

## The Guardian Gardener's Handbook: GG Share-Outs: Bearded Irises

How do we share irises with other Guardian Gardeners? In 2020 we'll use the GG Forum, **so be sure you're registered for that forum and that you set your profile up so you're notified of new posts via email.** Otherwise, you might miss a share-out list and an opportunity to grow exciting irises. Oh, no!

**The GG Share-Out thread is NOT the place for iris chat.** We ask that you use it solely as a place to list what you have to offer, along with your terms and conditions.

GG administrators are not the iris police. You may swap your irises in any way you wish. Being a member of Guardian Gardens, though, does require certain standards in record-keeping. Being a civilized human being requires certain standards of common courtesy. Most of what you'll find below are guidelines, things that we've found make our share-outs easier and more pleasant - and therefore more successful - for everyone. **The few absolute rules are in bright blue.** To save space, we won't constantly say "please," but...please:

**EVERYONE: GG Share-Outs run on the honor system. We trust that you are all honest and honorable. Respect the privacy of your fellow Ggers; do not share their private email addresses with anyone, ever. Pay your postage reimbursements promptly. Treat others as you would like to be treated.**

### DONORS:

#### 1. **Decide what to offer - it must be GG-qualified and you must have enough.**

A. The irises must be historic (or near-historic) and rare or on the Watch List. See GG Handbook Section 3, "What is Rare?" to determine rarity.

B. Keep at least four good rhizomes of any cultivar you're offering; in severe climates, it's better to keep six. Count how many rhizomes you will be able to offer. If in doubt, estimate low, and only offer the size rhizome you would want to receive yourself.

C. It's OK to also offer a few non-GG irises here (in a separate list at the bottom) , but you'll have more takers if you post them in the HIPS forum.

2. **In the GG forum Share-Out thread, start by giving people your email address.** This is a private forum; the only people who can see your address are other Ggers.

#### 3. **List the irises you can offer, giving this information:**

***Iris Name (Breeder, Intro Year), Iris Class, your source (and their source if you know it), and the number you have to share.***

Example: **'Ann Page' (Hort, 1919) TB, from Nancy McDonald (who got it from Phil Edinger), 6 rhizomes**

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A. If you don't know the breeder and year, look them up in the AIS Encyclopedia, here: <<http://wiki.irises.org/>>. It's always best to double-check names and spelling. Incorrectly spelled iris or breeder names lessen your credibility as a serious collector and preservationist.

**B. Your source (and *their* source if you know it - called *provenance*) is very important information and should ALWAYS be passed on to other GGers, and they in turn should always record it as far back as possible.**

C. It's nice to include a link to the AIS Wiki page and/or the HIPS Gallery page for each iris, if you're looking them up, anyway. That saves everyone having to look them up. However, this is not required of you.

D. Give each iris its own line(s), rather than putting all the irises in a paragraph. Put the irises in alphabetical order.

3. **State your terms;** they truly are up to you. People need to know:

A. **When you plan to dig and ship;** beginning and end dates. We all know that weather and life in general can change things. If it does, just get in touch with the people who requested irises from you and let them know.

B. **Shipping method:** Typically, we ship irises to one another by US Priority Mail (not Express, which is terribly expensive). Other forms of shipping must be arranged by you and the person you're sharing with. Make sure you and that person agree on this.

C. **Postage reimbursement:** Do you want the money up front or will you wait until people receive the rhizomes? Do you use PayPal or should people send a check or money order?

1. Please offer more than one payment method, as some people don't use PayPal. (Tip: if you accept PayPal, ask folks to pay you using the "Sending to a Friend" option so you don't pay credit card fees.)

2. We've had a few problems in the past with recipients not paying. Many GGers require postage reimbursement up front; you can estimate how many rhizomes will fit into the various sizes of Priority Mail box. A single TB rhizome, maybe two, will usually fit in a Small Flat Rate box. A Medium box will typically hold 6-10 rhizomes, and a Large box can hold 12 or more, even with appropriate packaging.

4. **State anything else people need to know:**

A. If for some reason you're leaving the GG program and this will be your last share-out, or if you're eliminating ALL of a particular iris from your collection, please say that it's our last chance to get this iris from you.

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**B.** If you live in a severe climate, rhizomes won't be as large as they might be if you live in a mild area; warn people of this. If your rhizomes are very small for that class of iris, you could offer to send two instead of one, but that cuts down on the number of helpings you can offer.

### **5. Shipping the irises:**

**A.** Read the GG Handbook section "How to Pack and Ship Irises" before you ship anything to anyone. Follow those instructions.

**B.** Ship via Priority Mail early in the week, so the irises don't sit in a hot place over a weekend.

**B.** Email the recipient when you have shipped the box. Keep the tracking number.

**6.** As you run out of each iris you offered, edit your original post and put **OUT** by the iris name, so people don't keep asking for it.

### **7. What do you do with leftovers?**

**A.** If you haven't already dug them, leave them in the ground and let the iris clump up more, unless you're out of space for it.

**B.** If you've stopped taking new orders, but haven't shipped yet, you can send the requesters two or three rhizomes of that iris instead of just one.

**C.** You could offer extras to the general HIPS membership via the HIPS forum thread "Iris Exchange," letting people know that these are rare irises.

**D.** DO let the GG administrators know if you still have extras, as we may be able to find good homes for them. It would be such a pity to compost rare irises.

**E.** DON'T send "extras" or "bonus irises" that the person did not request. Most collectors know what they want and how much space they have, and extra irises they did not request are often just in the way.

### **RECIPIENTS:**

**1. Write back to the Donor's private email (DO NOT reply in the GG forum) with any questions and to request irises.** Why? Because every post will generate an email for each of us saying there's a new posting in the thread; we don't want to be swamped with emails about YOUR conversation with a donor.

**2. Be reasonable, realistic, and sensible.** Remember that other people would like to have a chance at these irises, too. It's easy to get carried away and request

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more than you can reasonably care for, so try to be moderate. (I am grinning as I type this.)

- 3. Be specific.** If you truly don't know what to request, it's OK to just ask for "any three." It's not OK to ask for "any blue ones" or "any fragrant ones." Do your own research; the donors have enough work to do digging and processing irises.
- 4. Put your requests in alphabetical order in a proper list,** not in a paragraph; each iris should have its own line. That particularly matters if you're requesting more than one or two; it makes processing your requests MUCH easier for donors.
- 5. Remember that Donors may run out of some of your requests, so provide a list of substitutes if you wish.**
- 6. It's fine to indicate in your list which irises you want the very most.**
- 7. If you have extra space and really are happy to receive any bearded iris, you may let a donor know that you'll gladly take leftovers.** But be cautious! If you say that to all the donors, you'll be swamped — and remember you must pay postage on every package you receive. Communication is key.

**When you receive your irises:**

- 1. Let the donor know they came.**
- 2. Pot or plant them quickly; these are rare and precious irises.** If you can't pot or plant them the same day, at least unpack the box so the irises get some air; remember that dry is good and damp is fatal for bare rhizomes.
- 3. Reimburse postage immediately. Do not request irises if you can't afford to reimburse postage.** Recipients who do not promptly reimburse postage will be cast into the outer darkness where there is wailing and gnashing of teeth. **This is one way to get removed from the GG program.** Prompt payment is required unless you have a true emergency, in which case, notify the donor as soon as you can. If you send cash, you do so at your own risk.

**Most of all, have fun with this! We preserve irises because we love them, so enjoy them.**