



HENDRY HERALD

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

WHEN YOU GARDEN, YOU GROW hendrychapterhibiscus.com **AUGUST 2020**

Joy does not simply happen to us. We have to choose joy and keep choosing it every day.

"May we think of freedom not as the right to do as we please but as the opportunity to do what is right."

Peter Marshall

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**



Those of you who are friends with our member **NANCY KOPP** on FACEBOOK know the fabulous blooms she posts every single day. She was asked by Tom Miller, one of her followers, for her growing secrets and she graciously gave us this short primer of her success to share with all.

Hello fellow Hibiscus lovers with plants trying to survive in this summer heat!

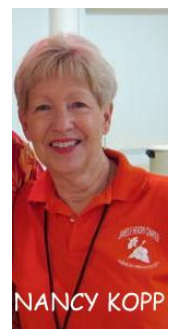
Every summer these months are a constant battle against the heat, too little rain, too much rain and bugs! Every summer I lose a few that just can't take it!

In June, I usually do a major pruning of my larger plants. I use a granular fertilizer monthly. I alternate 8-2-12, Hibiscain, and K&K.

Once a week I do a foliar spray using Miracle Gro, Super Nova, Super Thrive, HVH Hibiscus Booster and Soluble Seaweed Extract following the package directions.

When it comes to insecticides, I have tried most of them! I have had the best luck with Safari. When it's hot like this I sometimes put it in with my foliar spray as a preventive.

Please check the HVH website (**Hidden Valley Hibiscus** news@hiddenvalleyhibiscus.ccsend.com) for info on insects and diseases and what to use. I have yet to find the answers for spider mites and thripes! I just keep trying! Hope you have a great summer and beautiful blooms! Feel free to call me anytime with hibiscus concerns. **NANCY KOPP**





A Red-tailed Hawk Family Brought the Neighborhood Together During the Pandemic

While I was tending to my 83 exotic hibiscus I heard a loud crash in my neighbor's yard a few feet away. A professional gardener was trimming a very tall coconut tree when a large bird nest fell to the ground. I witnessed the whole thing and saw that two baby hawks did not survive but one darling one did.....I immediately went to the rescue and cuddled it in my arms and held it for a long time and bonded immediately!

Several neighbors called CROW (Clinic for the Rehabilitation of Wildlife) to find out what to do. We were instructed to put the nest up high in another tree and return the hawk knowing that the mother would return to her baby. She did and the rest is history!!

Normally the hawks build their nest in the large oak trees but this is the first time they chose to use a coconut tree.....maybe it's because they got a perfect view of my beautiful blooming hibiscus....we can only hope.

All the neighbors stroll down the street daily to take pictures of the baby, mother and father.....this has brought the neighbors and their children together for many happy moments.....lots of cameras take pictures of the family. The mother hawk stands guard over her baby while Daddy hunts and brings food back to her...she in turn feeds the baby. I was elected to name the baby but not knowing the sex I came up with "Ruby Redtail".....

Ruby has left the nest since she grew up so fast but stays in the trees in my neighbor's yard with mom and dad.....she is almost as large as they are and it's hard to tell the difference.

This bird is endangered and punishable by jail time and a \$15K fine if hunted or hurt.....we feel proud of what we accomplished by saving the baby and have fallen in love with the hawk family. These two hawks mate every year and have raised many babies. We know they will stay in the "Hawk Resort" for a long time and will keep producing such fine birds for all to enjoy. **submitted by WANDA SCHMOYER**



JEH Chapter members will receive a 10% Discount at Green Thumb Hydroponic Store with your member card. Located at 17031 N Tamiami Trail, N Fort Myers (239) 997-4769 and at Riverland Nursery, 13005 Palm Beach Blvd., Fort Myers.. NEW "PAID" MEMBER CARDS WILL BE MAILED WITH YOUR 2020-2021 MEMBER BOOK IN AUGUST.

SOME INFORMATION FROM COSTA FARMS-A HUGE WHOLESALE NURSERY

Tropical hibiscus are sun-loving, flowering plants that grow best with 6 to 8 hours of direct light each day to bloom the most. They can grow in part shade, but they tend to bloom less.

Hibiscus appreciate plenty of water, especially when you grow them in in container gardens. During the hottest part of the season, these summer-blooming shrubs may need watering every day (especially if their roots are cramped in a small pot). It's common for hibiscus plants to drop their flower buds if they dry out too much in summer.

