



# HENDRY HERALD

**JAMES E. HENDRY CHAPTER**

**the AMERICAN HIBISCUS SOCIETY**

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

**AUGUST 13 - CHAPTER MEETING at GARDEN COUNCIL 1:30**



## **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 you 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 read. **A garden shows that you have faith in the future. HY LANS**

ADVICE from Dr. Lans worth repeating!

Wrap cans or bottles in a damp paper towel before you put them in the cooler or freezer—they'll get refreshingly cold much faster! Hint from VIVA Paper Towels



## **PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE from BETH MEEHAN**

Greetings everyone!

I hope you are having a great summer! The heat is certainly upon us and I hope you are keeping cool.

Living in south Florida means fighting insects is a constant battle. Special thanks to Valerie Costa, Cathy Dunn and Nancy Kopp! At our July meeting, these ladies gave wonderful advice and information on controlling the pests that love our plants.

A big "THANK YOU" to everyone who renewed their membership in our Chapter. If you have any suggestions on what you want to learn about or how we can improve our meetings, please email me at [bethmg2020@gmail.com](mailto:bethmg2020@gmail.com). I'd love to hear your suggestions!

Hope to see you at our next meeting!

August summer get together.

**AUGUST 13**

Garden Council Headquarters

Gather at 1:30, presentation starts at 2:00

Drinks provided, please bring a snack to share

You won't have great blooms if you don't have healthy plants. Join us to find out what you can do to help your plants thrive.

Marsha Crawford will show us an assortment of products that she uses to keep her plants healthy and happy.

These include products that promote healthy roots and supplements to correct common nutrition deficiencies. Hope to see you there! Beth

## BEST ADVICE from Father Robert Gerlich with comments from Buddy Short in the Mike Bernard Acadiana Chapter's newsletter. A must read:

Occasionally in this wonderful hobby you run across information that is so profound and right on the money that few, if any, changes or adjustments need to be made. Such is this article entitled "Defeating Summers Two Major Culprits". This article was written by our friend and New Orleans chapter Father Robert Gerlich. I have added a few personal comments in blue as most of these procedures have been tried by me with successful results. If possible, you should save this article so that you can refer to it on a continuing basis. IT IS THAT GOOD!!!! Read it well and don't hesitate to ask any questions you might have.....

### Defeating Summer's Two Greatest Killers: Spider Mites and Improper Watering

I wrote about these dual threats to our plants' health last year, but the threat remains. So, I thought it important to repeat my discussion as both mites and improper watering practices are prime causes of plant fatality during the summer heat.

From what I have been able to judge, the only creatures that flourish in our summer heat are the bugs! Hibiscus begin to languish as temperatures climb into the 90s. But as they struggle with the heat, the opportunistic bugs flourish. Heat and high, dry temperatures provide the ideal conditions for perhaps the most pernicious and damaging hibiscus pest -- spider mites. Our recent rains will help to hold down the mite populations, but they will spread quickly if we have an extended period of high pressure with its dry, hot temperatures.

Spider mites are not true insects, but tiny members of the arachnid family -- spiders. Nonetheless, they are terrible pests capable of causing serious damage to hibiscus as well as to any number of other plants. Their feeding leaves holes in the leaf surface from which moisture escapes, leading to rapid desiccation. The leaves yellow and dry quickly. If unchecked, the mites can even kill the plant — a fact most of us know from sad experience. In most cases, however, mites seldom kill large plants if treated. Smaller plants and young seedlings can quickly succumb to the toxic chemicals injected by mites as they feed. So, pay especially close attention to younger plants, checking under their leaves frequently for signs of mites. Spider mites, like all garden pests, are best dealt with early and with the use of as little chemical poisons as possible. Thus, I recommend that you make a habit of following this simple procedure:

- Monitor plants regularly. Isolate newly purchased plants until you are sure they are bug free.

We could all do a better job in this area. Don't let the excitement of a few new plants get the best of you. Always isolate first.

- Practice prevention. Since mites favor dry, dusty conditions, keep the plants free of dust and the humidity high to discourage them from multiplying. My best procedure is blasting or washing off my plant leaves each day.

- As soon as you find signs of an infestation, use the lowest toxic level of treatment. Watch for ants at the same time. Ants = aphids

- Move to more toxic chemical controls only if necessary and warranted. If you catch mites early and give them a daily blasting this may not be necessary. Pay attention.

- Rotate miticides (chemical pesticides specifically designed to kill mites) so that they remain effective. Mite infestations will quickly build up a tolerance to chemical poisons when misused or overused. Read directions carefully before using any chemical product and use recommended precautions!

