



# HENDRY HERALD

JAMES E. HENDRY CHAPTER

of the AMERICAN HIBISCUS SOCIETY

WHEN YOU GARDEN, YOU GROW [hendrychapterhibiscus.com](http://hendrychapterhibiscus.com) JULY 2022



# HAPPY FOURTH!

GOD BLESS THE USA!

**HAVE YOU RENEWED YOUR MEMBERSHIP? NOW IS THE TIME!**

This is the most frequently asked question of hibiscus growers! *"Help! The leaves on my hibiscus plant are turning yellow. What's wrong with it?"*

INFORMATION from Hidden Valley Hibiscus Growers & Hybridizers of Exotic, Tropical Hibiscus

<http://www.hiddenvalleyhibiscus.com/care/yellowleaves.htm>

## Hibiscus Plant Care

### Yellow Leaves on Hibiscus

Don't panic, yellow leaves on hibiscus are normal. They look like something is wrong, but they are usually just a warning, a call for help, and not a sign of impending death.

**Hibiscus leaves turn yellow and drop from the plant due to stress.** The stress can be of any type, and figuring out what kind of stress is the challenge for the gardener. We cannot tell you exactly what is wrong with the plant without knowing a lot more than you are likely to be able to tell us. YOU have to think about it, and when you are pretty sure you have determined the cause, then you can take action to relieve the stress on your hibiscus. This article is intended to help you figure it out what is wrong.

Stresses that can cause yellow leaves on hibiscus include:

#### 1. Not Enough Water

In warm conditions hibiscus need a lot of water, even every day or more than once a day if it's really hot or windy. Self-watering pots can be an excellent way to avoid this type of stress. A watering system controlled by a timer is another way for gardens with large numbers of plants.

#### 2. Too Much Water

Yes, hibiscus can also be given too much water when the weather is cool or overcast. Hibiscus like to be moist but not sopping wet and if they don't need the water due to cold or dark conditions then too much will stress the root system.

#### 3. Too Hot

This is related to water but please take note on super hot summer days that hibiscus will need lots of water to keep all the big lush leaves well supplied. If they don't get enough they react by dropping leaves (that turn

yellow first) so that they don't need as much water.

#### **4. Too Cold**

Hibiscus are tropical plants that thrive in the same temperatures that people like, 65-85°F (18-29°C). Like us, they will survive, but they will not like temperatures down to freezing and up to 110°F (38°C). If they get too cold or are placed in a cold drafty window, they can react with yellow leaves.

#### **5. Too Much Direct Sunlight**

Hibiscus like sunlight but just as most people like moderate amounts of it so do hibiscus. Too much sun places stress on hibiscus that are not used to it and they can react with yellow leaves or big white spots on leaves. The white spots are similar to sunburn on us. They won't kill the plant but will cause it to shed leaves.

#### **6. Too Little Sunlight**

Light is the source of life for plants such as hibiscus. If they do not get enough to support all the big lush leaves they will drop some of their leaves (which turn yellow first) so that they don't need to support so many.

However, that means that there is less green chlorophyll left to support the needs of the rest of the plant so it may continue to decline until there are only a few leaves left on the plant.

#### **7. Insects, Particularly Spider Mites**

[Spider mites](#) are tiny spiders that look like little crabs under magnification. Usually you cannot see spider mites with the naked eye but do they ever leave a mark on hibiscus leaves! First you may see mottling of the leaves which begin to look dirty and then tired. The underside of leaves will show marks made when the mites suck the juices from the leaves. As the infestation gets worse you will see small spider webs under the leaves and at the top of stems. Leaves will yellow and fall off the plant and the entire plant will look stressed. If left untreated, spider mites can cause every leaf on the plant to fall. It takes hibiscus weeks to recover from a bad spider mite infestation so it is best to take action as soon as possible.

#### **8. Too Windy**

Most of us do not realize the stress that wind places on plants. Wind dries them out and the result is yellow leaves.

#### **9. Improper Nutrition or pH ~ Chlorosis**

This is a different condition, called [Chlorosis](#) and the yellow is a different yellow. The leaves will remain partly green and partly yellow when there is a nutrition problem. Leaves almost always fall off the plant after turning solid yellow. If they do not turn completely yellow nor fall off, then it is likely that the problem is a lack of essential nutrients. This can be due to no fertilizer applied or due to a pH level of the soil that is too high or too low. The leaves do not turn a bright yellow all over if this is the case nor do they drop off. Such problems can be corrected by using fertilizer and/or amending the soil with substances that will neutralize the pH. Consult a nursery professional at a local garden center if this is the case.

