



IRIS AUSTIN

Newsletter of the Iris Society of Austin November 2025, Vol. XXV, No. 10

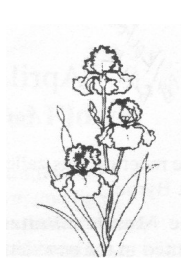
Website: http://www.kenfuchs42.net/isa_index.html

an Affiliated Society of the American Iris Society in Region 17 (Texas)

<https://www.irises.org/>

www.aisregion17.org

Submittals to the newsletter should be emailed within eight days following the ISA monthly meeting



Next Meeting

Sunday, January 18, 2026,
1pm-3pm meeting/program
at Auditorium

Zilker Botanical Garden Center
2220 Barton Springs Rd
Austin TX 78746

<http://www.zilker garden.org/>

Program: TBD

No December 2025 ISA Meeting

2026 American Iris Society National Convention

<https://ais2026convention.org/>

May 18-23 New Jersey & New York

2027 AIS Convention - Oklahoma City

April 27- May 1 (tentative)

Workday at Zilker Botanical Garden

November 17, 2025 from 9:30am to 11:45am

ISA members volunteered 11/17/25 to work in the main iris bed at Zilker. Tracey, Audrey, & Mary came out that morning to remove weeds near irises planted previously with the roses at Zilker Botanical Garden. Tracey noted in her email that they mostly dealt with nutgrass. The irises and daylilies are not crowding the rose bushes. In the purple rose bed, there aren't as many plants, but there also were hardly any weeds. Audrey commented that the rose bush in the circle bed, which only has daylilies, needs some serious pruning. The ISA volunteers removed some dead rhizomes and also treated one clump for rot, but thought the clump would be okay, as there was plenty of fine looking new growth. Iris 'Jean Cayeaux' was blooming and Tracey provided pictures.



Iris 'Jean Cayeaux' blooming at Zilker Botanical Garden 11/17/25 before weeding (left) & after weeding (bottom right)

Photos by Tracey Rogers



Workday at Zilker Botanical Garden (continued)

The garden staff member that directed Mary to the beds, told her the beds were going to be moved because the roses were being crowded out. The ISA volunteers noted that the purple roses in the other bed were planted at the same time and are twice as tall. They wondered if the yellow roses were a smaller variety and the only thing crowding them were the weeds. Tracey will email pictures to the Daylily Society and Zilker to show that our Iris rhizomes aren't the problem.



Tracey, Audrey, & Mary (left) at Zilker Botanical Garden
11/17/25 for weeding workday

Photo by Audrey Baker

Mary removing weeds around 'Jean Cayeaux'
(bottom left) & another planting bed (bottom right)

Photos by Tracey Rogers



Iris Society of Austin Meeting Minutes - November 16, 2025

Meeting was called to order by Jaime Hadley. There were 14 members present (including 1 youth member). This Sunday afternoon meeting was held at Zilker Botanical Garden.

We gathered today with a “snacking” pot luck in celebration of the holiday season and wish everyone safe travels and a Happy Thanksgiving!

- The Minutes from the October 19, 2025 meeting were approved as printed in the November newsletter.
- Treasurer’s report given by Donna Little. Current balance was reported and will be redacted for printing in the newsletter as is prescribed from Region 17 instructions. This includes the portion owed from holding our sale at Zilker. Vote to accept - no opposition, Report Approved.
- There will be a workday in the garden tomorrow Monday November 17, 2025 9:30am - 11:30am to pull weeds. There is a sign-up link sent out via email to register and track our volunteer time. Please contact Tracey if you need this information.
- Shirley Smith has volunteered to be the ISA representative to the AAGC meetings and to provide a report to the ISA after the quarterly meetings. Items we discussed were Christmas Tree decoration and the \$15/per ISA member annual dues to AAGC.
- Iris Society of Austin Dues are due in the month of January. Please make your payment to Marney Abel or Donna Little for “Iris Society of Austin”. There is an American Iris Society \$10 special for new membership or re-starting a lapsed membership to AIS that ends this month. Reminder: for old and new members that attending 5 meetings or events in a year makes you eligible for Iris Society of Austin to pay your membership dues to the American Iris Society!
- Donna Little, Show Chair for the ISA Spring 2026 Show. Clarified that the Show Theme is “Iris Rainbows” (plural rainbows!!). Everyone was asked to continue in their positions that they participated in last year. We will all need to share the role for Hospitality. Other positions: photography, placement, publicity, show schedule
- The Show Schedule is due for submission and approval by AIS at the end of January 2026.
- Next scheduled ISA Meeting is at Zilker auditorium: **Sunday, January 18, 2026 @ 1pm**
- Region 17 is seeking someone to be the Region 17 Youth Chair.
- Tracey Rogers is researching the details for a Judge’s training session (topic, location and possibly during the February 2026 meeting time. Stay Tuned!)
- Thank you to Marney Abel for presenting “A Feast for Irises!!” and sharing Guy Gifford’s “The Iris Elixir”.
- Next Meetings:
 - Sunday, January 18, 2026 @ 1:00pm (Zilker)
 - Sunday, February 15, 2026 @ 1:00pm (Zilker) Possible Judge’s Training
 - Tuesday, March 10, 2026 @ 6:00pm (Zilker)