Fertilize hibiscus monthly with a general-purpose fertilizer, following the directions on the product packaging, to ensure they produce the most blooms possible. You don't need to use special bloom-boosting fertilizers; regular, general-purpose products work just fine. Dwarf hibiscus grow 2-4 feet tall; standard varieties typically grow up to 5 feet tall.

Hibiscus typically don't need much pruning if you grow them in containers. But, if you do wish to prune your hibiscus, you can do so at any time to encourage a bushier, fuller plant.

Special Care

Tropical hibiscus are excellent flowering plants in frost-free climates where they bloom on and off all year long. They grow much larger in the South than in the North; it's common to see some hibiscus grow 15 feet tall and wide or more! These sun-loving plants are often grown as hedges to create a beautiful living privacy wall.

from COSTA FARMS

"As you grow older, you will discover that you have two hands: one for helping yourself, the other for helping others."

- Sam Levenson

FEW NOTES ON KEEPING YOUR HIBISCUS HAPPY IN THE HEAT

WATERING IN THE HEAT

Although we live in a great area for hibiscus, it is not ideal. Our coastal summers are hot and humid. We don't enjoy this weather and neither do our plants. When asked about the ideal conditions for hibiscus, I always say, "they like the same conditions we do." Moderate heat and moderate moisture are preferred by both grower and plant. Right now, we are experiencing less than ideal conditions. The heat is stressing our plants and making it difficult for us to give them the kind of care they need. Among the most critical issues is watering. Nothing is more essential to health (whether plant, human or pet), than staying properly hydrated. More plants, especially those in containers, are killed by improper watering than perhaps any other single cause.

"Watering" may seem like a "no brainer." All one has to do is open the hose and make sure the water gets into the pot. But simply pouring water on a plant does not guarantee success. A novice waterer may be well meaning, but fail to understand that simply sprinkling water in the vicinity of a plant is not what we growers consider "watering." Water must reach the roots in adequate amounts, but not in such quantities that the roots are suffocated by lack of oxygen because of compacted soil. That requires close attention, and a certain understanding of watering dynamics. In short, watering well is an acquired skill. And like all skills, it requires a bit of understanding and some practice.

First the "understanding" . . . roots are the "heart" of the plant. Besides anchoring the plant in place, the roots gather the critical moisture and minerals that the plant needs and transport them from the soil for utilization throughout the plant. Simply put, the health of the plant is directly tied to the availability of water. Now for a few practical considerations:

UNDER WATERING - Under watering causes the soil to become so dry that the plant suffers systemic dehydration. Hibiscus do not like to dry out fully between waterings. Too little water will result in yellowing leaves and young plants can also suffer the death of tender growth. If the drying out is severe and prolonged, the plant might not recover. Avoid this problem by using self-watering planters, watering globes or a gravity-fed, self-watering system.

OVER WATERING - Over watering is a very, very common problem. Plants both indoors and outdoors are frequently drowned by well-meaning home gardeners. The waterer fails to appreciate the needs of the plant and operates under the misconception that "more is always better." Plants situated outside in pots are the most likely to suffer the ill effects of too much water. Those planted in the ground have the general buffering of the surrounding soil to lessen the impact of excess watering. Pots, on the other hand, provide a micro-environment that can become quickly overwhelmed by too much water. Over watering can occur naturally (eg. a week of storms with heavy rains) or by improper watering (eg. watering too much or watering when it is raining). Over watering leaches nutrients from the soil and causes problems for plants that don't like their feet wet (eg. hibiscus). It can lead to plant diseases caused by a variety of fungus and it may well trigger damping off in seedlings.

WATERING AT THE CORRECT TIME - Outdoor plants should be watered in the morning after the dew has burned off, BEFORE the heat of the day. If possible, do not water in the evening as this will keep the soil too wet for too long. Even if the plant is a bit wilted at the end of the day, resist the temptation to water. Potted plants can cope well with a little dryness overnight better than with too much moisture. Excessive moisture over an extended period will only encourage the growth of deadly fungus. If you judge that it is indeed necessary to water in the evening, try to do so early enough so that the pots have a chance to dry out a bit before the nighttime hours.

IMPROPER WATERING- The general rule is that plants should be watered at the soil level without getting the foliage wet. Wet foliage aids in the spread of plant fungal diseases and cause sunburn on both indoor and outdoor plants, especially if one waters during the heat of the day. But hibiscus are tropicals that have developed in climates that are frequented by showers. In fact, watering under the

leaves helps prevent insect infestation. But watering the leaves is no substitute to getting water on the roots. One can easily rush along watering, fully convinced that the plants are being well watered when in fact only the first few inches of soil are wet while the bottom half of the plant remains dry. 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, on more than one occasion, I have found that the soil was wet only halfway down. Under these conditions, the plant's root system would soon be compromised. Be sure to water thoroughly until the plant is well-watered and then let it dry out. Not, of course, to the point of damaging the plant, but sufficiently so that the plant is showing definite signs of needing an infusion of H₂O.

