

Ellie Ferren
Region 22
1st Place
13 & Over Age Group

I have chosen the perfect sunny spot for an iris garden in my new yard! I have decided on a themed iris bed based on one of my favorite books, *Anne of Green Gables*. The main character, Anne, is an orphaned girl who lives on Prince Edward Island. Anne is a determined, imaginative, colorful, and optimistic character with carrot orange hair. I want my iris garden to reflect these characteristics.

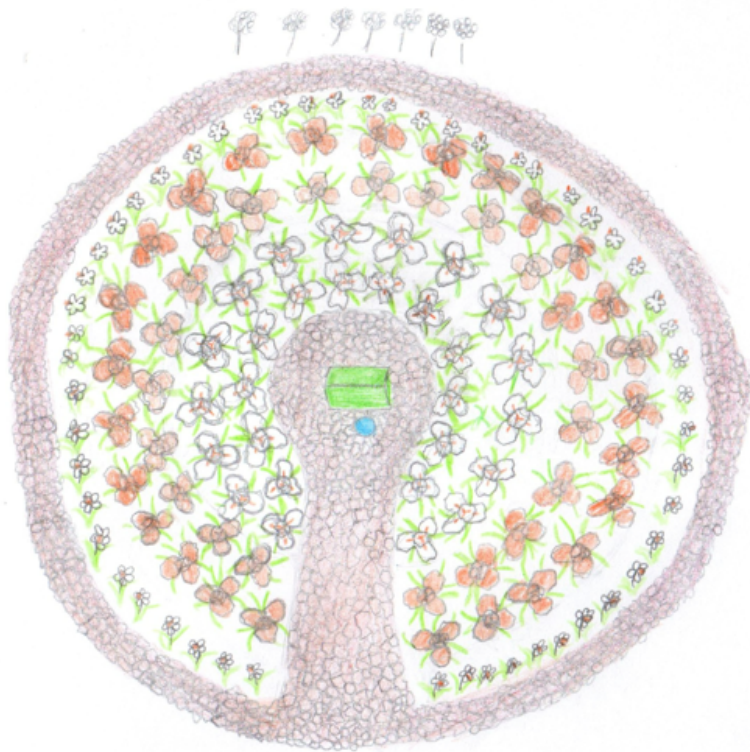
The most important part is choosing the irises. Using the AIS Iris Encyclopedia, I found a perfect iris named "Queen Anne's Lace". It is a tall bearded iris with white falls and standards and wide orange beards. I had found my color scheme: white and orange! Further research uncovered an orange iris perfectly named "Carrot Flash". (Once, Anne showed a flash of temper when called "Carrots"!)"Carrot Flash" is a standard dwarf iris with ombre orange coloring throughout. I love how the "Queen Anne's Lace" beards compliment the "Carrot Flash" irises to create a cohesive garden. To me, irises reflect Anne's determination and optimism. They endure the cold winter temperatures then bring the hope of spring with each new bloom stalk!

A circular shaped bed would remind me of Anne's island home and her continuous journey. In the very center would be a "Green Gables" shaped birdhouse mounted on a pole with a "Lake of Shining Waters" birdbath underneath. The innermost circle of flowers would be two rows of "Queen Anne's Lace" irises. These tall bearded would make a beautiful backdrop for the standard dwarf "Carrot Flash" irises. Two rows of these orange irises will encircle the white ones.

Although irises are stunning by themselves, I decided to add some companion plants. In the book, Anne was compared to "white June lilies", also known as narcissus. The final circle of flowers would be a single row of dwarf white narcissi. The graduated height of the flowers will lead you to the "Green Gables" birdhouse. Broken terracotta pieces, representing the red clay roads on P.E.I., would create a path to the center of the garden and an outermost border. It also finishes the orange-white pattern of the circle. Finally, I chose actual Queen Anne's lace to complete the garden. Not only is this plant aptly named, it is also a wild carrot! Perfect! I would plant these in a straight line behind the border, creating a background while keeping the irises the focal point.

My orange and white iris garden will be beautiful, cheerful, and colorful (just like Anne)! Its overall design and added decorations will attract pollinators, book lovers, and iris lovers alike. I have loved planning this garden. I hope you will journey with me and let your imagination take you along Prince Edward Island's red roads to the "Green Gables" farmhouse to visit with Anne and admire the beauty of irises! Can you dig it? ...I am going to!

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-Green Gables
 bird house

● - lake of shining waters



-Broken clay pots
 -to represent red clay
 roads in P.E.I.



- "White June lilies"



- "Carrot flash" iris
 - represents Annes nickname
 "Carrots"



- "Queen Anne's Lace" iris
 - Chosen for its name
 and colors



- "Queen Anne's lace"
 - wild carrot
 - name sake

Jackson R. Hancock
Region 3
2nd Place
13 & Over Age Group

A New Masterpiece Of Iris

(two colors: Blue & Yellow)

My (hypothetical) new house is perfect, just as I had always wished for. There is the perfect spot atop a small rock outcrop about 6' high to plant a lovely iris garden. The soil is light and well-draining. As a rule, I will only plant irises that are shades of blue, yellow, or a mixture of the two.

