



# HENDRY HERALD

**JAMES E. HENDRY CHAPTER**  
of the **AMERICAN HIBISCUS SOCIETY**

**WHEN YOU GARDEN, YOU GROW** [hendrychapterhibiscus.com](http://hendrychapterhibiscus.com) **JULY 2020**



“Just when the caterpillar thought the world was over, it became a butterfly.”

These excerpts came from an article from American Horticultural society on Learning To Love Bugs:

<https://ahsgardening.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Bugs-TAG-MJ20.pdf> submitted by DEB PETERSON

**THE ROLE OF GARDENERS** While the causes of insect decline are intertwined and complex, there are many practices gardeners can adopt to create healthy habitats for our smallest wildlife. First and foremost, we need a societal shift in how we approach landscaping. Perfectly manicured, weed-free turfgrass lawns **should be a thing of the past**. Intensive—and often unnecessary—water usage, overuse and misuse of pesticides and fertilizers, and emissions from lawn care equipment should be reason enough to forego or at least reduce the reliance on grass. On top of that, manicured turfgrass lawns are an ecologically sterile monoculture, offering little benefit to local fauna. Unfortunately, many homeowners find themselves bound to unsustainable landscaping practices because of strict homeowner’s association (HOA) and city codes.

**BE PROACTIVE WITH NEIGHBORS** There are lots of practical ways we can be more bug friendly in our gardens. But what if your neighbors don’t love your new-found approach to gardening for our many-legged friends? Neighbors might be quick to point out that native plant and pollinator gardens look messy or unkempt. They may also worry about these gardens attracting unwanted pests. The good news is, thoughtful design can create ecologically vibrant gardens that align with neighborhood expectations and community standards. Start by ensuring your native plant and pollinator gardens have appropriate borders. Bricks, stone, or natural wood borders can help maintain tidy edges and provide a more traditional garden aesthetic. Signage is also helpful for educating nit-picky neighbors and curious community members about your intentions. Having your garden certified as a Wildlife Habitat with the National Wildlife Federation or as a Monarch Waystation with Monarch Watch will allow you to put up signs for your landscape that showcase your commitment to wildlife. If your neighborhood still isn’t convinced, good old-fashioned conversation may help alleviate any neighborly concerns. Talk to neighbors about how your redesigned landscape reduces emissions, provides habitat and food for nesting and migratory birds, and supports healthy and vibrant food webs. It’s hard to argue with the fact that these bug friendly gardening practices help us all.

**A FEW GOOD REASONS TO RECYCLE-how long does it take trash to decompose?**

paper towel- 2-4 weeks: paper bag - 1 month: newspaper - 1.5 months: apple core - 2 months  
cardboard - 2 months: orange peel - 6 months: milk carton - 5 years: cigarette butt - 10-12 years:  
plastic bottle - 450 years: disposable diaper - 550 years: plastic bag - 200-1000 years.

INFORMATION FROM 5/15/2020 CAPE CORAL BREEZE

## 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.

### A p.s. on last month's "HY'S WAY" about Lubber Grasshoppers

Lubber grasshoppers (what a pain they are). We saw them coming out of the ground-I made up a little pail of water with a few hefty squirts of Dawn Dish Soap-used a rubber glove and handpicked those Lubber's. They die quickly! Now if we see one, we just handpick them. The little pail of water & gloves are in close reach, in the shade in the yard. Just thought I would let you know that this works! Sent to us by ANDREEA KELBER, a former member of JEH

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

### From COSTA FARMS - MAKE A STATEMENT IN YOUR GARDEN

If you want to make a statement, red flowers are the way to go. There's nothing subtle about a garden packed with fiery red blooms, such as [hibiscus](#), [canna](#), [salvia](#), [mandevilla](#), and [geranium](#). All these flowers love full sun, so they can be mixed and matched in sunny borders or containers. For shady areas, tuck in rosy-hued [begonias](#) and [coleus](#) to turn on the color.



