



# HENDRY HERALD

JAMES E. HENDRY CHAPTER

the AMERICAN HIBISCUS SOCIETY

WHEN YOU GARDEN, YOU GROW [hendrychapterhibiscus.com](http://hendrychapterhibiscus.com) FEBRUARY 2023

## WELCOME TO 2023

When you joined the James E. Hendry Chapter of the American Hibiscus Society, you probably were hoping to grow bigger, better and more colorful tropical hibiscus! We hope, this year, to guide you to that goal.

Attend our meetings. Learn from the pros, make new friends, and enjoy our group!

## ANNOUNCING!

Our long-time President, **JACK BERNATZ** has resigned his position due to personal reasons. He has requested that **BETH MEEHAN** fill in as interim president until the May elections. The board accepted his resignation and approved **BETH** as our new president. Join with the board in wishing **BETH** welcome. She is already chairing the 70th Annual Show and Sale to be held this spring and is busy making plans to carry James E. Hendry Chapter into 2023 with vim and vigor.

## HAPPY VALENTINE'S DAY

May your days be filled with peace, hope, and joy this new year!  
May your gardens grow green and your flowers bloom abundantly with magnificent color.

QUOTED FROM DRIFTWOOD GARDENS



## HY'S WAY FOR FEBRUARY

### PRUNING YOUR HIBISCUS

**When To Prune:** In Southwest Florida, the time to prune hibiscus is **late February**. You do not want to prune when a frost is likely. The frost can kill tender new growth. Remember, **blooms grow on new growth**, not old growth. Pruning results in more branches which results in more flowers. Pruning allows you to shape the plant.

*Pruning is not a black art. It is simple-when you know how.*

- Prune at the right time.
- Prune to an outward pointing bud. This is directional pruning.
- Cut away all dead, all crossing and weak-looking wood.
- Make all cuts clean and smooth. Use a clean sharp pruner.
- Do not leave stubs above a bud as the stub will decay.
- Remove all horizontal branches within 4 inches of the ground.
- You can remove a third of any branch (leaving at least two nodes) without hurting the plant.

## How To Prune:

(1) Remove all dead wood. Using a fingernail or small knife, scrape away ¼ to ½ inch of the brown outer bark of a branch you are not sure about. A live branch will be bright green underneath the bark; if the branch is brown or light tan the branch is dead. Remove the dead part of the branch down to where it is green.

(2) The general rule in pruning hibiscus is to cut the plants back one-third all over. You can leave a few old stems intact that will provide a few early blooms.

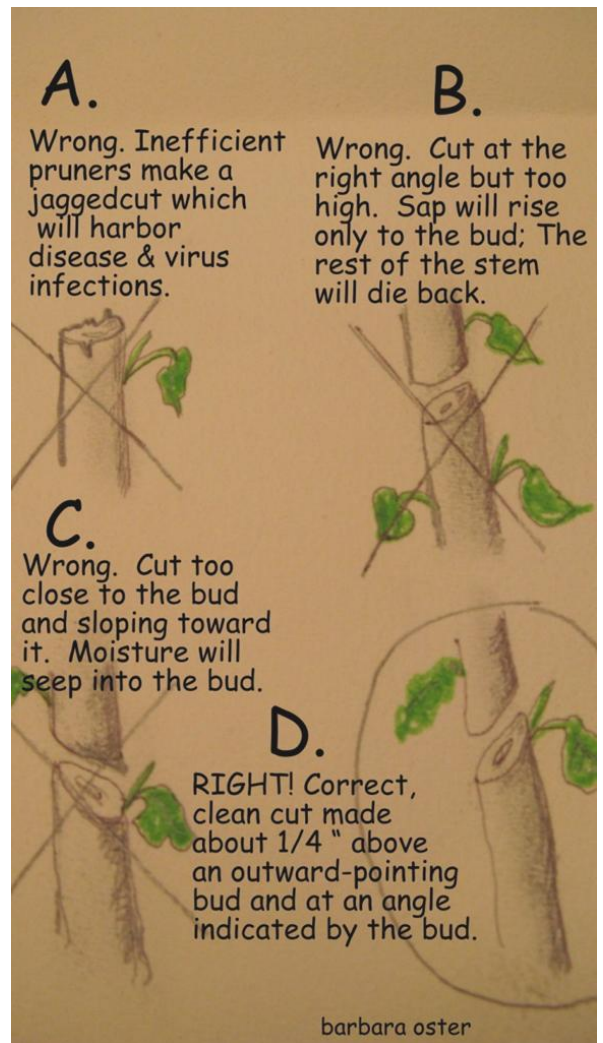
(3) Prune at a node. So what is a node? It is a definite bump on the surface of the stem where a branch is growing or had grown. The best node is one that has a leaf growing from it. If all leaves have already fallen off, just choose a node pointing outward and up. Be sure you cut ¼ inch above the node at a 45 degree angle to shed water.