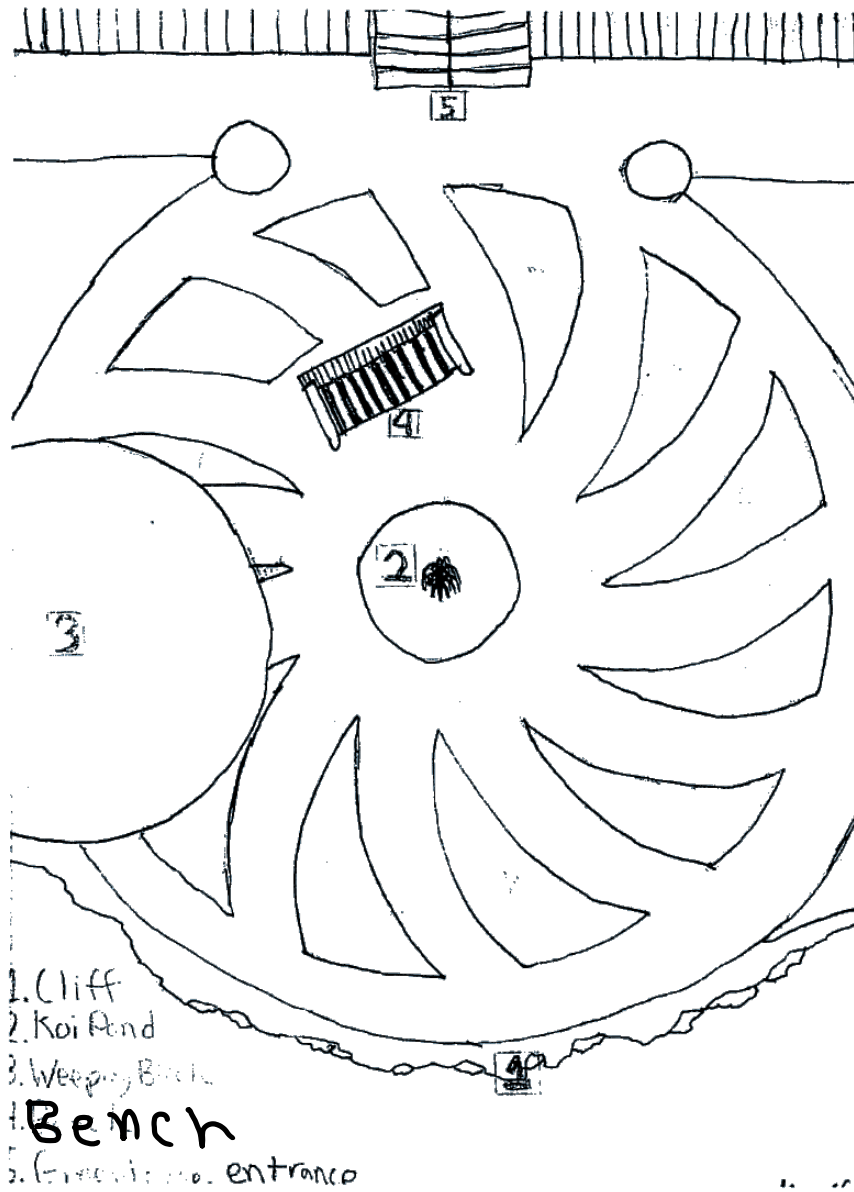
The general layout of the garden will be a vortex of colors (see map). There will be 12 arms with a maximum of 3 cultivars per arm. This means I can have 36 different cultivars. Taller plants will go on the outsides of the circle, and the shorter ones in the center. It will have a width of about 20 ft. At the center, I'll place a slightly elevated koi pond in which I will have some of the more water-loving irises on the edge and a small fountain in the center. There will be moss extending from the pond 2 ft. in all directions to serve as a walking path. The colors of the iris will alternate, with the arm at the 12 o'clock positions being mixed, then yellow, then a mixed arm, then a blue arm. 12 feet from the edge of the koi pond, at 7 o'clock position, I will plant a weeping birch tree, pruned to about 12 feet high, and at most 1 foot wide, with 4 feet in between the ground and the lowest leaf. Under that I will plant Iris Cristata and other shade loving plants. Some of the cultivars I want to plant are as follows:

- (Spec) Iris cristata 'Powder Blue Giant'
- (TB) 'New Mexico Sky'
- (TB) 'The Admiral'
- (Spec) Blue Flag Iris
- (SPU) 'Little Splash'
- (BB) 'Golden Coin'
- (TB) 'Corn Harvest'
- (Spec) Yellow Flag Iris
- (SPU) 'Imperial Seas'
- (IB) 'Blue And Gold'
- (TB) 'Vanuatu'
- (MDB) 'Blue Frost'
- (SDB) 'Yellow Hornet'

The beds in which I will plant the irises will have a stone border and be raised about a foot. In the beds, there will be high quality identification tags made of engraved bronze and marked with cultivar, class, and botanical name so I never have any NOID irises in my garden. There will be a small wooden guardrail at the edge of the cliff (safety first!) On the side of the cliff, I will place plantings of alpine and rock plants from around the world. In the raised beds surrounding the vortex (see map), I will plant some iris companion plants that follow the general color scheme.

