

# Bayou *and* Marsh

*Newsletter of the Greater New Orleans Iris Society*

## Summer Meeting

Saturday, June 21

9:30 - 11:30 AM

Garden Studies Center, N.O. Botanical Garden

The summer GNOIS meeting will be both an important transition and a renewal of past activities. Officers will be elected in a brief business meeting, followed by reports on the status of the GNOIS Iris Bank, the iris plantings in City Park and at Longue Vue that members participated in during the past year, and plans for future activities. Louisiana irises are an important part of several exciting and ambitious development and renewal projects in City Park, and hopefully GNOIS can be actively involved.

Make plans to attend the meeting on the 21st. It will be an opportunity to have input into future GNOIS activities as well as hear a review of what we have been doing. There will be a number of door prize irises, too, so be thinking about where you will plant them if you get lucky.



*Spring 2008 Louisiana iris bloom in the Sculpture Garden in City Park. Plantation Point Nursery in Mooringsport, LA donated the irises, which were planted by GNOIS members in late summer 2007. The project was featured in a Picayune article in October: [http://blog.nola.com/reneepeck/2007/10/sculpture\\_garden\\_is\\_pure\\_poetr.html](http://blog.nola.com/reneepeck/2007/10/sculpture_garden_is_pure_poetr.html)*

### **Volunteers Needed at Wetland Plant Center at Pelican Greenhouse**

As a result of the work of Mark Schexnayder, Amanda Hardesty and others, a Wetland Plant Center has been created next to Pelican Greenhouse in the Park. The Center is a holding area for plants to be used along the lagoons in City Park. There are many donated Louisiana irises in kiddie pools and pots.

The watering system post-Katrina still suffers from low pressure, and Buddy Manuel has borne the brunt of keeping the plants watered. Until the automated system becomes more reliable, volunteers are needed a few days a week to help water. If any members have an hour or two to spare once or twice a week, call Buddy at 985-626-3902 or talk to him at the meeting on the 21st.

# ***GNOIS Spring Tours***

## ***Early But Nice***



*A bed of fulvas and nelsoniis grown by Benny Trahan in Slidell. Check out the Society for Louisiana Irises website for a wonderful article by Benny on his collection efforts: <http://www.louisianas.org/publications/Summer2007a.pdf>*

GNOIS sponsored spring garden tours on two weekends in April, with one day on each side of the Lake. What had appeared to be an early bloom season at planning time did not materialize, and some garden visits were well ahead of peak bloom.

Gardens on tour included those of Eileen Hollander and Patrick O'Connor South of the Lake and Benny Trahan, Buddy Manuel and Keith Pendergraft on the Northshore. We also visited the Sculpture Garden and the Botanical Garden in City Park.

The most spectacular show was put on by Benny Trahan's collected plants, primarily fulvas and nelsoniis. Benny has found an amazing variety of irises in the wild. Nothing like this collection of native irises exists elsewhere.



*Above: A distinctly orange fulva and a rare and soon-to-be famous yellow nelsonia collected by Benny Trahan. Last, an old, spidery cultivar, 'Black Widow' at Keith Pendergraft's place near Independence. The picture does not fully show how dark the flower really is.*

## **The GNOIS Iris Bank**

Last fall, the club purchased a large number of newer Louisiana iris cultivars as an "investment" for the future. Three each of around fifty different cultivars were ordered from five growers for early October delivery. Members with space and an interest agreed to grow and increase one or more of these irises and, after several years, a portion will be given back to the organization to distribute to other members, to sell to the public to raise funds, or to donate to City Park, Longue Vue or other public plantings.

We'll get a brief update on these irises at the June 21 meeting. A list will be distributed so you can see what may will be available in the future.