The most low tech and least toxic approach to treating mites is to spray under the leaves of the plants with a sharp jet of water. This method is effective but it requires persistence. Yet even an occasional treatment will help retard the growth of mite populations. For best results, "hit" the plant twice a day for a week. I agree 100% with this statement. Blast away. Charles Black of Hidden Valley Hibiscus is a proponent of this method and offers a good discussion on mites on his website. See our website at [www.acadianahibiscus.com](http://www.acadianahibiscus.com) under Hibiscus doctor. Exceptional pictures. Minimally toxic sprays include insecticidal soaps and horticultural oils. One product, Mite-Rid, a neem oil based

product, claims good results, but I have never used it. In our heat, oil-based and soap sprays can be problematic. If they are applied too heavily, they suffocate the leaves, defoliating the plant. To avoid this from happening, spray in the “cool” of the evening and “wash off” the plants the next morning with a hose, especially when temperatures are over 85 degrees.

Should more aggressive chemical pesticides be necessary, consult your local nurseryman. Be sure and ask for a miticide. Not all chemicals are up to the challenge of mites. Among the newer products is Forbid. Some of our members who have used it report very positive results. Unfortunately, this product is very expensive. Fortunately, a little goes a long way. Even judicious spraying will not prevent leaves from yellowing and falling from an infested plant. Plants replace leaves once they have been damaged by spider mites, and chemical sprays will often hasten this process and sometimes contribute to it. Be patient, the plant will quickly send out a crop of new leaves to replace the fallen ones. If this doesn't happen, the damage to the plant may have been more serious than anticipated. If the branches appear dry, scrape the bark to determine whether the plant is still alive. If it is still a healthy green beneath the bark, allow it more time to recover. Just be sure not to overwater a defoliated plant as excessive watering will likely compromise the root system and end up killing the plant. I have had excellent results using Triazicide hooked to the hose for broad applications and, for individual applications, using a newly developed aerosol can of Triazicide or Ferti-Lome's indoor/outdoor bug spray.

### WATERING IN THE HEAT

Watering well is critical to the health of hibiscus, especially during our intense Summer heat. When possible, water in the mornings and let the plants dry out in the course of the day. This helps avoid fungus growth. But when you water, be sure to water thoroughly. One can easily rush along watering, fully convinced that the plants are being well watered. To make sure that I am doing a good job, I periodically turn a pot on its side and gently pull the plant out. Much to my dismay, I have found that on occasion the soil was wet only halfway down. The bottom half of the plant was still dry. This is an excellent procedure. Now do it! In short order, the plant's root system could suffer major damage unless this situation is corrected. Simply flooding the plant with more water can compact the soil and suffocate the root system. More plants probably die of overwatering than from lack of water. So, what is one to do?

If I have only a few plants, I like to place the problematic pots in a bucket of water, letting them absorb the water they need (this process requires 10 to 20 minutes depending on the size of the pot and the water level in the bucket). Let the air bubbles totally run out before you move on. But this method is impractical when one has lots of potted plants. So, if I know that a plant is having trouble getting enough water, I water twice. After watering normally, I move on to water my other plants. Then I return to the first plant and water it again now that it has had time to absorb the first dose of water. Generally this does the trick.

Here are a few little extras....since 95% plus of my plants are in pots, I have tried 3 additional ideas.

1) Find yourself some finely ground mulch (Gardenese has one called Soil Conditioner) and mulch the tops of your potting mix. That will help keep some moisture in your pots and keep most of your mix from totally drying out. That works for me.

2) If your plants are in pots, then, if possible, move them to a more shady location. 3 to 4 hours in this brutal sun is just too much. Move them and they will smile at you. Survival is more important than a few extra blooms!!

3) I'll bet you if your plants are in complete sun for most of the day then your leaves are bleaching out. Find that Epsom Salt and give each plant a monthly application. That will bring back some coloring in your leaves. Most members forget that.

And finally, if you want to try something different: double pot your plants. Example: place a 2 gallon pot inside a 3 gallon one. That extra insulation will be helpful.

Keep your plants happy and they will continue to reward you throughout the summer.

## DID YOU KNOW THIS?

I mean who knew all this?

Coffee filters .... Who knew! And you can buy 1,000 at the Dollar store for almost nothing.