Iris Society of Austin Meeting Minutes - November 16, 2025 (continued)

- ZOOM meeting information will be included in the Newsletter. We will commit to setting up the Audio/Visual components in the meeting room and start the call from someone in attendance at Zilker that has a computer setup to access the Zoom application and initiate the call. We are hoping that members not able to attend in-person will join the meeting.

Minutes Submitted for Approval at January 18, 2026 meeting as printed in the December 2025 Newsletter.

Notes about ISA meeting/show location & time for September 2025 - September 2026 [new] with *zoom info

Tracey confirmed Iris Society of Austin (ISA) meetings, show, & sale at Zilker Botanical Garden:

- Tuesday evening, September 9, 2025 starting at 6:30 pm
- Sunday afternoon, October 19, 2025, 12-4pm (meeting time 1pm-3pm)
- Sunday afternoon, November 16, 2025, 12-4pm (meeting time 1pm-3pm)
- Sunday afternoon, January 18, 2026, 12-3pm (meeting time 1pm-3pm) [*Zoom available 4 hours 12 to 4 PM]
- Sunday afternoon, February 15, 2026, 12-3pm (meeting time 1pm-3pm) [*Zoom available 4 hours 12 to 4 PM]
- Tuesday, March, 10, 2026, 6-8:30pm [*Zoom available 3 hours – 6 to 9 PM]
- Iris Show Date:
 - Setup: Friday, April 3, 2026, 1-5pm
 - Sale: Saturday, April 4, 2026, 9am-5pm
 - includes the Auditorium and Greene Room for Judges
 - Zilker gates open at 8am for the show
- Tuesday, April 14, 2026, 6-8:30pm [*Zoom available 3 hours – 6 to 9 PM]
- Tuesday, May 12, 2026, 6-8:30pm [*Zoom available 3 hours – 6 to 9 PM]
- Iris Sale Date:
 - Setup: Friday, September 11, 2026, 1-5pm
 - Sale: Saturday, September 12, 2026, 9am-3:30pm
- Sunday, September 20, 2026, 12-3pm [*Zoom available 4 hours 12 to 4 PM]

For Club Members -- ***Join Zoom Meeting:**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82096469078?pwd=yBaGnlv9pW8K5iZRbJHaWbmym2bsJ.1>

Meeting ID: 820 9646 9078

Passcode: 051827

One tap mobile – for call in audio only

+13462487799,,82096469078# US (Houston)

Join **instructions**

https://us02web.zoom.us/meetings/82096469078/invitations?signature=6D_Ouh-iZ84IfiL3ITbf0kXsRmNiO-r364yFBol4Rtc

Zilker Garden's regular operating hours are:

- September through May: 9:00 AM – 5:00 PM
- June through August: 8:00 AM – 4:00 PM
- Admissions close 30 minutes before the Garden closes

Guy & Carolyn Gifford's "Elixir" recipe

During the 'Feast for Irises' program in October, Marney handed out the Gifford's "Elixir" for irises recipe. A snapshot of the recipe is included in the newsletter again for reference.

Simple Elixir

Let's have a simple conversation about iris culture. All the usual recommendations you will hear in the club continue to apply. Dig your beds till your beds are loose and friable, amend with sand for good drainage, add a good deal of manure compost to enrich it, throw in some bone meal and time released fertilizers, and you are about ready to plant your iris. Plant your iris and water well.

All the usual admonitions about keeping the beds clean and bug free apply. The plants should begin to grow and thrive. Later on you will feel a need to give your plants a lot more attention because there's an iris show ahead. You will wish to be competitive and win some prizes. Conventional wisdom is that you should feed your iris in the run up to the show to increase your bloom and be ready for the show.

There is an accepted schedule for times and dates for our area. What we suggest here is that a simple elixir might be your feeding medium.

