

## Iceberg

Gray squirrels busily gathered plump acorns as browning elm leaves swirled across the Marin Art & Garden lawn, the Rose Garden now in the lengthening shadows of an Indian summer afternoon. I had come for inspiration for our last Rose of the Month column. The difficulty is not to be influenced by favoritism or personal bias, or to pick a rose with unique attributes, but impossible to grow. My choice wasn't all that difficult. I settled comfortably on 'Iceberg'.

The German hybridizer Kordes has given the rose world numerous world-class roses but none can compare with 'Iceberg', which he introduced in 1958, more than 60 years ago. As Shakespeare reminds us, "That which we call a rose by any other name would smell as sweet." So too it is with 'Iceberg'. The Germans call it 'Schneewittchen' and the French, 'Fee des Neiges'. To make matters even more confusing, in 1901 the French hybridizer Lamberts introduced a white polyantha named 'Schneewittchen'. But don't worry, just ask for 'Iceberg'. Everyone will know what you mean.

'Iceberg' received the well-deserved, World's Most favorite Rose" designation in 1983. For more than a half a century 'Iceberg' has been one of the most popular and widely grown roses. In 1968 a climbing 'Iceberg' was brought to market, which has greatly added to its universal appeal and varied uses. 'Iceberg' is classified as a floribunda but actually is a cross of a hybrid Musk ('Robert Robin') and a hybrid Tea ('Virgo').

'Iceberg' is a tall bush with clean light greens leaves and covers itself almost constantly with cluster flowers of stark white blooms, and cool weather brings an alluring touch of pale pink. In warmer climates, 'Iceberg' is known to bloom year-round. The flowers are long lasting, both in the garden and when cut. All this, plus a good fragrance, extremely healthy and virtually disease resistant. 'Iceberg' also can tolerate shade extremely well. Against my admonitions, Janet planted a half dozen along a shady border. Much to my surprise, and her delight, they have simply thrived there. A touch of mildew from time to time and perhaps a hint of blackspot might be all that holds 'Iceberg' back from a perfect "10" rating.

In our garden we use climbing 'Iceberg' on arbors, trellis, and gates. Its serves as a six-foot high border along a shady walkway and stands proudly and productively as a bush. I stopped to count. My goodness, we have eighteen 'Iceberg's and love them all.

'Iceberg' - A rose for all reasons, a rose for all Seasons.

By Gary Scales

Edited for the website by Nanette Londeree, March 2020