1. Cover bowls or dishes when cooking in the microwave. Coffee filters make excellent covers.
2. Clean windows, mirrors, and chrome... Coffee filters are lint-free so they'll leave windows sparkling.
3. Protect China by separating your good dishes with a coffee filter between each dish.
4. Filter broken cork from wine. If you break the cork when opening a wine bottle, filter the wine through a coffee filter.
5. Protect a cast-iron skillet. Place a coffee filter in the skillet to absorb moisture and prevent rust.
6. Apply shoe polish. Ball up a lint-free coffee filter.
7. Recycle frying oil. After frying, strain oil through a sieve lined with a coffee filter.
8. Weigh chopped foods. Place chopped ingredients in a coffee filter on a kitchen scale.
9. Hold tacos. Coffee filters make convenient wrappers for messy foods.
10. Stop the soil from leaking out of a plant pot. Line a plant pot with a coffee filter to prevent the soil from going through the drainage holes.
11. Put a few in a plate and put your fried bacon, French fries, chicken fingers, etc on them. It soaks out all the grease.
12. Put baking soda into a coffee filter and insert into shoes or a closet to absorb or prevent odors.
13. Use them to strain soup stock and to tie fresh herbs in to put in soups and stews.
14. Use them to remove fingernail polish when out of cotton balls.



## CHAPTER MEETING J. E. HENDRY HIBISCUS SOCIETY

JULY 9, 2023

President **BETH MEEHAN** called the meeting to order at 2:00. The Pledge was completed, new members, and guests were introduced. It was announced that our newsletter, written by **BARB OSTER**, received Best Newsletter of all chapter newsletters published for the American Hibiscus Society.

Marsha Crawford donated a large hibiscus plant, a cross of Jim Hendry and Sacred Fire, which was named by the group as Hendry's Fire.

Our program was presented by **VALERIE COSTA, NANCY KOPP, and CATHY DUNN**. We learned about various insecticides to use on our hibiscus. Our presenters agreed that using the same insecticide all the time could cause insects to develop an immunity. Use one type for three weeks, switch to another for three weeks, then change again. When you find evidence of insects, it's important to isolate the type of insect. Neem oil should be "painted" on the insects, but don't use in the sun as it can "burn" the leaves.

Respectfully submitted, **JOYCE YATES**, Secretary

## AUGUST South Florida Gardening Calendar UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA IFAS What to Plant

**Annuals/Bedding plants:** The hottest days of summer limit planting to heat-tolerant vinca, coleus, salvia, and celosia.

**Bulbs:** Aztec lily, butterfly lily, walking iris, and spider lily can be planted any time of the year, even late summer.

**Herbs:** Herbs that can be planted from plants (not seeds) include bay laurel, ginger, Mexican tarragon, and rosemary

**Vegetables:** Start planting eggplant, okra, peppers, pumpkin, squashes, and tomatoes for the fall garden.

### What to Do

**Palms:** Check older fronds for yellowing as it may indicate a magnesium or potassium deficiency. Apply an appropriate palm fertilizer.

**Vegetables:** Solarize the vegetable garden for 4–6 weeks in preparation for fall planting if not done in July.

**Poinsettias:** Pinch back poinsettias and mums before the end of the month to allow time for buds to form for winter bloom.

**Ornamental plants:** Fertilize those plants that show signs of deficiencies. Rapid growth and leaching rains may result in nutrient deficiencies in some plants.

**Fertilizer Bans:** Numerous municipalities in south Florida prohibit the application of fertilizer to lawns and/or landscape plants during the summer rainy season (June–September). See if such an ordinance exists in your area.

**Annuals/Bedding plants:** Remove spent blooms, cut back, and fertilize flowering annuals and perennials to extend the bloom season into the fall months.





# MANAGING TREES DURING HURRICANE SEASON

## Cathy Dunn



As we are all painfully aware, hurricane season is officially here, extending from June 1 to November 30 with storms typically peaking in August and September. According to the University of Colorado, the 2023 Hurricane Season is forecast to have above normal activity, with a likely average of 18 named storms (winds of 39 mph or higher), including 9 major hurricanes. Hurricane-force winds can be extremely damaging to trees and can pose significant risks to property and personal safety. The University of FL has studied the effects of 10 major hurricanes starting with Hurricane Andrew in 1992, and their work provides excellent guidance for Florida homeowners for managing trees during hurricane season.

Some tree species resist wind better than others. Ian's destruction is still evident, and we can see for ourselves the effects of a major Cat 4 storm in our communities. In SW Florida, palm species survive hurricanes better than broadleaf or conifer trees. Other trees that have exhibited high wind resistance include Sand Live Oaks, Laurel Oaks, Southern Magnolias, Dogwood, Holly and Crape Myrtle. Trees that exhibit low wind resistance include Laurel Oaks, Southern Red Cedars, and Pines/Conifers. Native tree species also survive better in hurricanes and tend to lose less branches than exotic species such as melaleuca, Australian pine and queen palm. Older trees are also more likely to fail in hurricanes because they are more susceptible to insects and diseases that weaken branches. Trees with poor structure, such as two or more trunks of equal size, are also more vulnerable to wind damage. Unhealthy trees with decayed root systems, trunk decay or large dead branches are also more susceptible to wind damage.

