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IS YOUR HIBISCUS LOOKING PEAKY?

Interveinal chlorosis .. and what to do about it!

Chlorosis, or yellowing, of the leaves, can be caused by many different things. In some cases it is a harmless part of the natural growth cycle, but it can also be indicative of adverse factors such as nutrient deficiencies, pests, diseases or stresses caused by poor plant management.

In the photo on the right you can see the typical chlorosis which signals that there is probably a nutrient deficiency. The veins in the leaves have retained a strong green while the spaces in between are turning pale (interveinal chlorosis).



In contrast, shown on the left is a leaf which has turned yellow and is about to be shed. On closer examination, this is the oldest leaf on a side shoot and the plant is shedding it naturally as it concentrates on the growing tip of the new branch.

Yellowing of the areas between the veins is usually indicative of either iron or magnesium deficiency. Iron deficiency affects the youngest leaves first, whereas symptoms of magnesium deficiency tend to start in the older leaves.

In contrast, nitrogen deficiency causes a more general yellowing, usually in the older leaves first and is often accompanied by a lack of vigour. With potassium deficiency the yellowing is often more pronounced at the leaf edges.

In fact, the large doses of potassium we give our hibiscus plants to encourage spectacular blooms can actually create a magnesium deficiency that stresses the entire plant.

So, you've been feeding your hibiscus regularly with a balanced fertiliser .. but it still looks peaky and pale? Why not try some extra magnesium, which you can find in the form of good old-fashioned Epsom Salts (MgSO₄, magnesium sulfate).

Hidden Valley Hibiscus recommends the following dosage:

First water with plain water to moisten soil.

Sprinkle magnesium on top of the soil under the plant

Water lightly to wet magnesium

Use 1 teaspoon of magnesium for a plant in a 4" pot.

Use 2 teaspoons of magnesium for a plant in a 6" pot.

Use 1 Tablespoons of magnesium for a plant in an 8" pot.

Use 2 Tablespoons of magnesium for a plant in a 2-gallon pot.

Use 1/4 cup of magnesium for large plants in the ground.

[Click here to link to a Hidden Valley Hibiscus web page that gives a full explanation of magnesium deficiency.](#)



A discussion about 'inveinal' chlorosis

Ursula Lengdobler commented: "I don't know what to make of it. 95% of my seedlings from crosses with *Hibiscus cooperii* and/or *Hibiscus arnottianus* show these strange leaves."





H. cooperi in Fiji

Dr. Lex Thomson replied: This ineinal chlorosis may come from a virus or mycoplasma .. both of which are not normally able to be transmitted by seed but I think there is some data that suggests that mycoplasmas can be transmitted in larger types of seeds. So perhaps that is what this is?

There was some DNA evidence that the Hawaiian whites (including H. arnottianus) are related to H. cooperi and perhaps derived from a common ancestor.

The likely original form of H. cooperi was white-petalled with dark green/brownish tinged foliage (originating in Indonesia, mentioned by Rumphius and important in the very early hybrids with H. rosa-sinensis).

A MULTI-GRAFT IN BLOOM

Grafted and photographed by Adil Demirboga



HIBISCUS DENISONII

Dr. Lex Thomson



Hibiscus denisonii is a white (or light pink) petalled hibiscus which first appeared as a stove plant in the UK in the 1880s and is named after Sir William Denison (Governor of New South Wales 1855-1861).

It appears to be a hybrid (rather than species) likely created by Australia's first plant breeder, John Bidwill, in 1847 in Sydney Botanical Gardens.

It is sometimes reported as a native species of Fiji, but is unlike Fiji species (see attached image with pink H. x denisonii on left and Fiji species on right).

H. denisonii self-pollinates easily and hybrids with it as one parent generally show little features of the other parent.



HIBISCUS ON STAMPS

A Selection of Postage Stamps from around the World
(Not to scale!)





QUESTION AND ANSWER

What's wrong with my poorly plant?



QUESTION:

I have a hibiscus that is in a pot and I bring it in during the winter. Last summer it bloomed really nicely. However, this year the leaves are slow to come back and those that are there are starting to get the brown spots you can see in the photo. Is there something I can do to help it recover?.