# Defeating Summer's Two Greatest Killers: Spider Mites and Improper Watering by Father Robert Gerlich

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.
- Practice prevention. Since mites favor dry, dusty conditions, keep the plants free of dust and the humidity high to discourage them from multiplying.
- As soon as you find signs of an infestation, use the lowest toxic level of treatment.
- Move to more toxic chemical controls only if necessary and warranted.
- 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. Charles Black of Hidden Valley Hibiscus is a proponent of this method and offers a good discussion on mites on his website. It is worth a read.

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.

## 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 half way down. The bottom half of the plant was still dry. 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 of the size of the pot and the water level in the bucket). 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.

This past year Dupont nursery introduced a new product to their watering regimen to help improve root growth and to hinder the fungus that promotes root rot. The product is called *Watermax*. It is produced by a company called "Clean Grow." (Click on the link to find their home page: <http://www.cleangrow.com/watermax/>). According to their website: "Watermax is a noninvasive neutral pH water treatment for use in all greenhouse and hydroponic systems. By inhibiting the formation of scale, mineral deposits, and bio-film Watermax will dramatically improve sanitation. Watermax promotes healthy, faster growing plants through increased oxygen, calcium, and magnesium intake. Watermax is a safe alternative to toxic and corrosive chemicals." It is a relatively cheap product that is used in only small amounts. Amazon sells Watermax, so it is readily available.

Many thanks to Father Gerlich who readily shares his writings. Father Gerlich does hybridizing in conjunction with Dupont Nurseries in Louisiana and is president of the New Orleans Chapter.

### A Call to Action By Carolyn Estep, JEH Member

with thanks to Micki Dougherty for her assistance with this article.

A couple years ago the First Presbyterian Church of Lehigh Acres planted 47 larger garden variety hibiscus plants in front of our church. Initially, the plants, which consisted primarily of Jane Cows and the pink Painted Lady, remained uncared for and graced the church grounds with their blooms. As time passed, weeds, fungus, bud drop, and other things became increasingly more evident. Every time I went into our church and had to pass by one of the gardens my heart just went out to these plants.



As relatively new members of our hibiscus chapter, since May 2019, my husband, Martin, and I felt a, "Call to take action". Equipped with pruning shears, fertilizer, and insecticidal products we were able to see blooms and healthier plants once again after a short time. The care of the hibiscus plants at our church was added to our already busy volunteer gardening efforts to other areas of our church and as members of another garden club at our local post office. Martin and I enjoy our many orchids at our home in addition to adding more and more hibiscus plants to our garden. It is such a great feeling to see the hibiscus plants at our church blooming again and to know that we helped to make a difference. We just hope we can help to keep them that way! Without God's help this would not be possible.



So, if you are bored, due to being quarantined at home, look around and use your gardening skills or other talents to make a difference in your community. Martin and I have not gotten bored during our quarantine! We even got all the things on our "to do" list done and now have added more projects. Hoping to see you all soon ! CAROLYN ESTEP

This is the church that has Faith Gardens run by WES ROWE and supported by our chapter with scholarships. SOME OF THE GARDEN VARIETY HIBISCUS TO BE FOUND AT FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH



# Aphids On Hibiscus: How To Get Rid Of Hibiscus Aphids

[Aphids are a frequent problem](#) on many kinds of plants. These pests are especially problematic on [Hibiscus bushes and trees](#). Aphids are very tiny, pear-shaped insects measuring no more than 6/100 of an inch long. They vary in color from pale yellow-green to a deep greenish black depending upon the species. The Melon aphid (*Aphis gossypii*) which is also known as the black aphid is especially attracted to the juicy stems and leaves of the Hibiscus plant. They tend to feed on new growth and hibiscus buds.



Aphids are small sap-sucking insects and members of the superfamily Aphidoidea. **What Damage Do Aphids On A Hibiscus Cause?**

Large aphid infestations can cause a great deal of damage:  
Leaf distortion - Pale yellow or cream-colored spots - Curling



Entire leaves may turn brown and fall

Very large, untreated aphid infestations can cause plant collapse. In addition to direct damage, aphids carry viruses that affect Hibiscus plants

## **Pest Management: How To Control Aphids on Hibiscus?**

Aphids tend to gather in clusters to suck the sap of plants. Even though they are very tiny, they are usually easy to see.

