

# Iris Classification

The irises most often used as garden plants fall into three main groups:

**Bearded Iris**

**Aril Iris**

**Beardless Iris**



Each group has its unique qualities, and a collection including representatives from each group will be varied indeed.

## Aril Iris

Two very different types of irises are grouped together under the term "aril". These are the oncocyclus and regelia irises of the Near East. Although they have beards, they are not classified with the bearded irises because they are so different. Actually, their beards are rather sparse, being long and straggly on the regelias, and nothing more than a wide "fuzzy" patch on the oncocyclus. The arils show dark signal spots below the beards with much veining and speckling, in an unbelievable range of colors. Unfortunately, the arils are difficult to grow in all but the warmest and driest regions of the United States.

However, in this century, hybrids were produced from crossing the arils with the more common bearded irises. These are called "arilbreds" (AB), and are usually very easy to grow and still display the spectacular features of the arils. Most arilbreds are tall and have large blooms. They usually bloom earlier than the TBs, with the SDBs and the IBs.

There are also small arilbreds, produced from crossing arils or arilbreds with dwarfs or medians. They are variously called "arilbred-medians", "aril-medians" or "aril-meds".