(4) Remember that blooms occur on new growth and not old growth. Pruning causes new branches and therefore more blooms. After pruning, apply a foliage fertilizer in ½ the suggested label strength.

(5) Very old bushes with old hard wood, large thick branches and small flowers need rejuvenation by drastic pruning. You may need a pruning saw. Saw them off two feet from the ground on a slant outward. A whole new plant, bushy and with more flowers will result.

**After pruning do not overwater. Because of the loss of leaves, the plant cannot cope with excess water. Also, be careful to not over fertilize until the plant has grown leaves.**

We are forever grateful to Dr. Hy Lans for sharing his knowledge of hibiscus with the James E. Hendry Chapter. Hy passed away in 2013. He was the author of a wonderful hands-on hibiscus manual **HIBISCUS FOR YOUR GARDEN - IN-GROUND AND CONTAINER** that is for sale at our chapter meetings or by contacting Barbara at [barbaramo@earthlink.net](mailto:barbaramo@earthlink.net) for \$10.



## **GREAT LEADERS DON'T TELL YOU WHAT TO DO....THEY SHOW YOU HOW IT'S DONE**

CHARLOTTE HARFF	FEBRUARY 8
TOM DiBELLA	FEBRUARY 12
JERRY McINTYRE	FEBRUARY 19
JUDY WEYANT	FEBRUARY 23
CAROL DOWNING	FEBRUARY 25



If you haven't already, please let me know your birthday!  
[barbaramo@earthlink.net](mailto:barbaramo@earthlink.net)

We want to celebrate!

### Garden Council Meeting 1/13/2023

"Secrets of a Flower Eater" was the program for the January 13, 2023 meeting. Heather Cook Gonzales presented a very informative and interesting talk. We tasted a hibiscus flower, a Turks Cap. The stem end was sweet. We also tried Gem Marigold, much smaller than typical Marigold, and a number of other edible flower samples Heather brought with her.

Berne Davis Gardens are open Tuesday and Thursdays 10:00-1:00. A new area is being developed featuring cactus and succulents. During February and March there will be artists painting in the garden. The Strolling Flower Show will be April 7<sup>th</sup>, later this year to give more time to downtown to recover from Ian. All clubs can have a table to advertise their clubs. Contact Sue Barrow. submitted by JOYCE YATES

Some welcome advice from Father Gerlich of New Orleans. He worked with the Dupont Nursery on their hybridizing program, which has produced **many** outstanding blooms before he was reassigned.

## Spring Hibiscus Pruning

If you are fortunate enough to have had your hibiscus in a greenhouse or in a warm garage or carport, you may be looking at a tall, gawky plant with few leaves and long branches. You now have a choice -- let the plant fill out and bloom or prune.

Let me offer this consideration to you fortunate few . . . . Hibiscus are tropicals and in tropical climates they may be pruned at any time of the year. Here in our more temperate climes, major pruning generally occurs during Spring. Of course, hibiscus



heavily pruned hibiscus

plants can be lightly pruned throughout the growing season into late Summer or early Fall. This promotes summer blooming, as **hibiscus bloom only on new wood**. Moreover, light pruning by pinching back the branch tips, or tip pruning, during the growing season encourage a more dense growth habit. Nonetheless, as a rule, springtime should be the only time for rejuvenation pruning. This entails a major cutting back and shaping of the plant to prepare it for the blooming season.

***The trick is to cut the plant back early enough so that it has the maximum amount of time to recover before the show season begins.***

If one waits too long, it could be mid-summer before the plant starts producing blooms and then the heat becomes a problem. If one prunes too early, the new growth can be easily damaged by a late frost or a sudden cold snap. I usually suggest that people keep an eye on the weather reports. If it looks like an early Spring, prune early. If the weather follows a cold pattern, then wait until it is a bit warmer. In general, I tell people that, for the greater New Orleans area, the best time to start spring pruning is during the period between the blooming of the Japanese magnolias and the flowering of the azaleas. That's a time window from mid-January to mid-February. Remember, this is only a "rule of thumb." Of course, you can prune later than mid-February, and sometimes work schedules make that necessary. But the later you prune, the fewer blooms you will have early on in the season.