If you don't immediately see aphids, you may see ants. Ants like to feast on the sweet, sticky substance aphids excrete called honeydew.

When you notice aphids, control them with one or more of these tips.

## **Encourage Beneficial Insects**

One of the best methods of aphid pest control on Hibiscus is to avoid having them at all. You can do this by [encouraging natural enemies \(predators\)](#) in your garden.

Ladybugs are famous for feasting on aphids, and they make a cheerful and pleasant addition to any garden. Other natural predators making short work of aphids include:

[Dust DE on the leaves](#) and stems of Hibiscus suffering infestations. DE can be harmful to all sorts of insects, so apply it judiciously and only as needed.

## **Don't Use Sticky Traps**

Although you may see some recommendations for sticky traps designed explicitly for aphids, these are not a good idea. The traps do not discriminate. They may be designed explicitly for aphids, but their bright yellow color and deadly sticky substance can do a great deal of damage to beneficial insects as well as aphids.

The addition of essential oils such as oil of rosemary or oil of lavender, garlic or hot pepper may help in killing aphids. These natural products are inexpensive and do little harm to natural predator populations. If you do use a natural pesticide, be sure to spray every part of the plant. Get the undersides of the leaves and any crooks and crannies to be sure of contacting every single aphid.

## **Use imidacloprid As A Last Resort**

Imidacloprid is a systemic pesticide that can be used as a soil drench. The chemical is taken up into the tissues of the plant through the roots.

It poisons aphids as they consume the sap of your plant. Unfortunately, this pesticide will also kill bees visiting your flowers. Never use imidacloprid on plants in bloom. This pesticide should be used only as a last resort in the event of very severe infestations in gardens suffering from a lack of natural predators and pollinators.

## **How To Prevent A Return Of Aphids**

In addition to establishing an environment that encourages beneficial insects, you can also discourage aphid reproduction by keeping your yard and garden clean.

At the end of the growing season, clean up the flower beds and hedges thoroughly.

## **Wash Aphids Away**

If aphids manage to get a toehold in your garden, try washing them away. Use a strong stream of water from your garden hose every other day. Wash your infested hibiscus plants thoroughly and knock the aphids to the ground. For the most part, a strong stream of water will drown aphids. Even those managing to survive will not be able to make their way back onto your plants again.

Once you've got the problem under control, make a habit of washing your plants down once every couple of weeks to discourage aphid infestation.

## Use Natural Oils and Soaps To Get Rid Of Aphids

Aphids are quite delicate and easy to kill off with Neem oil or insecticidal soap solution.

The addition of essential oils such as oil of rosemary or oil of lavender, garlic or hot pepper may also help in killing aphids.

These natural products are inexpensive and do little harm to natural predator populations. If you do use a natural pesticide, be sure to spray every part of the plant.

Get the undersides of the leaves and any crooks and crannies to be sure of contacting every single aphid.

## Use Pyrethrum

Pyrethrum is a botanical poison is a step up from natural soaps and oils. It will kill aphids and can harm beneficial insects, so use it with care and only when necessary.

To use it, mix a tablespoonful of concentrated pyrethrum into a pint of rubbing alcohol and apply as a spray directly on the congregated aphids.

## And Lastly

Clean up stray twigs, and leaf litter then dispose of the debris by burning if possible or bagging for rubbish. This will eliminate aphid eggs waiting to hatch in the springtime.

## From a FaceBook Posting

Thank you for posting to the IHS Facebook page. Yes those are aphids and we see them the most during spring so this is typical for this time of year. In a month or so their numbers will start to decline. The advice above to use Bayer Tree & Shrub is the way to go, I prefer Safari Tree & Shrub as it readily dissolves into water for immediate absorption but both are fine. Aphids reproduce at fast rates and can fly in from your neighbor's plants to keep you more than busy. Natural predators like ladybugs cannot keep up with their reproduction rates plus it is the juvenile ladybugs that eat a lot of aphids (look like little red and black alligators). **DARREN EMINIAN**

## PRESIDENT'S LETTER FROM JACK BERNATZ

Hello to all!