PRUDENT WATERING: Before watering your plants, remember to examine the soil carefully. Top soil will dry quickly, but it can still be quite wet just a couple of inches below the surface. If you are unsure whether you should water, you probably shouldn't. To be sure, lift the pot to see if it is heavy (water is fairly heavy, 8.345404 lbs per gallon). Avoid "topping off" a plant with "just a little water" as this does NOT help the plant, but hurts it. True, the plant needs to retain a certain level of moisture in the soil but it should not be continuously wet. This condition promotes the growth of deadly fungus, deprives the soil of oxygen, and retards the development of a healthy root system.

WATERING ON A SCHEDULE: Many gardeners make the mistake of watering on a fixed schedule rather than on the basis of whether or not the plant needs water. Watering should always be tailored to the plant's needs! And those needs are dictated by the intensity of the sun, soil composition, size of the plant, and the condition of the plant. In a healthy environment, wet soil dries relatively quickly as the roots bring moisture into the plant and the sun pulls the nutriment-rich water through the plant and evaporates it through the leaves. But cloudy days will slow this process down and every plant has a different rate of transpiration due to variations in leaf coverage. So be careful to treat your hibiscus as individuals. When you water, be aware that one pot might need water and the pot right next to it might need to forgo the additional moisture.

WATERING STRESSED PLANTS: Over watering and under watering are the chief causes of dramatic and systemic defoliation. Once plants lose leaves, for whatever reason, be doubly careful about watering! Plants that have few leaves cannot tolerate excessive water. In fact, with no leaves to transpire water, the root system is unable to draw the water up into the plant efficiently. Overly wet soil will reduce the available amount of oxygen in the soil, given that many air pockets collapse under the weight of the water. If this condition lasts too long the root system will begin to die. Dead roots = dead plant!

KEEPING THE SOIL POROUS: One is able to water more successfully when the soil is porous and well-drained. Soils that drain quickly retain more oxygen and allow for the re-formation of air pockets more rapidly. Thus, good drainage does a great deal to prevent plants from suffocating. Stir up the soil occasionally if it appears to be compacted. And repot if the situation warrants. Remember, plants can sometimes fool you into thinking that they need water. It is natural for them to wilt a bit during our hot summer days. And overly watered plants tend not to grow a robust root system. Without a good root system, the plant will invariably give the appearance that it needs water (since it does). But it will not be vigorous until its root system is allowed to fully develop. If you suspect that the roots are underdeveloped, check them. If they are as you suspected, make a special effort to let the soil dry out sufficiently before watering again. This allows the roots to expand their network as they seek out moisture at the bottom of the pot. Consider bottom watering for a time, as this will ensure that moisture is at the bottom on the container for the roots to reach. Occasionally watering freshly planted hibiscus or plants with weak root systems with root stimulator (according to directions) will encourage better root growth.

The above article is reprinted from the NEW ORLEANS HIBISCUS NEWSLETTER written by Father Robert Gerlich, S.J., Loyola University of New Orleans, Louisiana.



JACK BERNATZ, President and **CHARLOTTE HARFF**, Treasurer ran a virtual plant sale for chapter members. They emailed out the list of available plants and order forms and members mailed in their choices for hibiscus in 4" or 3 gallon pots with their checks. Jack and Char ordered the plants and arranged for member pick-up at their house. They put hours of work into the project. Since the annual show was called off, members had no way of getting these exotic hibiscus. Jack figured a way and acted on it. They single-handedly sold 173 plants to 20 participating members at our member discount price. They also had available 50# bags of Hibisgain for interested customers. Jack & Charlotte expressed this sale as a positive experience! They wish to acknowledge their appreciation of the hard work and dedication of Sunfire Nursery: Teresa, TJ, Lisa and Terri who helped immensely during a very busy time for them at the nursery! They also wish

to acknowledge the free plants that **BETH MEEHAN** and **VALERIE COSTA** donated to members who were buying plants. These women are wonderful growers.

Amazing what can be done with some ingenuity and hard work during this sad period of time in our history. The Chapter wants to thank all involved for making plants available at this time of year.

