

## Reblooming Iris Facts

Reblooming Bearded Irises have existed for decades. Unlike “**Encore**®” Reblooming Azaleas, these special perennial plants received minimal attention from Iris fanciers. Public notice finally arrived in the late nineties due to a feature story appearing in **Martha Steward Living Magazine**. Product demand forced major producers to list selections in their yearly catalogs.

Spring only flowering bearded irises cannot become a reblooming one. Remontants (rebloomers) are bred for spring and fall flowering. As hybridizers such as **the late Dr. Lloyd Zurbrigg** formerly of Radford, VA and Durham, NC retired, concrete performance data and new development saw a significant decline over the past decade. Since rebloom origins are difficult to pinpoint, only a handful of dedicated breeders across the US and Canada are actively working for new color breaks and patterns plus better fall reliability. One current goal is to move the fall bloom sequence up to late August or early September. Such progress would allow gardeners in colder climates the chance to enjoy these marvelous heirloom plants in fall flower.

Gardeners should use extreme caution in ordering plants. Growers often fail to make the distinction between warm and cool season varieties. West Coast selections may not grow or flower in fickle Mid-Atlantic growing conditions. Consult reputable local growers for the best choices in performance and fall bloom reliability.

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