The types of companion plants I will use are as follows: Forsythia, Liastris, Daffodils, and Blue Alliums. In the rear of the garden is where I'll place my greenhouse to grow Iridaceae and other plants from more tropical regions. Finally, I will build a bench to be placed near the fountain in the center of this horticultural masterpiece in order to sit back and enjoy my garden.

Jackson R. Hancock
Region 3
2nd Place
13 & Over Age Group



Sabrina Anderson
Region 14
3rd Place Tie
13 & Over Age Group

My Blue And Yellow Oasis

Moving into a new home is exciting, but it can also be a daunting task to make it your own. One of the first things I noticed about my new home was the lack of irises. As a lover of flowers and gardening, I know I had to change that. After some research and contemplations, I decided to create an iris garden with two colors: blue and yellow.

Blue and yellow are complementary colors on the color wheel. I think they would create a stunning contrast in my garden. Blue colored irises are calming and peaceful, while yellow irises are bright and cheerful! I imagine my garden being a place where I can feel both relaxed and energized.

For my blue irises, I would choose the "Blue Rhythm" iris. It has a deep blue color and a striking, ruffled shape that would add some texture to my garden. For the yellow irises, I would go with the "Lemon Reflection" iris. It has a pale-yellow color with a hint of orange and would add a nice pop of color to my garden.

To complement my irises, I would plant some pink and purple petunias around the edges of my garden bed. They would provide a soft border and a nice contrast to the bright blue and yellow. In the center of my garden bed, I would add a small birdbath with a statue of a bird perched on the edge. It would be a lovely spot for birds to visit and would add a touch of whimsy to my garden.

As for the shape of my garden bed, I would go with a circular shape. It would create a nice focal point in my yard and allow me to easily arrange my plants around the center birdbath. I would also add some white stones around the base of my plants to help with drainage and add some texture to the bed.

I would call my garden the "Blue and Yellow Oasis." It would be a place where I could escape from the world and find some peace and tranquility. The contrast of the blue and yellow irises would create a beautiful visual display, while the pink and purple petunias and bird statue would add some whimsy and charm. Creating an iris garden is a fun and creative way to make a new home feel like your own. By choosing two colors, blue and yellow, for my iris garden, I can create a stunning visual display that is both calming and energizing. The addition of pink and purple petunias and a bird statue will add some charm and whimsy to the garden, while the circular shape and white stones will create a nice focal point. I can't wait to start planting and watch my garden come to life!

Sarah Wheeler
Region 20
3rd Place Tie
13 & Over Age Group

A New House

If I was moving into a new house, I would add and design my own iris garden. I would have iris beds in both the front and back yard. Personally, I would pick blue and red flowers. Blue and red really go together, and there are many shades of these colors. Some red iris I would include in my garden are Rio Rojo and Eric The Red. For blue iris I would plant Blue Shimmer and Sea Power along with others. These would make a lovely combination of irises.

My iris gardens will have different shapes and styles for the different kinds of iris. In the back against the fence, I will have raised beds. I will use stones to raise the beds because the stones won't rot or break apart. In the middle of the garden, I will have a pond for my Siberian iris. Around the pond I will have a bed for the others like TB's, IB's and dwarf irises. This is where I would have my tulips and columbines.

Not only would I plant iris, I would also plant tulips and columbines. Tulips and columbines grow great with iris. They do not compete with each other, and they make a colorful design when put together. Tulips bloom before iris so you can have phases of the blooms. Tulips come in so many different colors that will bring your iris gardens to life. They include red, pink, yellow, purple, and some that incorporate multiple different colors. Columbines come in a variety of colors to match whatever garden theme you are going for. I personally know these go great together since it's what we have growing in our current iris beds. Columbines do spread seeds which allows them to come back every year.

Some of the last touches I will add to my iris garden would be additional decorations. They'd include bird baths, fairy garden decorations, and bird feeders in the trees. Bird baths will help attract birds to the gardens. Hearing the chirping of birds and seeing their pretty feathers is something I have loved about my gardens. Ever since I was little my mom and grandma would get me little fairy garden decorations. You can get them at Spencer's, and they have dragon statues, fairies, and furniture with them. I loved decorating the gardens with these, they didn't help nor harm the iris, but they made them look pretty. The bird feeders also attract birds to the garden which is why I would include them.

This is what I would do if I was to move into a new house. The combination of the plants, decorations and bird feeders all come to make a wonderful-looking garden! The scent of all these amazing plants is what would make the garden truly magnificent. The colors complement each other to make such a magnificent look.