Emma Thompson
Plymouth, Michigan

ANSWERS:

Did it get wet in heat of day or did someone throw something onto it? That looks like a burn from something. Personally I would cut off the worst leaves, make sure it's been watered but not soggy, check that it's draining well and not stopped up, then remove the first couple inches of soil and replace with some good fertilizer mixed with decent potting soil. Finally, leave it to dry out for a week.

Some of those leaves are toast anyway just draining energy that could be used to help strengthen it. Put it in a shady spot until recovers. **Carrol Hanna Vice**

That's good advice Carrol. Also depending on the variety and the weather you have had this spring it can cause a delay and/or some strange new growth on your hibiscus. Springtime you will see your plants start to shed their winter leaves and grow new ones or even branches instead. Many times the leaves will start to getting brown spots as the plant shuts down nutrients to them in preparation for new leaves. Some plants will show the new leaves simultaneously while others will drop the leaves first and the produce new leaves. **Darren Eminian**

Thanks Darren, should I remove the leaves with brown spots or leave them on? **Emma Thompson**

Either way when you lose leaves you should drastically reduce the amount of water you give your plant as it has no way to transpire out the water in the soil. Match how much you water your plant with the size of the leaves as they come in. Be patient, love your plant and you should see it slowly leaf out if all goes well. **Darren Eminian**

Many of us hand irrigate with hoses made of rubber, and the temperature inside a hose on a hot day can be high. If you're going to spray water on the foliage, make sure to run water through the hose until cooler water emerges. **Gregg Blanchard**

HOME MADE 'WHITE OIL' BUG SPRAY

Better for the environment!



You've just noticed that your Hibiscus are under attack from bugs again. The ones seen here on the left are aphids. They're not always dark like this, some of them are pale green and hard to spot. You know you have aphids when your windowsills start feeling sticky or, if your plants are outside, then you will probably find columns of ants crawling up the stems to harvest the sticky 'honeydew' these pesky bugs excrete.

There are several ways of dealing with infestations. With aphids, a good blast of the hose will clear many of them away and wash the sticky stuff off the leaves. You could also use a commercial bug spray which usually works quickly but, being a toxic chemical, is not good for the environment.

I prefer to use a home made spray .. and 'white oil' is one of the best and easy to make. You basically mix cooking oil and dish soap (washing up liquid), add water, give it a shake and spray. However, I've ruined several expensive sprays which have ended up clogged up with oil.

I was talking to an orchid expert, and she told me her secret is to mix equal quantities of oil and dish soap in a bowl first and give them a good stir to emulsify them. You will know when it happens because the mixture turns white. You can then put it in your sprayer, add water and give it a shake. The oil is now dispersed and far less likely to clog your sprayer.

The following recipe suggests different quantities of oil and soap. Do this in a bottle with a tight fitting lid:

- One cup dishwashing detergent
- Two cups sunflower oil. (Sunflower oil works well but you can try other oils such as olive or canola).

Screw the lid on and shake the bottle until the contents turn white - and hey, presto! - you have concentrated White Oil.

When you are ready to use it, **dilute one tablespoon of the concentrate per litre of water.** Add to a spray bottle, give it a good shake and away you go!

WARNING! - do not spray when the temperature is 30°C (86°F) or when expecting these temps in coming days, as you risk burning your plants!

Note: When you have put the diluted oil/soap mixture in your sprayer, you could try adding a few other ingredients to help confuse bugs. I add a few drops of thyme oil and tea tree oil, both of which are said to be insect repellent. Garlic is another one. Crush a few bulbs of garlic, put them in a bottle, add water and leave for 24 hours. Top up your White Oil spray with with the garlic water and it should help keep the bugs at bay. I sometimes add lemon juice (or citric acid) too. The idea is that the bugs won't recognise you plant as being a hibiscus and might fly straight past.