This simple elixir is created by using several two liter soft drink bottles with caps as containers. The first ingredient to be placed into the container is alfalfa pellets, a good handful. The second ingredient will be time release fertilizer such as Peter's or Miracle Grow, at least ½ cup. The third ingredient would be small pelletized bone meal, a good handful. The final ingredient will be about three table spoons of copperas. Copperas is iron sulfite and is available at the Natural Gardner. Finally, fill the bottles with water. In good time, all the powders and ingredients will disappear into the fluid and the alfalfa pellets will disintegrate. The elixir is basically prepared at this point and ready for the feeding program right up to the show. There's one warning! When you pour out the fluid out of these bottles, always pour it through a strainer to removed the alfalfa debris and the Johnson grass seeds that are bailed with the alfalfa.

About the ingredients— of course, time release fertilizer has the balanced ingredients needed by each plant, Bone meal adds extra phosphorus for better bloom. The alfalfa pellets are known to have a growth simulator. You can find more information on this in the Organic Gardner's magazine written in the 1970's. The copperas element is reported to aid the growth and add vigor to the bloom stem and to the leaf. It gives a healthy color to the plant.

How do you use this elixir? Apply it just as if you were applying the fertilizer on the normal feeding schedule. If you are feeding November, December, January, take one cup of the fluid, add it to a three gallon sprinkling can filled with water and apply a reasonable amount to each iris plant. Nature will deliver the ingredients to the root zone. February is usually the last feeding date, so in this case .you should use two cups to the three gallons of water.

We have had some success with this methodology and continue to look for better ways to cultivate the iris bloom.

Guy & Carolyn Gifford



Tall bearded iris 'Ida Red'
(Bruce Clark, R. 1978)
(left) *photo by Argyle Acres Iris
Gardens*



Tall bearded iris 'Salsa
Rio' (Schreiner, R. 2000)
(right) *photo via AIS wiki*



Tall bearded iris 'Red Skies'
(Joseph Ghio, R. 2006) (right)
photo by Iris 4 U Garden

October newsletter corrections

It was noted during the October ISA meeting, the following corrections/updates from what was published in the newsletter:

- There was only one new member in September, Annette. The other person that was previously noted as a member, Renee, was a visitor, not a member.
- The 2026 ISA show theme is "Iris Rainbows" not "Iris Rainbow"

ZBGC Safety Protocol

During the AAGC board meeting 11/11/25, there was presentation regarding safety protocols & plans for people at the Zilker Gardens. Each AAG club is to provide ZBGC a list of three club members that could serve as the club point of contact for situations including lockdown/shelter-in-place, evacuation and best practices for clubs meeting at night. Tracey provided copies of the following reference material:

1. A summary of other items ZBGC/Operations discussed at the meeting
2. Zilker Botanical Garden – Emergency Quick Reference Guide
3. Zilker Botanical Garden Conservancy – Staff Safety Protocol Quick Reference Guide

Summary of Operations Items at Nov 11, 2025 Meeting

Shelter in Place

- The purpose of three names is to have a backup in case one person is not available, and ZBGC is sure the notice goes to someone able to act on the club's behalf.
- ZBGC will email all points of contacts **at the same time**.
- If phone calls are required, staff will work down the list until someone responds.
- ZBGC will add this protocol to the upcoming revision of the *Guide for Clubs*.
- A short version of the Shelter-in-Place protocol will be posted in the Library by the docent-area and at the podium in the Auditorium.
- All clubs should review this protocol at their next meeting and discuss the importance of staying away from windows and following staff instructions.
- AAGC's President will be included in all notices for awareness, but the first priority is always notifying those on-site or en route.

After-Hour Meetings and Radios

- Night clubs will be getting a two-way radio to receive any notices from the Night Attendant on duty.
- The first person to arrive from the club should pick up the radio from the Night Attendant who will provide instructions on how to use it. The radio may be left in the Auditorium or returned to the Night Attendant at the end of the meeting.
- Radios should remain on and audible throughout meetings.
- Daytime clubs will not receive radios. They will continue receiving notifications via the Gift Shop or the Manager-on-Duty, and AAGC/ZBGC will continue exploring whether a more direct notification method is feasible.

FY 2026 Schedule changes

- Any changes should be made directly with ZBGC with a copy to AAGC.
- Please send your notice that you will not be using the Garden Center facilities to: info@zbgconservancy.org with a copy to Schedule.aagc@gmail.com
- It is important to do this as soon as possible to have the time previously counted in our rental waivers removed from the computation.
 - Info@ is preferred because it reaches the Manager-on-Duty, ensuring the fastest response.
 - For evening clubs, cancellations must be sent at least two weeks in advance to avoid the \$80 Night Attendant fee. ***More notice is appreciated.***

A-V Support & Trainings

- We have all benefited from the hands-on support from Heather and her staff, including Pedro, Cheris and Amanda who updated the guide that is in the Auditorium.

