



Hibiscus International

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PRESIDENTS REPORT

Hi hibiscus friends and welcome to the first of the H.I., Hibiscus International, cyber issues with a changed look by our new editor, Jim Purdie. It has also undergone some organizational changes in that the I.H.S. Board Of Directors has elected to remove the Secretary/Treasurer's Report and Committee Reports from H.I. to make more room for articles of interest to our readers. Work is now underway to put these reports on the I.H.S. Web Site under the menu item "I.H.S. Administrative Activities". Those reports should be appearing there shortly and we will do our best to keep them current.

Besides getting H.I. underway again, the second most notable thing is the IHS Nomenclature Program. It is working beyond expectations from our end, i.e., we have some 450 registrations pending approval from Brian Cheers, the ICR, International Cultivar Registrar. There are some growing pains at both ends, i.e., Joseph whose health continues to deteriorate, has found it difficult to keep up with current registrations. Accordingly we have started a new IHS Nomenclature Committee, consisting of Joseph Dimino, Arthur J Schick, Ian Rabenda and myself. They seem to be working great as a team and are making good progress in aiding Joseph at this task. Although the system is semi automated, it seems people don't quite follow the instructions meaning everything has to be checked. This backlog of registrations is basically a result of waiting for the AmHS nomenclature database to be published. Failing that or other communications, there is a risk of duplicate naming. If that information is not soon forthcoming, I suspect the ICR and the AuHS Nomenclature Committee are going to have to make some difficult decisions to resolve this problem.

Accordingly, we are gradually getting things in order. We now have some volunteer web master assistance via Ian Rabenda and the contributions of Tai Phan. In our search for new revenues, as recommended by Tai, we are subscribing to Google AdSense, where you will find pertinent inconspicuous advertisements on a number of pages (eventually most of them) on our web site www.internationalhibiscussociety.org. Some of those ads will hopefully be of interest to some of our web site visitors, which will hopefully provide the IHS with a small revenue.

Still we welcome any volunteers for web site assistance. Accordingly should any of you reading this want to assist or know of others that might, please contact me at diveta@mail.pf

RICHARD JOHNSON

President of the International Hibiscus Society

EDITORS REPORT

Welcome to this my first cyber magazine. I hope you get some knowledge from it to help you in growing our favorite plant the Hibiscus.

It is my hope that it will remain this number of pages full of information and I will do my best to carry on producing the Hibiscus International cyber magazine for many years to come.

If a member or affiliate can help with an article to add to this publication on how they grow hibiscus or anything to do with hibiscus plants could you please send them to me at the e-mail address of jpu11707@bigpond.net.au. Articles should preferably no more than 2 X A4 pages.

This Cyber magazine covers the months of Jan. Feb. March coming out in April i.e., Vol. 9, No 1 Issue 38

The second issue covers April May & June, coming out in July. i.e., Vol 9, No 2 Issue 39

The third issue covers July August September, coming out in October. i.e., Vol. 9, No 3 Issue 40

The fourth issue covers October November December coming out in January. i.e., Vol. 9, No 4 Issue 41

Congratulations to all the SOTY / HOTY winners and to Richard Johnson for winning the inaugural 2003 HOTY with Tahitian Princess.

Congratulations also to Denis Bojcic for winning the TPC 2009-1 competition with Hoosiers a lovely Miniature.

Do not forget to cast your votes in the TPC 2009-2 which closes on Monday 18th May 2009, there are 4 sections with a voting form attached and you have to choose 3 entries which in your opinion is the best in that section. As there is only one entry in the computer art section you do not have to vote for this category

Editor Jim Purdie

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Hibiscus Hybridizing

Hibiscus Lady - Jill Coryell - hibiscuslady@hawaii.rr.com

Welcome to the wonderful "club" of Hawai'i folks who first began hibiscus hybridizing in the 1870s!

The Hybridizing Process

Each hibiscus flower contains both the male (pollen/sperm) and female (stigma/pollen pads) necessary to create seeds. The new "hybrid" hibiscus which grows from the seeds created by your hybridizing efforts will contain approximately 1/2 of the genetic material from each of its parents.

1. Generously apply pollen from the pollen parent to the stigma/pollen pads of the pod parent. The flower whose stigma has been dusted with pollen is the "mother" and must remain on the plant for the cross to take.

The best type of day to have a high success rate is an overcast or misty day. If you are making a cross on a no-cloud, hot day, you might consider lightly misting the pollen pads with a fine spray of water after you've made the cross, and if the plant is in a pot, turn the pot so that the flower is facing away from the sun, or put it in partial shade for a day or two.

2. Mark your cross with masking tape or bright construction tape. It is helpful to use an "industrial" permanent marking pen. Write your cross information as follows: Name of Mother X Name of Father, then add the date of the cross...i.e. Georgia's Pearl X Tranquility 2/10/05.

3. Several days after making the cross, the flower will fall off the plant. Let it fall off by itself. Inside the empty calyx (the green "cup" just under the flower), you will see a small bump. This is the ovary of the flower. If the cross has "taken", the ovary will get larger and larger over approximately 4-8 weeks, until it fully ripens. Inside this ovary, if fertilization has occurred, miniature seeds are beginning to mature.