A CELEBRATION OF BEAUTY

A selection of fabulous photos shared by members of the
International Hibiscus Society



POOL PARTY
Photo by Eliza Ridzi Jordan



**CHI'S GARDEN
ROSES OF PALMS**

[Unregistered]
(Parentage unknown)
Hybridized by Chi's Garden &
Hibiscus Wonderland
Photo by HW Bert



**PAYUAN CYNTHIA'S
METEOR GARDEN**

(Payuan Cynthia
x Payuan Jing Lan Ocean)
Hybridized by Cheng Yu Pan
Photo by Teng Teng

**TAIWAN FORMOSA
SUN MOON**

[Unregistered]
(Parentage unknown)
Hybridized and photographed
by Aneela Lee



**IMMA
CASIANA
GABRIELA**

(Moorea Eros
x Moorea Lovely Treasure)
Hybridized by Charles Atiu
Photo by Rodrigo Joseph Bautista



STORMY HEART

**(Erin Rachael x Purple Magic)
Hybridized by Charles Black
Photo by Thomas Narolewski**

EASTER GLOW



**(Cosmic Gold x Enlightenment)
Hybridized and photographed by Charles Black**

BO DEN ELECTRIC EYE BEAUTY

[Unregistered]
(Parentage unknown)
Hybridized by Wu Kun Zhu
Photo by Aneela Lee



MOOREA PHOENIX REBORN

[Unregistered]
(Parentage unknown)
Hybridized by Charles Atiu
Photo by Tatyana Sokolova





**MOOREA
BLUE ARINA**

(Moorea Mamie Blue
x Moorea Vaimoana)
Hybridized by Charles Atiu
Photo by Monika KS

© Monika KS



TAHITIAN PINK ANGEL

(Parentage unknown)
Hybridized and photographed by Richard Johnson

RESCUING A GRAFT WHEN THE KNIFE SLIPS

(Or, when life gives you lemons .. make lemonade)

Doug Entz



Hawaii Volcanoes National Park



1

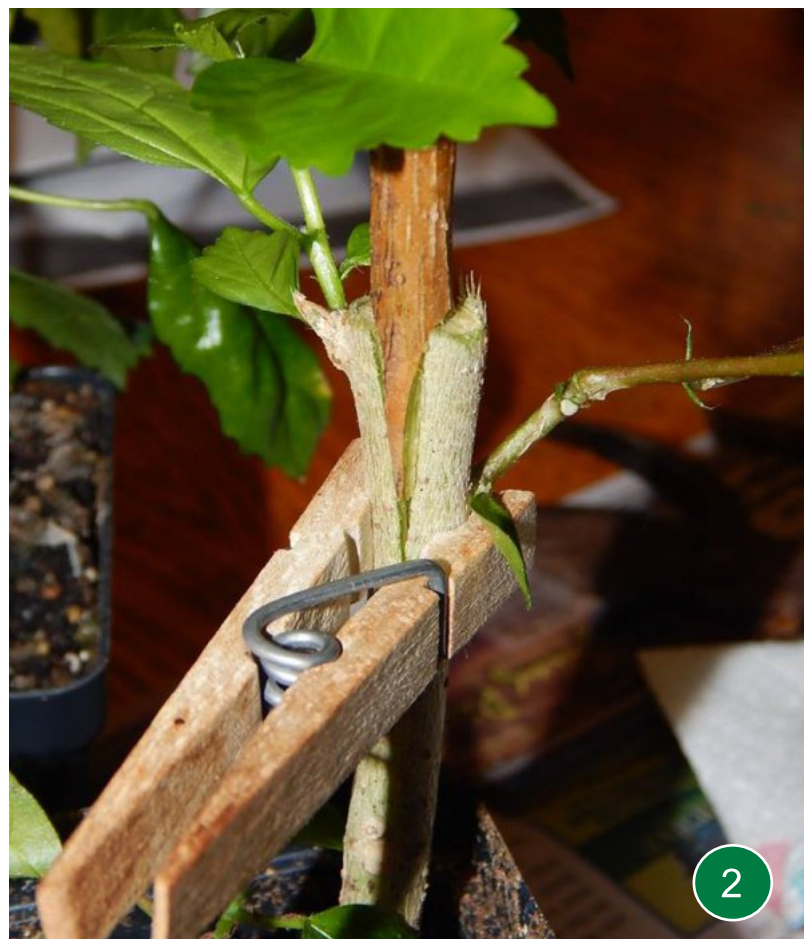
Above: Oops! It's the grafter's worst nightmare. You momentarily lose control over the knife and the slippery sucker makes a cut which ends up being way too deep!

