

Memo from the Nomenclature Registrar

Registration and Introduction

As we already know, in recent years, thanks to the combined efforts of some overseas hybridisers and some NZIS members, there has been a huge amount of iris seed made available to our members, both donated for sale at our Conventions, or given to individual members when attending overseas Conventions. The Society is most appreciative of these donations and this has had to be the way forward for improving the development of irises in New Zealand since the importation of rhizomes has been made virtually impossible by MPI.

What should be our focus now is the fate of the resulting seedlings. We must ensure that the best of these are not lost and progress is maintained into the future. The key words are "the best of" and we must continually look for improvement. In any breeding programme there is a curve, from no improvement on one end to really excellent at the other with the bulk somewhere in between. What we want is the really excellent to be saved and available for further hybridising. Not all will need to be registered for this to occur. Of course the very best should be registered and made available to other people, but others can be identified by a seedling number which will serve the purpose for the grower/hybridiser. However, it is in our own and the Society's interests that unnamed irises should not be sold or distributed.

To assess these seedlings one needs to take into account the whole plant, not just the amazing flower that has been produced, but bud count, branching, the stem, plant vigour etc. and a particular seedling may be used to improve those qualities in another cultivar.

Having been selected and registered, an iris needs to be introduced to keep its name, or this may be forfeited after three years. Unless an iris is first introduced in the United States, it is not eligible for AIS Awards. An iris can be introduced in New Zealand by way of a commercial iris garden or nursery, or an advertised list of irises for sale at a price. Where the list may be published has yet to be confirmed by the NZIS committee. All registration and introduction information is to be sent to the NZIS Registrar to be forwarded to the AIS Registrar, as required by the AIS.

The above discussion has centred on the mainly TB seed available recently, but also applies to the seedlings raised from seed donated to our own seed pool, both by our own members, and individuals and societies overseas. As Registrar, I have noted that this year's registrations are all bearded irises. I encourage growers and hybridisers of beautiful beardless irises to select their best and make them available also.

Stephanie Boot