4. At about the one month point, you can cut or tear back the top of the calyx if you want. Removing the calyx helps prevent small insects from chewing away at your seed pod. You can also enclose the maturing seed pod in fine netting to prevent the seeds from falling out if you don't happen to check the pod on the day it opens.

5. When the pod is mature, it will begin turning tannish one day, and the following day it will turn brown and open, revealing 5 chambers with one or more seeds in each chamber. These are now ready for planting, and the excitement begins!

PLANTING YOUR SEEDS!

1. Fully empty the seed pod in an area where there is no wind, and count the seeds. You will be planting up to 8 seeds per 4" pot. Therefore if you have a windfall of, say 25 seeds, you might consider planting 5 pots with 5 seeds each, or 4 pots with 6 seeds, 6 seeds, 6 seeds, and 7 seeds...no more than 8 seeds per pot.

2. Once you've determined how many pots you'll need, prepare the pots as follows: The bottom 1/4 of the pot should be perlite, and the next 1/2 of the pot should be potting soil (I use Schultz potting soil). Run water into the pot so that the potting soil is thoroughly wet.

3. Prepare plant markers for each pot. On the marker/tag, record the name of the pod parent (mother) X pollen parent (father), the date you planted it, and the number of seeds that pod will hold.

4. You do not NEED to nick fresh seeds. They may be planted "whole" onto the wet potting mix. However, it does not hurt the seeds, and may help germination, if you do choose to nick them. Consider using an Exacto knife or a single edged razor blade, and carefully nick the rounded part of the seed.

5. Place seeds on the wet potting soil (up to 8 per pot), and lightly dust dry potting soil over all seeds...perhaps 1/8" of "dust". Spray/spritz with water to dampen the dust.

6. You will want to keep your pots damp during the germination process. You can do this by spraying/spritzing with water several times a day, OR you can fill a small bowl with water and let the pot sit (not immersed) in the water until you can see that the moisture has dampened the top of the soil.

7. The seeds will germinate in about 1-8 weeks. Because you marked the number of seeds you planted in that pot on your marker, you will know when most/all of the seeds have sprouted. Once these seedlings have developed 2 or 3 true leaves, you can separate the seedlings and plant into their own individual pots, using whatever planting medium you will use for the mature plant.

Continued on next page

You can use potting soil, but you must amend it by adding 1/3 perlite or lava cinders to 2/3 potting soil. Hibiscus LOVE water but MUST have good drainage.

8. Once your seedling is approx. 8" tall, transplant into a 1 gallon pot, and wait for your FABULOUS first bloom, which you should get in 6-12 months. A Gold Ribbon Flower is right around the corner!!!

Enjoy your hybridizing, and keep us posted of the results!!! Aloha, Jill - Hibiscus Lady

www.hibiscusladyhawaii.com

GROWING HIBISCUS IN THE TROPICS.

Hawaii has always been associated with the beautiful tropical Hibiscus - Rosa-Sinensis. We in North Queensland are fortunate enough to live on the same meridian- 20' from the equator.

This enables us to grow flowering hibiscus plants all year around, and in different positions in the garden with an abundance of flowers throughout the winter months.

We have experimented with hibiscus in different positions in the garden, and have found they handle, part shade in the tropics with no detrimental effects also part shade will help in the summer with less bud drop due to the heat. Plant growth is very fast due to the warmth, humidity, and plenty of water available.

Good drainage is also essential for hibiscus plants as our big wet seasons can test most plants. Remember oxygen is just as important as water to a plant, so if in doubt about drainage elevate the beds, and buy grafted plants in order to get hardier root stock.

Mulching of beds is a must to stop weeds and grass competing with your plants, and also to conserve water.

We have found hibiscus grown in their own beds with no competition from other plants, particularly palms or trees, make the perfect garden bed, one to be very proud of with plenty of beautiful hibiscus blooms.

Don't lose heart as every gardener even in the southern parts of Queensland, have had a hard time this past summer. Just think if your plants have not flowered as you would like them to, that they have had a spell and are ready to show you some of their best blooms this winter.

Walter Willcox
President of Whitsunday Burdekin Branch

DRYING HIBISCUS SEEDS

In "Breed your own Vegetables" by Carol Deppe in a section on storing and drying seed including Hibiscus in general she states:-"Seed dried at room temperature usually has a moisture content of 10 to 20 percent. That is not dry enough to store in airtight containers or to freeze. Such seed should be stored in paper envelopes or bags or other containers that allow some air exchange. Seed stored in paper is subject to attack from insects or pests however. In addition, many kinds of seed have insects or insect eggs in them as they come from the field. Such seeds will be destroyed inevitably if we do not take measures to kill the insects or insect eggs. Freezing is a good preventative measure. Only very dry seed can be stored in plastic bags, jars, or other airtight containers. And only very dry seed can be frozen.