Right: Taking a deep breath and counting to ten you start trimming the scion thinner so that it fits all the way in. Now it's time for the high tech tools (a clothespeg is perfect) to hold things in place until the graft can be securely wrapped.

HIBISCUS INTERNATIONAL

Doug lives in Hawaii in a place called Volcano, which is situated at the entrance to the Hawaii Volcanoes National Park - one of the most popular visitor attractions in the entire state of Hawaii. To avoid any confusion, Volcano is also referred to as Volcano Village since the entire area here is basically one big volcano! Owing to its altitude, Volcano has a subtropical highland climate with relatively uniform temperatures and abundant rainfall throughout the year, although rainfall is concentrated during the months of November through to April.

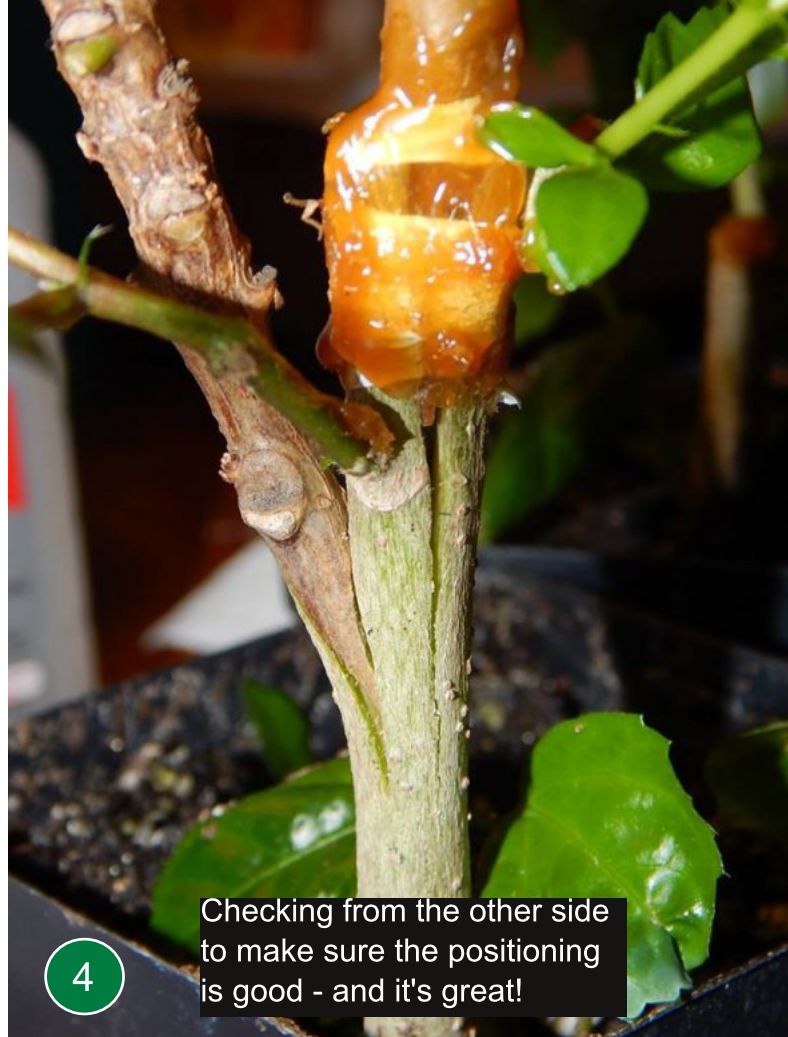
The hardiness zone is 11a.