#### **10. Pesticide Use**

This is not a common problem but overuse of pesticide or using the wrong pesticide or too strong a pesticide or spraying in the hot sun of mid day can also cause leaf problems. If you have applied pesticide recently this may be the problem but if you used the same type at the same strength and done so in morning or evening then it is most likely one of the other stress problems above.

Once you have reviewed all the possible problems and decided on a likely source of the stress the cure is to remove the stress. Sometimes it is already done, as when you have watered thoroughly after neglecting to do so during a heat wave. There is no saving the yellow leaves that WILL fall off but the good news is that hibiscus will quickly grow back new green leaves when the stress is removed. Sometimes it becomes necessary to prune back a stem that has lost all of its leaves except for a few at the top. Pruning causes a cascade of plant growth hormones to enter the bare stem and stimulates new growth on the remaining part of the stem after pruning. This is a final solution if all else fails but it is best to remove the cause of stress first and to feed and water the plant well since that may be all it will take to get new growth on your hibiscus.

Yellow leaves are not the worst thing in the world. Sometimes the situation will correct itself, other times you need to correct the stressful condition. The hibiscus will do its part by reacting to the improved condition by no longer dropping leaves and often by regrowing new ones to replace any that were lost. Good luck with your growing and gardening and by all means have fun with it!

## **DON'T FORGET HY'S WAY FOR THE SUMMER MONTHS**

In this hot weather hibiscus need at least an inch of water twice a week. To determine if your sprinkler is delivering that amount place several cups in the garden area and run the sprinkler for 15 minutes. If there is now 1/2 inch of water in the cup you need to run the sprinkler for a half of an hour to deliver one inch of water to the area. Also to determine if you are getting water to the plant take an 18 inch stick (like a plant stake or dowel rod) and stick into the ground to see how deep you are watering by the wetness on the stick. With hot weather it is important to have at least 3 inches of mulch to keep roots cool and the garden area watered. Do not fertilize until you have watered the plants and water again after fertilizing to avoid burning the roots. If you have leaves that are chewed, use snail bait (from Lowes, Home Depot or local hardware). Remember if there are ants on your plants you may have aphids. If so, treat with horticultural oil or horticultural soap and repeat twice one week apart to kill the new generations. Most important, after all your work on your garden, sit and enjoy your garden with a cool drink and relax. **A garden shows that you have faith in the future. HY LANS**

### ***Prepare your Landscape Before a Storm Threatens - advice from Driftwood***

#### **PRE-HURRICANE**

Secure lawn furniture, hanging plants, outdoor decor, grills, trash cans or anything that might blow away or become a projectile

Keep trees and shrubbery trimmed

Strategically remove diseased/damaged trees or branches, and always monitor and remove coconuts from Coconut Palms

Trim limbs that are close to structures to prevent damage (ie; home/pool cages etc.)

Check for loose or clogged rain gutters. Keep a supply of stakes and rope on hand for post hurricane clean-up

Turn off sprinklers

#### **POST-HURRICANE**

Stake trees and shrubs ASAP

If you've had saltwater intrusion resulting from coastal flooding, rinse the affected areas with freshwater.

Always be careful of downed power lines.

When appropriate turn on sprinklers.

For the most up-to-date hurricane preparedness information in your area rely on the following: Collier County Emergency Management [www.colliergov.net](http://www.colliergov.net) or Lee County Emergency Operations Center at [www.leeecoc.com](http://www.leeecoc.com)

### ***May you always have Love to Share, Cash to Spare, And Friends who Care***

#### To Do List

- During these extremely hot and dry periods , deeply water your plants at least two to three times a week. The best time to water is always in the early morning to mid-morning.
- Take a walk around your landscape beds and look for signs of potential problems, like insect or fungus damage.
- Selectively prune/trim and pinch back annuals for new growth during the fall growing season. Prune Roses for their fall flush and blooms. Prune your Knockout Roses and other shrub roses like you would an evergreen hedge. Selectively prune the rest of your more hybridized roses.
- Fertilize and deeply water all landscape plants after pruning. Make sure to use a slow release granule for continued feeding throughout the fall growing season. We recommend going a little lighter on your fertilizer ratios than you do in the spring. Look at the recommended full dosage on the label and go between 1/2 and 3/4 of that amount this time of year.
- Begin **PLANNING** new plantings in your landscape. Remember fall is the best time to plant in the southwest Florida area.