Now to the conclusion, the final chapter of the Pandemic that plagued the world in 2020 as we plunge headlong into June midst the Hurricanes. Totally amazing how resourceful and innovative people can be when threatened with quarantine and containment.

We in the JEH Chapter are trying a few ventures by email, the name the bloom for Frank Heffernan's seedling orchestrated by Barbara Oster. An email Mini Show and bloom guessing game organized by Beth Meehan. We also are in the process of a mail in plant purchase sale! The participation will determine continuation of these types of ventures.

We are also trying to do a few things on the business side of the Chapter.

We are lagging behind in our membership renewal. Our Show and Plant Sale was the earmark of getting the membership for the year with the benefit of purchasing plants at a discount along with additional benefits. When normal shows up again, our meetings, party and picnic will resume. Please send in Your Membership dues Now!!

While We are in this confined atmosphere, I would like to suggest that We All pay particularly close attention to all of our correspondence; the Newsletter, the Website [www.hendrychapterhibiscus.com](http://www.hendrychapterhibiscus.com) and emails. If You have any questions about anything, pick up Your Phone and Call Me 239-738-3796, or any of our other members. This is a very congenial group and hibiscus help is readily available.

Let's stay in close communication with one another, after all We have a shared love of the Hibiscus Flower, and all of Us spend a large part of our discretionary time cultivating and nurturing the little darlings!

JACK BERNATZ



# GIVE YOUR CROTON AN ASPIRIN

Aspirin therapy isn't just for "sick" plants; healthy ones can benefit too



Old time nurserymen and gardeners used to take several sticks from a willow tree, put them in water and let them soak for a while, then used the "willow water" on their plants. They may not have known how it helped plants grow, but with the aid of science, we can now understand why it works.

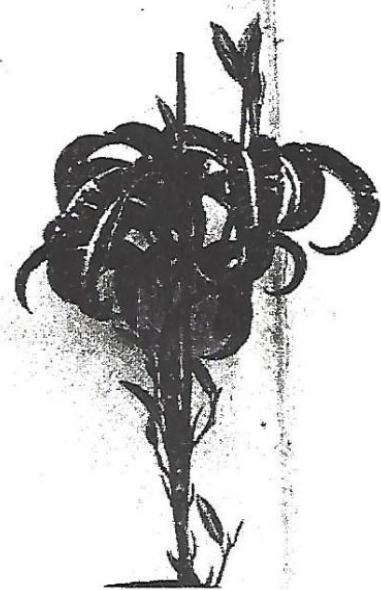
Willow water contains a chemical, salicin. Over 100 years ago, the Bayer Company produced a stable form of acetylsalicylic acid, which we know as aspirin. Plants make their own salicylic acid to boost their immune system. It helps fight against pests such as bacteria, fungi, and viruses. Aspirin has been found to be an activator of 'Systemic Acquired Resistance' (SAR). Sometimes plants don't produce the acid quickly enough to prevent injury when under attack. Spraying aspirin on the plants triggers the SAR response.

Spraying aspirin on plants requires that the tablets be crushed and dissolved in water. However, not all of the aspirin dissolves; a problem which can clog a sprayer. The solution is simple: use Alka-Seltzer or a generic version. It contains the same aspirin in a soluble form, plus citric acid and bicarbonate of soda. Use two tablets, letting them dissolve in a small amount of water (about one pint). After the fizzing stops, put a top on the container; then shake it to get the last bit of residue dissolved. Then add the mixture to two gallons of water, and spray. The result has been dramatic. Not only do crotons look great, but the most change occurred with a *ramshorn* which was just a 14" stick with a few leaves on the top. After one application of aspirin water, the plant produced over a dozen new shoots along the stem. (see picture at right).

One source claims that aspirin-treated plants grew huge, as if they were on steroids, compared to the size of identical plants which had no aspirin therapy.