2



3 The first bit of wrap and wax is in place and I've decided to add a second graft.



4 Checking from the other side to make sure the positioning is good - and it's great!



5 All neatly bound and sealed with grafting wax.



6 Yep. I'm pleased with that. Now it's just the waiting ...

INSECT ART

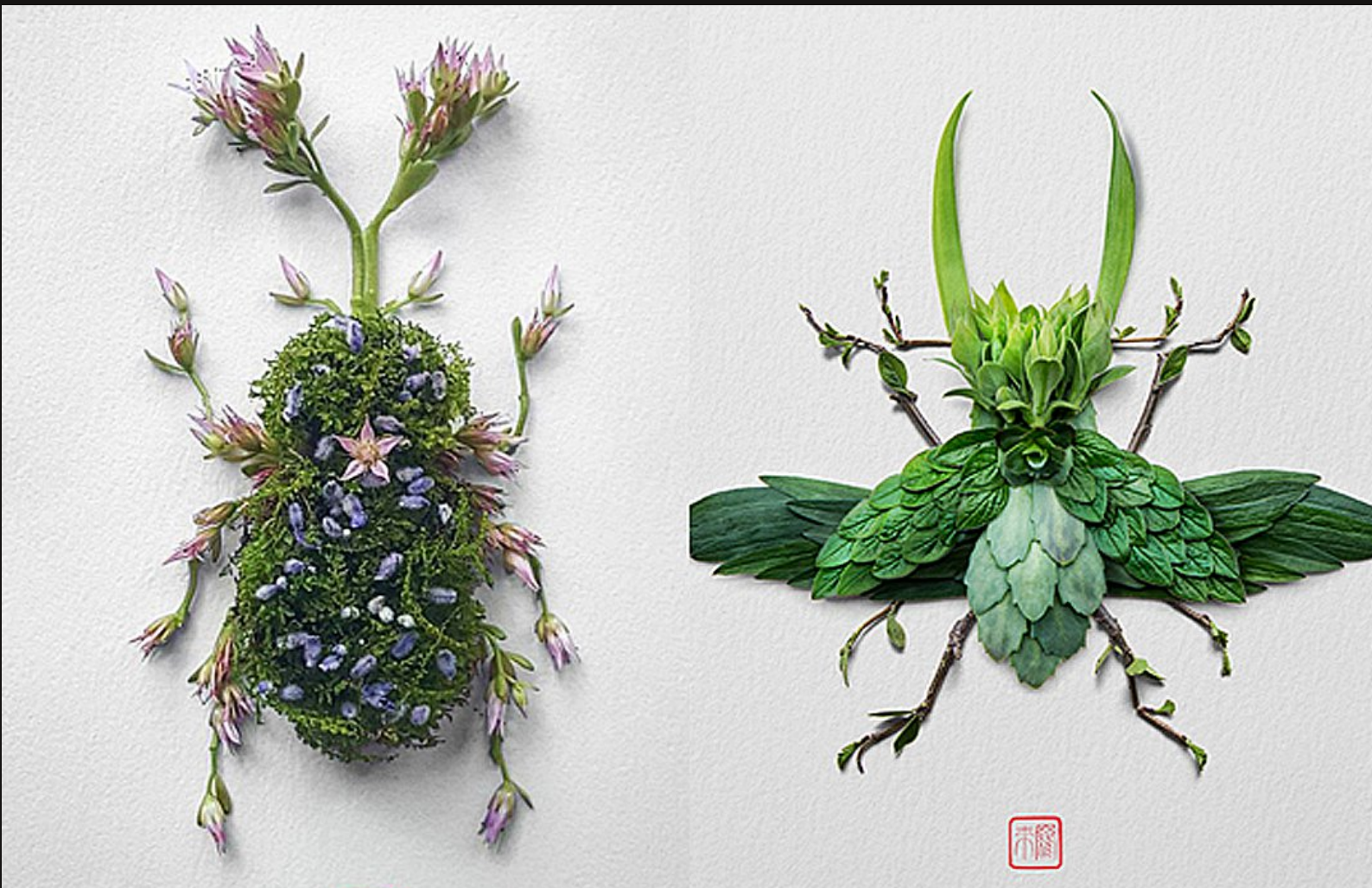


And now for something completely different .. nothing to do with hibiscus, but just look at the astonishing art created by Montreal based artist Raku Inoue!



