

# NURSERIES, GARDENERS, AND OTHER STUFF YOU SHOULD KNOW

*TWG Editor:* I'm designing a new garden in my yard called the "Fragrant Garden", which is a little silly cause I try to make all my gardens fragrant. [What's the point, otherwise?] Anyway, the newest fragrant garden will be blue and yellow (with some ornamental grasses in the background, of course). So I wrote to Lou Emmons, owner of *Blossom Bend Nursery* (which specializes in Iris and Alliums), and asked her if any Iris qualify for the garden. Here is her interesting response:

Dear Rommy: I know of few really fragrant Iris. Unfortunately, that attribute is not generally found in Iris... Some of the historical Iris do have fragrance and I am starting to learn which ones. I have four **Bearded Iris** [*Iris germanica*] dating back to the mid-1800's which I hope will bloom this year. One I have available is from my hometown in Kansas. I would estimate it arrived there at the turn of the century. It is a tall Bearded, purple self with a wonderful grape(?) aroma. It fills the room with its fragrance. Also, *Iris graminea* is supposed to have a plum-like fragrance. It's a wonderful species and I grow it. And the little *Iris reticulata* have fragrance, too... Once you leave *Iris pseudacorus*, yellow Iris are few and far between, except for all the Tall Bearded's. I think Currier McEwen's *Iris siberica* 'Butter and Sugar' is very nice, although not entirely yellow. Stahly's *Iris siberica* 'Moonsilk' is beautiful, too. I'm growing some Sino-Siberians (40 chromosome) which are very lovely and have quite a lot of yellow coloring. The *Iris* 'Holden Clough' (*I. pseudocorus* x *unknown*) and its offspring, 'Berlin Tiger', 'Phil Edinger' and 'Roy Davidson' are all

yellow with brown markings... The blues go on and on—but if you want to see something outstanding, come over when *I. siberica* 'Summer Skies' (1939) is blooming! Of course, for the truest colors and best selection, it's Tall Bearded. But then, there's the borer...

—Lou Emmons, *Blossom Bend*

Dear Rommy: *TWG* just keeps getting better and better. Love the new format. The bottom line is, I learn more from this publication than all the "glitzy" ones combined! It is about us—Midwesterners—and about the plants that work and don't work for us. Every Midwestern gardener should subscribe. I will be mentioning *TWG* in all my speeches this year, so keep all the information coming (I especially love herb-related topics). Hope our paths cross sometime soon! —Marge Clark, author, *Thyme Cookbooks*, West Lebanon, IN. (800) 930-3222

*TWG Editor:* Wow, Marge, what a great letter! It will have to go on the back page of *TWG* once I finish savoring the one from Russ Morash. Thank you from the bottom of my heart. But, with all due respect, your letter made me crazy. I opened it within seconds of deciding to quit doing *TWG*, whose

## PLANT RESCUE ALERT

If you hear of a property with plants and wildflowers about to be bulldozed, please contact *The Wild Ones'* Plant Rescue Committee to coordinate a plant rescue. Call Donna Retzlaff at (630) 852-7861.

writing I love but whose production I abhor. Now I can't quit and it's all your fault. So come up here, have a Marguerita (with Lime Basil in it or some such), and start typing.

"Dear Rommy: It's great to have *TWG* again. I love the re-design and the fabulous opinion. I'll never let my subscription lapse again." —Deborah Needleman, Editor at Large, *House & Garden Magazine* (New York, NY)

*TWG Editor:* You may recall that **Seven Son Flower Tree** [*Heptacodium miconioides*] was highly recommended in the Winter issue of *TWG*—and well it might be. Very nice! An update, though... Landscape architect Susan Murray (Madison, WI) was asked by one of her clients—*TWG* subscriber Lynn Mills of chilly Burlington, WI—to plant Seven Son Flower instead of a Crabapple tree. A prudent architect, Susan called Boston's *Arnold Arboretum* to inquire after its cold hardiness. They advised that a sunny, wind-protected site would be the best bet for this splendid small tree, which the *Arnold* was the first to discover. Sources for this tree are listed at *Weedpatch.com*.

*TWG Editor:* I want to acknowledge the death of herbalist Adelma Grenier Simmons of *Caprilands Farm* in Coventry, CT. Mrs. Simmons was a legendary character whom I first met when I attended the Univ. of CT. One of my friends worked for Adelma, and that's how I happened to visit her home/nursery/restaurant. A complete eye-opener! I had never seen or smelled so many herbs and I had never met anyone who lived a life devoted to the lore of plants. She influenced my life, and she will be missed. 🌿