What steps can you take to protect your trees (and your property) before a hurricane? When you plant new trees, choose tree species that have proven to be more wind resistant. More information on the best wind resistant trees to plant in SW Florida can be found on the University of Florida website Trees and Hurricanes at: [https://hort.ifas.ufl.edu/treesandhurricanes/selecting\\_southern.shtml](https://hort.ifas.ufl.edu/treesandhurricanes/selecting_southern.shtml). Monitor your mature trees for signs of decline and disease which could cause poor survival in hurricanes. Good structural pruning will ensure that your trees are less likely to suffer wind damage. Make sure that your trees have sufficient aerial space under power lines and near structures. Do not damage root systems during construction as compromised root systems make trees more vulnerable to wind damage. Consider removing damaged trees before hurricanes; a certified arborist can help determine which trees should be considered for removal. Also note that 'hurricane trimming' for palms is NOT recommended; palms are naturally able to survive high winds and removing fronds can actually be harmful to the palms.

I think we all have a pretty good idea of what to expect immediately after a hurricane, but it sometimes quite a while for damage to become evident. Pine trees may not show immediate damage but may decline over a period of 6 months to 2 years after windstorms. Carefully monitor pines as damage can be hidden; check closely for signs of stress such as insects or disease or sudden yellowing needles. Some trees may also lose all or some of their leaves, but they are not necessarily dead. Leaf loss is a strategy that trees employ to help them survive high winds. Over time the tree may leaf out again; trees such as Live Oak and Gumbo Limbo readily lose leaves and small branches and will leaf out again in a few months or in the spring of the following year. Palms may also lose all their fronds and still survive; the best species for wind resistance are sabal palms, Canary Island date palms and manila palms. Queen and Washington palms have exhibited lower survival rates during hurricanes in SW Florida. Allow at least 6 months after a hurricane for palms to put out new fronds, and check for hidden root, stem or bud damage.



**CATHY DUNN, MASTER GARDENER GARDEN CLUB OF CAPE CORAL MEMBER JEH VP**

# HIBISCUS CARE DIRECTIONS by CHRISTINE PETERSON

New member's (CHRISTINE) view. Fact checked by longtime member(BETH MEEHAN). Christine has joined the chapter recently, attended several meetings and has written up her guide for members new to the hibiscus world. President Meehan has checked article for accuracy.

## General Care

- Always isolate new plants.
- Always spray in early morning or late evening.
- Add spreader sticker and a little fertilizer to any sprays.
- Always wear PPE (especially a mask when spraying)
- When you pot up, add Bayer 12-month tree and scrub.
- Rotate products every 3 weeks

## Thrips

- Use spinosad (Cortera Conserve or Monterey, for example)
- Spray directly on buds
- Spray every 5-7 days, 3 times to break life cycle.
- Pull yellow buds – don't let them lay on the ground!

## Gall Midge

- Drench soil with Imidacloprid
- Pull yellow buds – don't let them lay on the ground!

## Mealy Bugs or Scale

- Use neem oil or horticultural oil directly on mealy bugs or scale.
- Can use 50% rubbing alcohol and 50% water.
- Can dip a q-tip in rubbing alcohol and place directly on mealy bugs.
- Drench soil with imidacloprid

## Spidermites

- Use a product labeled for spider mites
- Spray in the evening.
- Spray every inch of the plant: stems, leaves, twigs.
- Can also wash off spider mites.
  - If plants are in pots, lay them on their sides where the pots can be rolled over to all sides. If plants are in the ground, get a long enough hose that you can walk all around each plant.
  - Using a hard stream of water, wash every single millimeter of each plant - the top and bottom of every single leaf, branch, stem, and twig.
  - Wash the ground.

Repeat every 5-7 days, 4-5 times

## QUESTION - Can I start seeds now?

**ANSWER** - Too much heat will make them struggle and the ratio of losses will probably increase with temperatures over 85 F."

If you want to do germination in the summer, you may want to invest in a mist system set on a frequency to hold a high humidity at the seeds. You may also consider doing it in a conditioned space with bottom heat to control the soil temperature and a grow light or near a window to help once the plant emerges. I hope this helps. Good luck. FATHER GERLICH

**HOPE YOUR SUMMER IS GOING WELL! COME TO AUGUST MEETING AND LEARN A LOT FROM AN EXPERT. ENJOY YOUR 2023-2024 MEMBER BOOK. GOOD INFORMATION.**