

Rare Plants of Louisiana

Iris nelsonii – Abbeville red iris, Nelson’s iris Iris family (Iridaceae)

Rarity Rank: S1/GNR

| | | | | | |
|--------|-----------|---|------|---|--------|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| State | | | | | |
| Global | | | | | |
| | imperiled | | rare | | secure |



Range: Vermillion Parish, LA

Recognition:

- An erect perennial herb of hybrid origin (*I. fulva* x *I. hexagona* x *I. brevicaulis*)
- Clonally spreads by rhizomes
- Flowers large drooping, bright red, very rarely yellow
- Fruit a capsule tapering to a point at both ends
- Leaves green, often drooping and becoming glaucous; erect, long and narrow with an acute tip, blades 80-90 cm long, 1-3 cm wide
- Stems erect 70-110 cm tall

Flowering Time: April-May

Light Requirement: Full shade

Wetland Indicator Status: FACW- usually occurs in wetlands

Habitat: Cypress-tupelo swamps, forested edges of bayous and waterways

Threats:

- Conversion of habitat to agriculture
- Residential and commercial development
- Altering of hydrology
- Deforestation of riparian areas
- Over-collection from wild

Beneficial Management Practices:

- BMPs for wetlands
- Prevention of collection from wild
- Conservation of cypress-tupelo swamps
- Creation of forested habitat corridors to prevent hybridization



LA River Basins: Vermillion

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References:

Randolph, L. F. 1966. *Iris Nelsonii*, a New species of Louisiana Iris of Hybrid Origin. *Baileya* 14:143-169.

Arnold, M. L. 1993. *Iris Nelsonii* (Iridaceae): Origin and Genetic Composition of a Homoploid Species. *American Journal of Botany* 80:577-583.