

Douglas Iris (*Iris douglasiana*)

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The Douglas iris, *Iris douglasiana*, lives naturally on the south coast of Oregon and in coastal California. It has a taller stature (about 2 feet) than *Iris tenax*, the Oregon iris that you see here so commonly in the wild, and has its place in our gardens as both an Oregon native (although not a local one) and a WaterWise plant choice. It is sometimes called Pacific Coast iris, although this name is also applied to a range of hybrid irises of West Coast origin. Flower colors typically are pale to medium blue, but violet, cream, and white forms are also known. In nature, it often forms clumps, which it will also do in a garden setting. Unlike some other iris, this species does fairly well in part shade, although flowering is more prolific in full sun. It is widely available at native plant nurseries in Oregon and California and also appears frequently at plant sales featuring native plant. I have grown this species for many years and am particularly fond of the white form shown in the photograph, but the blue forms also add a cheery note to a garden setting. Unlike some of the reports in the literature, I have had good success dividing clumps and moving pieces to new locations in the garden. Like many of our natives, this species tolerates, even seems to thrive on summer dry periods and provides a fantastic reward of colorful flowers in mid-to late spring every year.