- Heather is looking into providing A-V training to help clubs be more comfortable with the system and trouble-shooting problems that may occur, including doing a first-time run-thru with clubs to make sure they know how to set up for their particular need - projector only, Zoom, etc.
- Clubs wanting support should email ZBGC directly, and say your club is interested.
 - Emailing info@zbgconservancy.org is best
 - Group A/V trainings can happen but will be scheduled January/February at the earliest.
 - Groupings based on equipment needs (projector only, Zoom, hybrid, tech compatibility check) make sense.
 - Most A/V issues result from computer settings
 - The A/V binder in the podium is the most up-to-date version.

Please cc: schedule.aagc@gmail.com so we can stay in loop on how many clubs are requesting support.

Yule in the Garden

ZBGC is inviting Garden Clubs to participate in the annual celebration of the holidays. Education Coordinator Janie Trevino is heading this up and has set Dec 1 and 2 as the days for clubs to set up trees. She will bring up any trees, and boxes with decorations from the Bev Shed. If you want to be a part of this, please email Janie directly Janie@zbgconservancy.org and cc: publicity.aagc@gmail.com

Zilker Botanical Garden - Emergency Quick Reference Guide

If an emergency occurs, follow staff instructions immediately.

Lockdown / Shelter-in-Place

- Lockdown = Security threat (intruder, police activity, violent behavior).
- Shelter-in-Place = Environmental threat (severe weather, chemical hazard).

If announced:

- Move to nearest indoor building immediately (Garden Center or Horticulture).
- Close doors if able; stay away from windows.
- Stay silent; silence cell phones.
- Do not open doors until a staff member or police gives the all-clear.
- Follow instructions from the Manager-on-Duty or Night Attendant over the radio.

If You're In the Garden (Outside Building Areas)

- Go to the nearest building immediately (Garden Center or Horticulture Building).
- If unsafe to reach a building:
- Get low behind stone structures, walls, or dense foliage.
- Stay out of sight and remain silent.
- Keep your group together and help maintain calm.

Evacuation (Fire or Other Emergency)

- Exit using the nearest door.
- Go to the Primary Rally Point: Oak Lawn by the Barton Springs Gate.
- Secondary Rally Point: Polo Fields across the street on Barton Springs
- Follow staff guidance.
- Do not re-enter buildings until cleared.

After-Hours Meeting Safety Notes

- First arrival checks in with Night Attendant and picks up walkie-talkie.
- Keep radio on and audible.
- Report injuries, concerns, or missing persons immediately
- Leave together; no one walks out alone after dark.
- Gate typically closes by 7:30 PM
- All participants must exit by 9:30 PM.

Emergency Contacts

Night Attendant: On-site during after-hours meetings

If on-site, Gift Shop attendant can alert manager-on-duty.

On-site Phone Number: 512-477-8672 ext. 2

PARD:

Anna Bradley — Anna.bradley@austintexas.gov

Amanda Ross — Amanda.ross@austintexas.gov

ZBGC:

Heather De La Garza — operations@zbgconservancy.org

Holly Hawk — director@zbgconservancy.org

Zilker Botanical Garden Conservancy - Staff Safety Protocol Quick Reference Guide

Lockdown / Shelter-in-Place

- Lockdown = Security threat (active shooter, intruder, law enforcement activity).
- Shelter-in-Place = Environmental threat (severe weather, nearby hazard, chemical release).

Both mean: stay put, secure people, and await instructions. Lockdown focuses on concealment and limiting access; shelter-in-place focuses on protection from external conditions.

Immediate Priorities (For Any Lockdown or Shelter-in-Place)

When a lockdown or shelter-in-place is announced:

- Stay calm and communicate clearly (use radios/phones if safe).
- Bring visitors, volunteers, and participants indoors immediately.
- Lock doors and close blinds if applicable.
- Stay away from windows and exterior walls.
- Silence phones and remain quiet.
- Do not open doors until an “all-clear” is issued by police or management.

Staff Roles

MODs: Sweep garden for guests, inform them of lockdown/shelter-in-place, and direct to closest building.

All leads (staff, program, volunteer, event): Account for participants (sign-in sheets help).

MOD/Programs/Education/Volunteer Leads: Contact anyone expected on-site who is still en route.