Should you choose to do a major pruning on your plants, it is helpful to leave at least one or two branches intact on your rarer cultivars. That way you will have some scion wood to share.

**Be sure not to overwater your newly pruned plant.** With the decrease in foliage, it needs less water. Too much water will stress the plant, and likely suffocate the roots. Cold, damp and oxygen-poor soil encourages the growth of fungus and not hibiscus! Before pruning hibiscus, make sure your pruning shears are sharp and clean, preferably sterilized with alcohol gel, Clorox or some other disinfectant. This is important to prevent the spread of any disease agents from affected branches, should any be present.

Charles Black's website, Hidden Valley Hibiscus, offers a helpful description of the pruning process. Consult his website for further information.

**ROBERT GERLICH, S.J.**



**FEBRUARY 12 - GENERAL MEETING**

## JEH CHAPTER MEETING January 8, 2023

The meeting was called to order by **BARBARA OSTER** at 2:00. Dennis and Dyanne Downing were visiting. The pledge was conducted. President **JACK BERNATZ** has resigned his position and asked BETH MEEHAN to complete the year. It was approved at the Board Meeting. **BETH** was sworn in as interim president by **VALERIE COSTA**.

Beth Wild from the Community Co op came to thank us for our \$2000 donation. She told us her organization is run on contributions.

**MICKI DOUGHERTY** introduced our speaker, Tony Mauriello, who spoke on pollinators. If there are many pollinators you have a healthy ecosystem. Some examples of pollinators are bees, butterflies, flies and wind. Honey bees visit 5,000,000 flowers to make 1 pint of honey. Pollinators need food/nectar, shelter/vegetation, and water/an easy and consistent access. An important rule to remember is Right Plant, Right Place. Plant in clusters and use mulch, not colored.

**TERRY MARTIN** ran the mini flower show:

Amateur single:	<b>CATHY DUNN</b>	Climax
Double seedling:	<b>VALERIE COSTA</b>	Stolen Kiss x Nitroexpress hybridized by Don Bernard
Regular seedling:	<b>VALERIE COSTA</b>	Erin Rachael X Double Pink
Mini single:	<b>MICKI DOUGHERTY</b>	Lavish Kingdom
Mini double:	<b>NANCY KOPP</b>	Bayou Rose
Single:	<b>MICKI DOUGHERTY</b>	Black Dragon
Double:	<b>DIANNE &amp; PAUL ZINSZER</b>	Hawaiian Flame

\*The meeting was adjourned, the 50/50 was drawn. \$62 was divided between the treasury and the winner.

Respectfully submitted, **JOYCE YATES**, Secretary

## FEBRUARY 12 - GOOD MEETING - GARDEN CENTER 1:30

**UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA** <http://www.ufl.edu/> February

### What to Plant

**Annuals/Bedding plants:** Good performers in South Florida's mild winter include impatiens, verbena, dianthus, strawflower, and lobelia.

**Bulbs:** Many bulbs can be planted now. Divide large, crowded clumps. Provide adequate water for establishment. Some examples include Amazon lily, crinum, and agapanthus.

**Groundcovers:** Consider replacing areas of grass with drought-tolerant, low-maintenance groundcovers.

**Vegetables:** Winter vegetable gardening is in full swing. Last month to plant cantaloupes, cucumbers, eggplant, lettuce, peppers, spinach, and tomatoes for a late spring harvest. Protect crops in the unlikely event of a frost or freeze.

### What to Do

**Lawns:** Fertilize lawn grasses to improve color or coverage. Choose a fertilizer (not a "weed and feed") with no or very little phosphorus unless a soil test indicates the need for it. A fertilizer with controlled-release nitrogen provides longer-lasting results

**Roses:** Prune roses this month to remove damaged canes and improve the overall form. After pruning, fertilize and apply a fresh layer of mulch. Blooming will begin 8–9 weeks after pruning

**Shrubs and palms:** Fertilize shrubs and palms by spreading fertilizer evenly over the soil surface and watering it in. Follow with a fresh layer of mulch to conserve moisture and reduce weeds. Delay pruning any cold-damaged branches until new growth starts.

