95-6. TB (novelty), 34" (86 cm), M Apricot orange self; bright mandarin orange beard; five S. and F. (Flaming Heart x Mauve Magic) X self. Keppel, Melrose Gardens 1976

**Painted Doll**  
(D. Boen, R. 1957)





**Jumbo Rose (Austin 1964)**



**Andromede (Vilmorin 1926) //**

For excellent color photos of historic iris on the web, see

The former website of HIPS, by **Mike Lowe** -- very beautiful photos!  
[www.worldiris.com/public\\_html/Frame\\_pages/QFix.html](http://www.worldiris.com/public_html/Frame_pages/QFix.html)

The **HIPS website** has a visitor's section, must join HIPS to see all the photos  
-- for some photos, see  
[www.hips-roots.com](http://www.hips-roots.com)  
Phil Edinger has vetted the photos here as correct.  
You can join HIPS online! or by mail.

Rick Tasco and Roger Duncan (of **Superstition Iris Gardens**) show over 200 photos  
of historic iris (scroll down the page to see the historic iris area)  
<http://community.webshots.com/user/rickt103>  
Their email is [randrcv@sierratel.com](mailto:randrcv@sierratel.com) if you want to order a catalog (\$1.50)  
Excellent place to order historic! and modern iris too

Another not-too-far-to-drive place selling many historic is **Bluebird Haven Iris Garden**,  
(530) 620-5017 catalog \$1.00  
[www.bluebirdhavenirisgarden.com](http://www.bluebirdhavenirisgarden.com), [www.bluebirdhavenirisgarden.com/siteV2/catalog.html](http://www.bluebirdhavenirisgarden.com/siteV2/catalog.html)  
Mary Hess' email is [mhess1863@innercite.com](mailto:mhess1863@innercite.com)  
Excellent place to order historic! huge number of cultivars  
Also, Mary will grow your "unknown" iris for you! and try to identify them.

A wonderful introduction to how to look at iris, wonderful detailed descriptions

**"Bearded Iris - A Perennial Suited to All Gardens"**, Austin W. W. Sand,  
Cornell Extension Bulletin 112, June, 1925. You can order this from Historic Iris Preservation Society, \$8.00 postpaid at  
[www.hips-roots.com/visitors/v-shoppe.html](http://www.hips-roots.com/visitors/v-shoppe.html)

You may also order by sending a check or Money Order to:

Dorothy A. Stiefel, 260 Michigan Hollow Rd., Spencer, NY 14883 e-mail: [IrisAcher@aol.com](mailto:IrisAcher@aol.com)

Phil Edinger, HIPS' old iris ID guru, calls this "the best old iris reference in existence".

To join HIPS (Historic Iris Preservation Society)

Via internet, you can join at [www.hips-roots.com/visitors/v-membership.html](http://www.hips-roots.com/visitors/v-membership.html)

Or, mail dues (single annual 10.00, single triennial 24.00, dual annual 12.00, dual triennial 30.00) to  
Membership Secretary, Judy Eckhoff, 7911 S. Yoder Rd, Haven, KS 67543-8114  
Roots, the journal of HIPS, comes out twice a year. There is a HIPS Rhizome Sale yearly.

Please feel free to email or  
write to me,  
Gesine Lohr

Let me know if you'd like a list  
of the iris shown today (via  
regular mail, or email).

I would be glad to email you  
some photos of historic iris. I  
archive old iris catalogs (they  
are treasures!) and have  
scanned some of them, can send  
on a CD.  
[gesine.lohr@gmail.com](mailto:gesine.lohr@gmail.com)  
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