Location-Based Procedures

Garden Center (Main Building near Parking Lot) – Primary Shelter

- Use interior rooms (Library, Offices, Auditorium) as “safe rooms.”
- Offices equipped with:
 - o Flashlights
 - o First Aid and AED
 - o Radios
 - o Door wedges

Once inside:

- MODs lock all exterior doors (main doors, Auditorium side doors).
- Small groups: Move into interior rooms, close blinds, turn off lights.
- Large groups: Use Greene Room or Auditorium (away from windows).
- Radio in once secured:
 - o “Garden Center building secure with [number] persons inside.”
- Remain indoors until “all-clear” is given.

Horticulture Building (Back of Garden) – Secondary Shelter

For staff and volunteers working in the back of the garden:

- Lock all doors.
- Move to the interior storage area away from windows.
- Account for all horticulture staff and volunteers.

Radio in once secured:

- “Horticulture building secure with [number] persons inside.”
- Remain indoors until “all-clear” is given.

Persons in the Garden (Open Areas)

This group is hardest to protect, so pre-assignment and training are key.

If safe to move:

- Go to the nearest building (Garden Center or Hort) as directed by staff.
- If you cannot safely reach a building:
- Find low, concealed ground (behind stone walls, dense foliage – Bamboo Grove is a good option).
- Get low and stay out of open sight lines.
- Silence phones and remain still.

If with a group (tour, program, volunteers):

- Move together, quietly, behind cover.
- Assign one person to maintain calm and headcount.
- Use natural barriers (rock gardens, tree clusters) for protection.
- After the all-clear, docents/program leads verify everyone is accounted for.

Communication Flow During a Lockdown

Role	Action
<i>Natural Resources Director</i>	Communicates with emergency services; notifies garden supervisors and on-site staff.
<i>MOD / Operations Director</i>	Announces lockdown/shelter-in-place via radio (“All staff, lockdown/shelter-in-place in effect...”), calls 911 if needed, initiates all-staff text, and notifies those outside the garden who may arrive on site.
<i>Garden Center Staff</i>	Secure visitors, lock entry doors, shelter people in Greene Room/Library/Auditorium, report headcount to MOD.
<i>Horticulture Staff</i>	Secure building and report headcount to MOD.
<i>Programs / Volunteers / Events</i>	Lead participants indoors or to concealed areas and report headcount.
<i>Guest Services / Admissions</i>	Close gates, silence phones, shelter guests in Greene Room or Library.
<i>All Staff</i>	Avoid radio use if the threat is nearby; otherwise, report secured status and headcount.

Accounting for People

- Each area lead (Garden Center, Horticulture, Education, Programs) maintains a people count.
- Once safe, radio brief updates such as:
 - o “Garden Center secure, 34 persons sheltered.”
 - o “Horticulture secure, 5 staff, 2 volunteers.”
- After the all-clear, conduct a reconciliation check to confirm all visitors and staff are accounted for.

Equipment & Preparedness

Each main building has:

- Flashlight and batteries
- First Aid supplies
- Printed staff phone tree
- Door wedges
- Copy of procedures
- Radios charged and distributed during open hours

After the All-Clear

- Reopen doors only after direct confirmation from law enforcement or Garden leadership.
- Complete an Incident Report (S-0011) summarizing actions taken.
- Hold a brief debrief to review what went well and what needs improvement.
- Evacuation Procedures
- MOD will radio evacuation location.

Rally Points:

- **Primary on-site:** Oak Lawn by Barton Springs gate.
- **Secondary off-site:** Zilker Polo Fields across Barton Springs Rd.

Steps:

- Gift Shop staff alert Greene Room, Auditorium, and restrooms.
- If in a building: Exit via closest doors → proceed to Oak Lawn by Barton Springs gate.
- If in the garden: Proceed to Oak Lawn by Barton Springs gate.
- MOD: Conduct staff head count and obtain verbal confirmation of staff safety.
- Program/Volunteer/Event Leads: Account for participants.
- Do not re-enter until cleared by emergency personnel.

After-Hours Club Meetings

- Public hours end 5:00 PM (4:00 PM in summer).
- Front gate typically closes at 7:30 PM.
- Meetings end by 9:00 PM; all participants out by 9:30 PM.
- First arrival checks in with Night Attendant and picks up a walkie-talkie.
- Radio remains with the group and stays audible.

While On Site:

- Report concerns or injuries immediately via radio.
- Leave together — no one walks out alone after dark.
- No alcohol, smoking, open flames, or exploring beyond reserved meeting spaces.

Emergency Situations:

- Night Attendant can reach staff and emergency responders
- Alert Night Attendant for medical emergencies or missing persons

Emergency Contacts

PARD:

Anna Bradley — Anna.bradley@austintexas.gov

Amanda Ross — Amanda.ross@austintexas.gov

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