

# Bayou *and* Marsh

*Newsletter of the Greater New Orleans Iris Society*

## *Summer Activities and Preparation for Fall*

### **Meeting Aug. 10, Sale at NOBG Oct. 16-17**

A year of iris activities begins with a Fall GNOIS meeting on Tuesday, August 10 at 7:00 p.m. at Longue Vue. The meeting will include a slide show of pictures from four gardens at the Society for Louisiana Irises National Convention last April in Dallas. It also will include Louisiana iris pictures from the Iris Friendship Garden in Rochester, NY and Pacific Flora 2004 in Hamamatsu, Japan. Rochester and Hamamatsu are Sister Cities that participated in a joint exposition this spring that featured Louisiana irises.

#### **Some Business**

GNOIS has some overdue organizational business to which it must attend. Draft bylaws have been prepared and are scheduled for consideration and adoption at the August 10 meeting. If you would like an advance copy of the draft bylaws, call Patrick O'Connor, 456-6060 and they will be mailed to you.

Adoption of the bylaws will be a prelude to election of officers and members of a new Board at the following meeting, scheduled for October 12. These meetings and other key dates are summarized on the attached schedule.

#### **Annual Plant Sale**

We are trying a new approach with the iris sale this year. The New Orleans

Botanical Garden Show and Sale now permits organizations to sell at their booth, and we will conduct our plant sale there on October 16-17. Previously, we have held the sale at Longue Vue on one afternoon. The NOBG sale attracts several thousand people, so we will have good exposure, and many people coming to our booth in past years have wanted to buy irises. This approach will require more manpower over a longer period of time, so our volunteers will be critical.

We will have a large number of different iris hybrids available for the sale, so members will have an opportunity to obtain new cultivars. A workday to prepare the irises is planned for the weekend before the sale (to label and package the irises), and members will have the opportunity then to buy early.

This year we are obtaining plants from Iris City Gardens in Tennessee. Plans are to buy sale plants from a different source each year in order to assure that different cultivars will be available.

#### **Spring Activities**

Spring is the time that our work during the rest of the year pays off. In addition to our own gardens, there are several opportunities to enjoy the variety of colors and forms of Louisiana irises. The Celebration of the Louisiana Iris in Jean Lafitte offers a closeby chance to see both the amazing stands of tall blues (*Iris giganticaerulea*) in their

native swamp setting and to enjoy them on garden tours.

GNOIS expects to hold its own garden tour in the spring and also organize a field trip to several Baton Rouge spots with large plantings of Louisiana irises. One will be the Bator Rouge Botanical Garden, which features many of the irises of the late Joseph Mertzweiller.

A bit further away, the annual iris show sponsored by the Acadiana Chapter of SLI offers a different setting in which to see the irises. This is a formal, competitive iris show held in conformity with the rules of the American Iris Society. The irises are shown on the "show bench" rather than in the garden, and several members have suggested that an annual iris show should be an appropriate goal for our organization. The Lafayette group offers the closest model. An iris show has been held in Lafayette, either by SLI or its local chapter, for over 50 years. It will be a good opportunity to observe the mechanics of putting on a show.

#### **Volunteers Needed**

**GNOIS especially needs volunteers to work our booth at the NOBG Show and Sale on Oct. 16-17. Please keep a couple of hours open to help out. We will ask later for you to sign up.**