CLINT OSTER	JULY 7
AL McMEEKIN	JULY 20
TERRY MARTIN	JULY 24
DEBBIE SOWARD	JULY 25



WHITE WINGS - often confused with White Versicolor

'White Wings' is another old cultivar that has large white flowers (with a dark red center eye) and dark green leaves. Its long floral tube is white and pink with red stigma pads. It forms a large, full bush, growing up to 4.5m in height. It is similar to, and often confused with the cultivar 'White Versicolor', which has yellow stigma pads rather than red.

Many nurseries have these cultivars mislabeled. In the 1950s and '60s, 'White Wings' was commonly sold in the U.S., but it has become increasingly difficult to find. If you find it, it is worth growing! DAMON VEACH



### MESSAGE from President JACK BERNATZ

Having gone through the "Pandemic" that rendered most of us immobile, we lived with the uncertainty of staying safe & healthy. We developed skills of carrying on with our communication via Zoom. Our member familiar with Zoom meetings enlightened our membership and thanks to Beth Meehan, we carried on. We even had email plant sales, thanks to Charlotte Harff, while keeping our sights on the mission of our chapter. Through the difficulties we developed methods to cope, keeping us assertive spreading the good news of the beauty of the exotic hibiscus!

Coming out of our limited confinement, we managed to grow our Chapter to 89 members. Not just statistics! We have many new members that have joined and taken on responsibilities that makes our Chapter so enlightened and active. Along with presenting a warm & fuzzy atmosphere, it is a group of people you would very much like to be with.

We have along with our Award winning Newsletter by editor Barbara Oster, enhanced recognition of our Chapter through Web Site presence, Social Media involvement, Face Book, along with written contributions to our newsletter and a central place to store pictures of our magnificent blooms thanks to Cathy Dunn, for her research and direction.

Another rapidly growing development has been for a number of JEH members, wearing our bright orange, logo embroidered shirts, to visit other State Chapters at their shows, participating in bloom presentation as well as observing to complete their Judges training. Their impact has been quite impressive with the # of bloom awards brought back. Thanks to the "Orange Shirt Gang" consisting of Jill Breslin, Valarie Costa, Micki Dougherty, Nancy Kopp, Terry Martin, Beth Meehan, Wanda Schmoyer, along with others. They are very much involved in other Chapters Shows and activities. The value of this cooperation and involvement is immeasurably noticed and appreciated.

It is just so exciting to see all of the positive things that the confinement of the Pandemic has generated. We took advantage of every issue, taking a circumstance, studying the options, then implementing our solution without missing a step. People stepping up when the issue presented itself allowing continuation. Examples; Web Site enhancement and needing a webmaster; the secretary's position on the board; the completion of our plant purchase when shipment of our plants needed alternate delivery; changing the venue for our Annual Show and Plant Sale.

Looking at our Chapter today versus one year ago, seems almost unrecognizable, a closer look will bring recognition, the bright orange shirts with embroidered logo are outstandingly significant in recognition of our Chapter. What a warm friendly picture that presents!

I want to share how great our chapter thinks it is to have a very active, positive, and knowledgeable AHS President, how this generates a positive message throughout the Society. Thank You Todd Alvis! Enjoy the AHS Convention, We most certainly will enjoy hearing about it and seeing all the pictures. Hello to all, JEH Chapter of the AHS. JACK BERNATZ, President



## SELECTING NATIVE PLANTS by CATHY DUNN



If you want to enjoy a garden that provides many benefits with minimal effort, then native plants are your best bet! Plants that are adapted to local climate and soil conditions where they naturally occur are classified as native plants. A “Florida Native Plant” refers to a species occurring within the state boundaries prior to European contact; most native plants were spread by wind, birds or other natural means. These beneficial plants produce nectar, pollen and seeds that provide food for native butterflies, insects, birds and other animals. In addition, native plants do not need fertilizers and generally require fewer pesticides than other plants. Native plants also require less water and are more apt to help prevent erosion.