EDISON AND FORD PLANT SALE

Plant Sale

August 8, 9 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Everyone enjoyed the June plant sale so much, we're having another one! We'll have a few vendors, along with a food truck and some beverages available for purchase too. The sale will take place outdoors, in the Garden Shoppe and surrounding areas. We've received a lot of new plants, so the Garden Shoppe is stocked! Plus, horticulturists will staff the "Garden Guidance" table again, so bring your gardening questions. Vendors and Garden Guidance table will be on site until 2 p.m. Admission to the plant sale is free (does not include tours or admission to the museum, lab or riverside of the property).

For anyone who has never been to the Garden Shoppe, it's a unique place for gardeners to shop for quality plants. There's a large selection of flowering and fruit trees, butterfly plants, herbs, succulents, orchids, rare exotics and even Florida natives. Wind chimes, fountains, ceramic flowerpots and garden art are also offered. Only a limited number of garden carts are available, so if you have one of your own, it's a good idea to bring it along.

All staff will be wearing masks, and we are encouraging our visitors to wear a mask to the plant sale as well. Masks are required in all indoor areas. We also ask everyone to practice social distancing at the plant sale. If you would prefer to shop on a different day, the Garden Shoppe is open seven days a week, 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. We hope to see you there!



Treat Your Face Mask Like Underwear



- MAKE SURE IT'S CLEAN
- MAKE SURE IT FITS SNUG BUT NOT TOO TIGHT
- MAKE SURE IT COVERS THE IMPORTANT PARTS
- DON'T TOUCH OR ADJUST IT (ESPECIALLY IN PUBLIC)
- DON'T SHARE IT
- THROW IT AWAY IF THERE ARE HOLES OR STAINS
- NOT ALWAYS REQUIRED BUT DEFINITELY ENCOURAGED



JIM DOUGHERTY EXPRESSES HIS OPINION OF HIS WIFE MICKI'S HIBISCUS HOBBY

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.



AND THE WINNERS ARE

Thanks to everyone who participated in the July Virtual Mini Show. We had 19 single blooms and 17 doubles submitted from 11 members. We had 18 members voting. The voting was close with so many beautiful blooms to choose from! However, I'm happy to announce this month's winners:

Single: **CHARLOTTE HARFF** with Red Sylvia Goodman

Double: **JOSEPH CHURNEY** with Cherry Blue

I hope everyone is enjoying the virtual mini shows. I know that it makes me feel good to see all the beautiful flowers growing in our gardens. Let's keep it going any have another contest! All those members out there who haven't participated – go outside and enjoy the sun. While you are there, snap a photo or two of what's blooming. Share your beautiful flowers with the rest of us.

We are going to limit it this time to 1 single and 1 double. So pick your best one! Submit your photos to Beth Meehan at BethMG2020@gmail.com by August 11. You will then have one week to vote.

Good luck everyone! BETH MEEHAN



Hello All,

Welcome to the New Fiscal Year of the James E. Hendry Chapter of the AHS. I certainly feel like I have accomplished another degree of education, labeled "Personal Hygiene and Social Distancing" to remain as disease repellent as possible. In addition we now have a very important new article of clothing "The Mask". What an opportunity this has opened. There are so many varieties of this "Mask" it has become a race to see who can come up with the winner that all of the "Shark Tank" Entrepreneurs will want a piece of the action.

What Covid19 did for JEH?

Could We have a Mini-Show of blooms from our yard, using Email? Yes is the answer, and a big thank You to Beth Meehan for suggesting it and handling the voting.. Thank all of You who participated to make this a fun social distanced activity.

Another thank you to Covid19. It created a need to find a way to purchase our Exotic Hybrid Hibiscus via email and snail mail. Get the plants purchased, delivered and dispersed to all of You that Purchased. We did all of those things with the enthusiastic support of our determined Exotic Hibiscus Growers in their search to improve the quality and quantity of our favorite blooming flower in their respective gardens. The determination to overcome all odds, I was witness to several comments, "Oh I just don't know where I'm going to put these in My garden!! I'm running out of room". Another was "How am I going to get these in my garden without my partner knowing, it will be the end of our relationship" Another comment "Had to get five more, that's about the average that I have to replace yearly". It is just our passion to take care of these little darlings!!

We have decided to have a Board Meeting via Zoom, thanks again to Beth Meehan who will host the meeting. We will work on getting our plans together and determine how we will continue to function under the Pandemic Parameters.

We may be a very compromised group due to our fit with the statistics, We are a very determined and resourceful group as well.

Everyone Please Stay Safe, Stay Healthy! This too shall pass, Jack

barbara oster, editor