**Avocados and mangos:** Disease-susceptible varieties of avocado and mango may require applications of copper fungicide.



***Good friends are like quilts - they age with you, and yet, they never lose their warmth. Take good care of them!***

**Replace smoke alarm batteries once a year-your birthday is a good day-easy to remember. Also, detectors should be replaced every 10 years. info from LCEC**

## WHERE CAN I GET GARDENING HELP? CATHY DUNN



Even the most experienced gardener sometimes encounters a problem in their landscape that they can't resolve. Have you ever wondered who can provide local, professional assistance for your gardening questions? The answer is that we are very fortunate to have incredible resources through the University of Florida Institute of Food and Agricultural Services (UF/IFAS), a federal-state-county partnership dedicated to developing knowledge in agriculture, human and natural resources, and the life sciences. Employing more than 2,000 faculty and staff statewide, including 375 Extension Agents, UF/IFAS offices are located in each of Florida's 67 counties and at the University of Florida main campus in Gainesville. So, no matter where you live in the Sunshine State, you have resources in your county that can provide expert assistance for all your gardening questions!

You may ask, what kind of help can UF/IFAS provide and how easy is it to access this assistance? The answer is that the variety of services provided is extensive, and ranges from research and self-identification on the web to a walk-in clinic in Ft. Myers that is open 5 days a week. If you enjoy researching and have time to explore the diagnostics site on the internet you can find hundreds of links to blogs and publications that offer pictures and detailed information. If you're not feeling adventurous, you can contact an expert by email and attach photographs and descriptions of your garden issue. And if you enjoy talking through a problem with an expert, visiting the Plant and Insect Diagnostic Clinic in Ft. Myers will provide you with the opportunity to get real-time answers to your questions.

For those who enjoy online research, IFAS Diagnostic Services (<https://diagnostics.ifas.ufl.edu/>) provides detailed information for just about every gardening question you can imagine:

**Plant Disease:** This section provides links for the EDIS (Electronic Data Information Source) database with links for hundreds of publications on topics ranging from Black Spot on Roses to Palm Problems. If you can't find an answer in the database, contact information is provided for experts who you can contact for more information.

**Insects:** You can find helpful slide shows on every kind of insect found in the garden, as well as contact information for the InsectID Lab in case you still can't identify your pest!

**Nematodes:** If you suspect nematodes are damaging your landscape, this section provides directions for submitting samples for analysis.

**Soil/Water:** This section provides online resources and details the process for submitting soil samples.

**Plant/Weed ID:** The recommended first step for Plant/Weed ID is to contact your local coop extension service; if they can't assist you with plant/weed ID, this section will provide detailed guidance for submitting your questions via email.

**Management:** Provides information on the Florida Plant Diagnostic Network, a diagnostic and reporting system that helps first detectors submit plant samples, images and detailed crop information for pest diagnosis.

If your smartphone serves as your preferred research device, The FFL (Florida Friendly Landscape) Plant Guide is available as an app for your smartphone, and will help you identify plants, growing conditions, and pests.

Accessing local experts is a great option if you enjoy more personalized assistance. Lee County residents can contact the Lee County Extension Office for expert assistance with garden-related questions. The Lee County Extension Office is located in Ft. Myers at 3410 Palm Beach Blvd and provides a Plant and Insect Diagnostic Clinic Monday through Friday from 9:00 AM – 12:00 PM and 1:00 PM – 4:00 PM. The clinic is staffed by Lee County Extension Agents and Florida Master Gardener Volunteers, and answers homeowners' gardening questions. The clinic provides help for walk-in, phone-in (239-533-4312), and e-mail ([lee@ifas.ufl.edu](mailto:lee@ifas.ufl.edu)) clientele, and also provides a basic soil and water testing service free to the citizens of Lee County.

Anyone who enjoys learning more about gardening is surely familiar with Stephen Brown, Horticulture Extension Agent, who is the resident horticultural expert in our area. Stephen writes a blog on the UF/IFAS site (<http://blogs.ifas.ufl.edu/leeco/author/brownsh/page/2/>) that has a wealth of helpful information. He also authors bi-weekly Sunday columns for the Ft. Myers News Press, and is active on Instagram ([lee\\_ufifas](https://www.instagram.com/lee_ufifas)) Stephen also answers email questions on gardening and landscape issues; you can contact him at [brownsh@leegov.com](mailto:brownsh@leegov.com).

