

The Little Aril that Could
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It is Arilbred hybridizer's greatest wish to have a seedling flourish into a plant that can withstand that various environments that stretch over the United States. Well I know of one such Arilbred.

"Eye To Eye" (Keppel 2009), arrived in Maryland the year that it was introduced. Unfortunately for it, I had ordered more than my fair share of Arilbreds from the ASI plant sale that year along with purchases from other hybridizers so "Eye to Eye" was planted in the ignore bed. The ignore bed was a narrow bed along the drive that got minimal attention, little weeding, little if any fertilizer for it was a bed for porr performers or those that refused to bloom in regular beds. It was rocky with friable soil that held little water, a perfect place for arils, so I told myself as I planted other arilbred purchases.

Now Arilbred are not supposed to grow here but that is the point, the wider the distribution of plants the better for all. When "Eye To Eye" bloomed the second year it was here in 2011 and I was hooked. Color, or should I say colors, lots of them, form just everything pleasing, I was in love. Unfortunately I needed the room and had to pot it since I did not have a bed ready for it and the rest in that bed. Somehow during that summer I lost it, the pot I mean. That was a bad winter and I was sure since it was in a pot I had lost it totally. So I was surprised when in the spring I saw a very familiar bloom. The colors seemed more intense since I had first seen it but it was just as lovely.

Since it did so well and I had lots of plans for an upcoming regional I left it in the pot sure I would have something ready by fall. Ah.. no. Hubby was so helpful moving things for me that the pot was lost once again even though this time I made sure that it had a permanent marker. It did not bloom in 2013 so I was sure I had lost it and forgot about it except that it went on my list to purchase again.



Almost everything was set for the regional when a familiar flower bloomed in the shade at the back of the property. After three years in a pot, through unprotected severe winters, "Eye To Eye" bloomed again as spectacular as I remembered. As soon as the blooming ended "Eye to Eye" was placed with my Arilbred seedlings, I was not taking a chance at losing it again.

For all this poor iris suffered I am positive that this Arilbred could grow in any location and under any conditions. The Wiki has pictures of it growing in Oregon, California, and many other locations. If you want to try to grow Arilbreds, this is a great iris to start with.