Aspirin water is also a root stimulator. Soaking prepared cuttings overnight eliminates the need for a root stimulator. Soaking sphagnum moss in aspirin water can boost root growth in an air layer. After the air layer has been taken off the plant, soak it overnight and watch the roots come alive! Soak seeds in aspirin water and you will get a higher germination rate.

Aspirin has been called the "wonder drug." It can cure a headache, prevent heart attacks and reduce the effects of a heart attack as well. When it was first developed, no one could have foreseen the benefit for plants. When you add the plant benefit to the human benefit, aspirin is more than a wonder drug; it is a true miracle drug.



Written by Perry Edge

SUBMITTED BY WANDA SCHMOYER from literature from Woody & Ruth Watson

## CONTEST NAMING FRANK'S HYBRID THAT CHARLOTTE HAS GROWN

Hello members, thank you for the opportunity to judge the name of the bloom that I hybridized and CHARLOTTE HARFF grew.. I think I'll choose BONNIE'S choice for a name. I'll choose "SOPHIE ELLA". I know that is close to home but we didn't register the other bloom that I named Sophie Ella and this one looks good. The other one has died out. Should another bloom come about in the group I gave Jack, I would like some other person to get the flower and name it. Thank you and I hope the Chapter members in the contest understand my choice. Should I get seeds from my three plants up here this fall, I'll send them to you for the group. Thank you again and God Bless all. **FRANK HEFFERNAN**



**The following are the names submitted for consideration:** MORNING MEDLEY; FRANK'S FOLLY; FRANK'S ORANGE OMBRE; HEAVENLY SUNSHINE; BEE GRATEFUL; BONNIE'S BLISS; BONNIE'S BLESSINGS; MISS CORONA; NEELA'S SUNRISE; YELLOW GOLD; ORANGE CREAM SODA; LEMON DELIGHT; AN ANGEL WHISPERED IT; BLONDE BONNIE; TROPIC STAR and the winner SOPHIE ELLA submitted by **BONNIE HALL**. **Thanks to all who participated.**

### NAME THAT BLOOM

Only three people guessed the name of this bloom. All were correct – Acapulco Gold.



Here is the description of this beautiful bloom from the Hidden Valley Hibiscus website: 'Acapulco Gold' is one of our very fastest growers and best bloomer! It's a great hibiscus for beginners because it is so easy to grow and will delight with flowers very quickly. This highly recommended variety blooms with 7-9" vivid single flowers in yellow, orange, and white with a deep red eye and a bit of a pink bleed. It grows and blooms spectacularly in all kinds of growing situations - in the ground, in pots for life, as houseplants, and in cold northern locations being moved in and out of house or greenhouse with the seasons. With good nutrition, the bush can grow 6 feet tall and be covered in flowers in less than 2 years. 'Acapulco Gold' is the offspring of 'Fifth Dimension' and 'Georgia's Pearl,' and it has inherited the most positive qualities of both its parents. Released from HVH in 2008.

### June Virtual Mini Show

**The first "Virtual Mini Show" was a great success. We had 9 seedlings, 17 regular blooms and 13 mini blooms. All were beautiful! We had 20 people who voted.**

**Next month, let's try something a little different. We are going to have singles v. doubles. Send your pictures of 2 singles and 2 doubles to Beth Meehan at [BethMG2020@gmail.com](mailto:BethMG2020@gmail.com). Pictures are due July 11. You will then have one week to vote for your favorites.**

**The winners this month were:**

**Mini: Nancy Kopp with White Pride of Hankins**

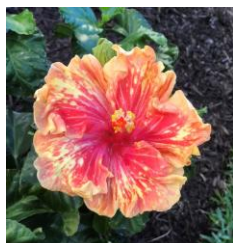
**Regular: Valerie Costa with Hawaiian Lava**

**Seedling: We had a tie between Micki Dougherty with her unnamed seedling and Todd Alvis with Great Balls of Fire.**



WHITE PRIDE OF HANKINS

EDITOR barbara oster



HAWAIIAN LAVA



UNNAMED SEEDLING



GREAT BALLS OF FIRE