Native plants encompass a wide range of species, from wildflowers to ferns, groundcovers to grasses, palms to vines, and trees and shrubs. You can easily incorporate native plants in your existing landscape, and for a truly Florida Friendly Yard you can convert your entire landscape to natives! One of the primary reasons to enjoy native plants is that they preserve the character of the Florida landscape. Familiar native plants include Buccaneer, Royal, Florida Thatch and Silver Saw Palmetto palms; Florida Maple, Gumbo Limbo, Live Oak, Mahogany and Slash Pine trees; Carolina Jasmine and Coral Honeysuckle vines; Fakahatchee and Muhly grasses; Beautyberry, Clusia, Cocoplum, Coontie, Firebush, Sea Grape and Wax Myrtle shrubs, and Beach Sunflower, Peperomia, Sunshine Mimosa groundcovers.

How do you go about identifying appropriate native plants for your landscape? There are several excellent Florida specific resources available to help you:

- Florida Friendly Landscaping (<http://floridayards.org>) provides resources to help you plan your garden with native plants. You can start with the Florida-friendly landscaping Interactive Tutorial and Quiz, and download the Florida Yards and Neighborhoods handbook for more detailed information. The site also includes an excellent photo gallery of Florida-friendly yard examples and links to resources offered through your local UF/IFAS County Extension office.
- The Florida Native Plant Society ([www.fnps.org](http://www.fnps.org)) is dedicated to promoting the preservation, conservation and restoration of the native plants and native plant communities of Florida. Their web site provides maps of native gardens and native plant “Hotspots” throughout Florida as well as resources including books and downloadable documents. A comprehensive list of native plants by county also allows you to select plants that are appropriate for your area. You can also browse the database by viewing all plants, find specific plants, find plants for a specific county, site conditions or purpose, or plants that are helpful in attracting butterflies or wildlife.
- The University of Florida/IFAS Gardening Solutions site ([gardeningsolutions.ifas.ufl.edu](http://gardeningsolutions.ifas.ufl.edu)) provides many general publications on Native Plants as well as a comprehensive list of native plants with specific information on purchasing, planting, and maintaining the plants.
- Plant Real Florida ([plantrealflorida.org](http://plantrealflorida.org)) is dedicated to helping you add native plants to your landscape and bring home the beauty of *real* Florida. Their website includes a large database of Florida native plants, numerous publications about native plants, and a listing of professional native plant landscapers and native nurseries for the entire state.

Incorporating Florida native plants into your landscape will provide rewards for you, your neighbors and our native birds, butterflies and wildlife. Who wouldn't support plants that mean less work for you, more compliments from your friends, and the added benefit of sustaining our native wildlife? I hope you will be inspired to explore our many native plants and give your garden the true Florida touch!

Cathy Dunn, Florida Master Gardener  
Garden Club of Cape Coral and James E. Hendry Member



Head Table at our 69th Annual Show. 2023 will be our 70th Annual Show to be held at FIRST ASSEMBLY OF GOD CHURCH on Summerlin Road in Fort Myers on April 30, 2023. You will want to be part of the excitement, I'm sure, so be sure to join today.

Also there is a huge plant sale coming up on October 22, 2022 at Rotary Park in Cape Coral in conjunction with the Tropical Plant Sale. JEH will be selling 350 tropical hibiscus and of course, member discount will apply. Watch your Hendry Herald for details.

Our next **chapter meeting will be September 11** with experts on hand to swing you into *CARING for exotic hibiscus plants, from soil, potting ( when to repot and the proper size of pots ), planting in the ground & when to do so, pesticides, fertilization , pruning and the basic concepts of the various means of propagation. (seeds, cuttings, grafting, air-layering etc )*

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DUES ARE NOW DUE FOR THE 2022-2023 YEAR that runs to June 30, 2023

If you haven't sent in your \$40 check made to AHS, please do so today. Thanks.

NAMES \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS Street \_\_\_\_\_

City, Zip, State \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE Home \_\_\_\_\_ Cell \_\_\_\_\_

BIRTHDAY Month \_\_\_\_\_ Day \_\_\_\_\_

**MAKE \$40 CHECK TO AHS (AMERICAN HIBISCUS SOCIETY)  
and mail to our treasurer:  
BARB YEKEL, 5541 HAMLET LANE, FORT MYERS FL 33919**

If you signed up at our annual show and sale in April, you are already paid for the coming year.  
Thanks.



barbara oster, Editor