For a series titled Natura Insects, Montreal-based creative Raku Inoue arranged a variety of leaves and blooms to create the delicate components of stag beetles, butterflies, and other insects.

While the same results could be easily produced using digital or collage techniques, Inoue pushed the concept even further and used real flowers which he then photographed as you see here.





See more of
Raku Inoue's
art by clicking
here ..





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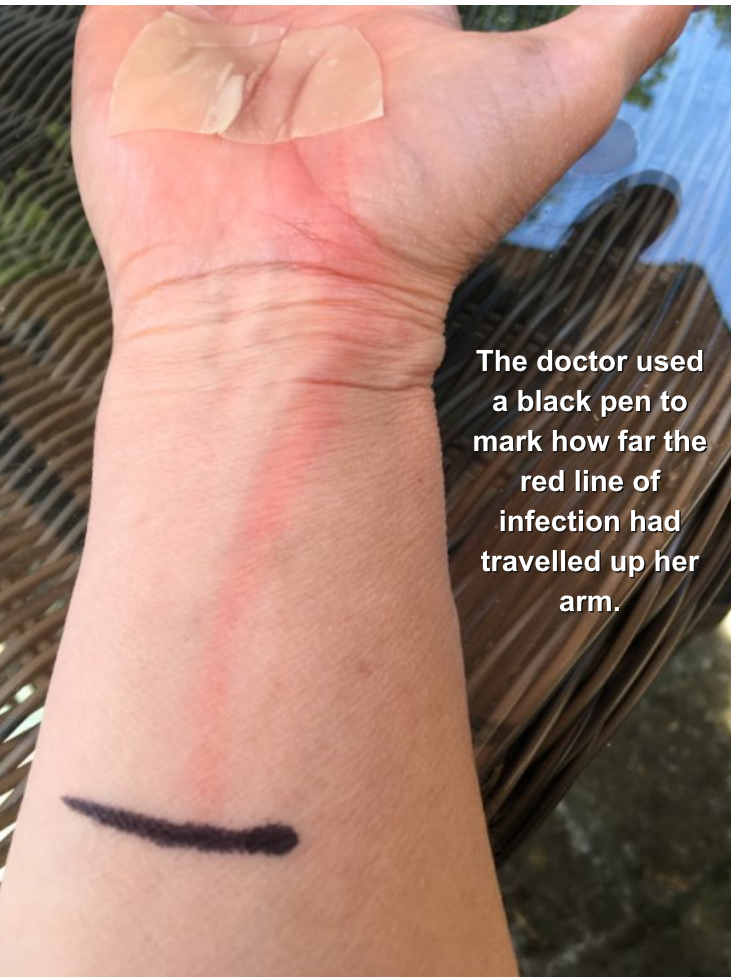
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Don't forget that you can find some very helpful 'How-To' videos on the IHS website.
 Go to <http://internationalhibiscussociety.org/new/>



The doctor used a black pen to mark how far the red line of infection had travelled up her arm.

A WARNING TO ALL GARDENERS!

This lady was sweeping out her shed when she got a tiny splinter in the palm of her hand. It didn't look serious - just a tiny dot of blood. She finished sweeping up before going back to the house to run her hand under cold water. She fished out the splinter with tweezers, stuck on a plaster and carried on gardening .. and never thought any more about it.

Later, her hand started to itch and turn red. Then it started swelling and felt stiff, and she noticed a red line creeping up her arm.

Slightly worried by now, she phoned for advice and was told to see her doctor straight way. She was given antibiotics and luckily they cured the infection.

This story is a reminder that it is important for gardeners to look out for any kind of infection, and don't delay in seeking help. Even a simple thing such as a splinter, a rose thorn or a tiny cut can be deadly.

An insect bite can be equally dangerous.

SEPSIS CAN KILL. See your doctor without delay!

Who wouldn't love to step into the house (or out of the bath) onto this colourful mat with exotic birds and hibiscus! We found this on Amazon (various sellers).

There are other great designs too .. try doing a search for 'hibiscus door mat'.



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