

THE LOPHIRIS ALSO NEED MORE ATTENTION

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Section *Lophiris* (*Evansias*) are fairly easy plants for the gardener because they can be grown in the open, either in the ground or in pots, under conditions indicated by their natural habitats which are widely dispersed through the northern hemisphere. Many new forms have been found in recent years. Ten species are presently recognised and it is possible to divide them into two main groups: evergreen and herbaceous. One form, wrongly known in Britain as *Iris wattii* Baker, considered an hybrid, similar to *I. confusa* Sealy and often mixed up with it, is almost certainly a true species, but needs to be properly investigated.

Although there is a general idea that all the larger *Lophiris* species will interbreed across the genus *Iris*, in practice only *I. tectorum* Maxim. will do so. Unfortunately this species is very susceptible to virus infection which, given suitable conditions, it can survive indefinitely. However, it passes this characteristic on to its hybrids so that the presence of the virus is a fairly reliable indicator where the breeding of such a hybrid is in doubt.

I. gracilipes A.Gray, *I. latistyla* Y.T. Zhao and *I. tenuis* Watson have totally different leaf morphology and cultural requirements from the other *Lophiris* and seem to need serious consideration as possibly belonging to some different category in spite of the crests on their falls. In fact, all the members of the section seem to need extensive reconsideration.