No matter how you prefer to acquire information on gardening and landscaping solutions, you have a wide array of options here in Lee County! I hope you will take advantage of the breadth of knowledge and expertise that UF/IFAS offers – it is truly an invaluable asset for gardeners.

CATHY DUNN, , Garden Club of Cape Coral Member, JEH Chapter Member

# MESSAGE FROM RETIRING PRESIDENT JACK BERNATZ

Hello All,

Charlotte and I would like to share with you highlights of our wonderful adventure in JEH.

Began in 2006 with our permanent move to Cape Coral, Fl. Charlotte and I offered our time to help volunteering at Lee Memorial Hospital. That choice extended my life, and greatly influenced our direction for the rest of our gifted years. In the process of preparing to begin our volunteering, I discovered that my heart was coming to a rapid stop. I needed to install a pacemaker to continue my life.

With that taken care of and an ok from the doctors to enjoy unlimited physical activity. We began our volunteer service. Fortunately, while volunteering I was assigned to the cardiac care laboratory, where we met Barbara Oster. Of course, we immediately exchanged what was going on in our lives, then one day Barbara asked us if we would be interested in joining a group of Flower People that concentrated on the Hibiscus, a gorgeous flowering plant, the bloom had no fragrance. Barbara's bring us into the fold line was "It's a fun- loving group, that has a magnificent Holiday Party" and you don't have to do anything. Very convincing so we joined. Another thing that helped our decision was Charlotte had an 80-acre farm in Minnesota. She was known as the Flower Lady. Everything Barbara said was right-on, fun-loving group, wonderful holiday parties, and you could do whatever you wished in terms of participation.

Now we have reached an end to our gardening activities and feel we should once again alter our lifestyle, to be less active physically. We want you all to know that Charlotte & I are billed as a team and are very beneficial to one another in all we do. Therefore, if we both cannot experience and contribute comfortably, we must alter our activities accordingly.

I sincerely hope that even though abrupt, we departed so that The Chapter will smoothly move to a new chapter in the life of The James E. Hendry Chapter of the American Hibiscus Society. Know this! You all will be missed. We will stay in touch for we feel we have an investment that has proven its worth.

Thank You All. May 2023 be your best year yet! **JACK & CHARLOTTE**



Beth

## OUR NEW PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE – from BETH MEEHAN

First of all, let me say how excited I am to be chosen as your President. This is a great chapter filled with great people and I'm honored to hold this office. Together we will have a fantastic season! Please let me know of any suggestions you have that could help improve our meetings or chapter overall.

The highlight of our season will be our landmark 70<sup>th</sup> Annual show. A small leadership team has been assembled and our first meeting has been held. However, this team will need a lot of help from everyone. We want this show to be the best ever! So, when YOU are called to help, please say "YES".

We will also be forming a Nominating Committee in the near future. If you are able to give more of your time and talent to the chapter, please consider becoming an officer or a board director.



## February 12, 2023 JEH Meeting LET'S LEARN ABOUT APHIDS

A common insect pest for Hibiscus. Presented by **BETH MEEHAN**

One of the most common insect pests for our exotic hibiscus are APHIDS. Aphids can reproduce very quickly and if untreated will increase amazingly fast. Join us as we learn how to identify them. Various options on how to efficiently deal with them will also be discussed. Bring your questions

**HOW TO HANDLE, PACK and TRANSPORT BLOOMS TO A SHOW and HOW TO PREPARE BLOOMS for COMPETITION and JUDGING** Presentation by **MICKI DOUGHERTY & NANCY KOPP**, JEH Judges.

During this talk you will learn everything you need to know to take that first step as you nervously consider entering that beautiful bloom. There are a total of 8 Show opportunities in Florida alone this year. The two in February are the 11<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup>, There are two shows in March on the 11<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup>. **OUR 70<sup>th</sup> SHOW will be held in Fort Myers on April 29<sup>th</sup>** and finally three opportunities in May, on the 14<sup>th</sup>, 20<sup>th</sup> with the last show in Florida on May 27<sup>th</sup>.

\_\_\_\_\_Hear the interesting story of a former amateur who was going to throw out a bloom only to have it win Head Table! Experts and Florida state Winners from the JEH Chapter are always on hand to help members identify and enter their blooms!

Submitted by MICKI DOUGHERTY

barbara oster, editor