To dry seed to the very dry stage for freezing or storing in airtight containers, you can use either silica gel or a food dehydrator that has a thermostat. You cannot use a home oven. You set the thermostat to 95 degrees F and dry the seeds for up to about 8 hours. If you use equal weights of seed and silica gel, a few days or less is usually sufficient. Silica gel is likely to be most useful for small amounts of seeds".

From information sent by Fred Westerman

CARE OF NEW PLANTS

Written by Jim Purdie

This article is for the attention of our new members who have purchased plants at the Annual Shows or at your nursery selling hibiscus plants.

The first thing to look at is the position where you intend to plant the hibiscus. It should be in a well drained garden, preferably on its own where it will get at least half a days sun, [a full days sun is even better for production of blooms]. When I say “preferably on its own” I mean hibiscus do not like to have their roots disturbed, therefore it is not a good idea to plant hibiscus with other annuals which you will be digging out when they have finished flowering. Hibiscus have surface roots and when digging around them these fine roots can be disturbed and broken, thus putting the hibiscus into shock, causing it to not grow and flower well. For the same reason a stake should be placed beside them to stop the roots from being disturbed when the wind blows, also tie the bush with a piece of pantyhose—I find this best as it stretches with the trunk of the plant as it expands and does not cut into the bark of the bush.

Always plant the bush at the same level as when in the pot. The soil should be prepared before planting with plenty of organic matter, well rotted manure and compost. It is a good idea to sprinkle some dolomite around to bring your soil PH up to around 6.2 to 6.5, which is the ideal PH for hibiscus to thrive. This should be done a few weeks prior to planting the bush. Plant the bushes about one metre apart and use a stake about 150 cms. To 180 cms tall [5 to 6 foot] to allow the plant to be tied as it grows taller..In the cooler weather the bushes will not grow very quickly because of the weather, but they will forming a root system and will be ready to shoot away in the spring.

Water them well when planting with some fish emulsion which helps prevent planting shock, and keep moist during the winter, but not too wet, as hibiscus do not like wet feet, i.e. they do not like sitting in water. If you have shale or clay in your yard it is a good idea to build the garden beds up 30 to 40 cms. [12 to 14 inches] so the water will drain away.

After about 1 month a light dressing of fertiliser can be applied, then it is only a matter of regular feeding and watering for the plans to start flowering.

Should you have any questions about growing hibiscus why don't you go along to the nearest Branch or Chapter to where you live or ask your preferred on line hibiscus organization, and experienced growers can help you with your problems.

In the other parts of the world the plants are grown in pots and have to be kept inside the house or in the hot house during winter for protection. They can then be taken outside for a few months in the hotter weather, which is the only way that the plants can survive in the climate experienced. The members have to be congratulated for being so enthusiastic about their plants.

I hope that some one from the colder regions will forward an article on how they grow their plants in pots and be able to produce blooms

A LITTLE BIT OF HUMOUR

A man goes to a party and has too much to drink.

His friends plead with him to let them take him home. He says no— he only lives a mile away.

About five blocks from the party, the police pull him over for weaving , and ask him to get out of the car and walk the line. Just as he starts, the police radio blares out a notice of a robbery taking place in a house, just a block away. The police tell the party animal to stay put, they will be right back. They hop a fence and run down the street to the robbery.

The guy waits and waits and finally decides to drive home.

When he gets there, he tells his wife he is going to bed, and to tell anyone who might come looking for him that he has the flu and has been in bed all day. A few hours later the police knock on the door.

They ask if Mr. X is there and his wife says yes. They ask to see him and she replies that he is in bed with the flu and has been so all day.

The police have his driver's license. They ask to see his car and she asks why. They insist on seeing his car, so she takes them to the garage. She opens the door. There sitting in the garage is the police car, with all its lights still flashing.

SOME GOOD BROWNS.

By Jim Purdie

Brown hibiscus flowers are one of my favourite colours from all the different colours we are presented with every day, from around the world. I think it is amazing that the hybridisers have been able to produce such elegant blooms, when you think all they had to start with was a red.

I have checked the International Hibiscus rosa-sinensis Cultivar Register/Check list, and I am listing the brown flowers which the following blooms have produced, from the photos which are available, as many of the early blooms do not have photos on record to be able to show what colour they are, and also how many times they have been used as a parent from the listings of the blooms which have been registered, the ones that are not registered we will never know what was used in the breeding of them

There are many brown blooms around and some of my favourites are Herm Geller [Topaz Glory X Joyce A], and was bred by Joe Ludick of the USA, and has appeared in a lot of the crosses which have been made, and according to the International Hibiscus Check List it has been used as a Mother 22 times, and it has produced 7 brown prodigy, which are as follows, Ester Denslow [Harry Goulding], Mango Chutney, Puppy [both Elizabeth Jordan], Renee Rose, Sunny Moon both Harry Goulding], Tahitian Brown Gold and Tahitian Suntan [both Richard Johnson].

When it was used as a Father it produced 75 crosses, but there were not as many browns when it was used as a father, in the Check List there are photos of 3 Browns, Jayella [Brian Kerr], Not Lately [Harry Goulding] and Tahitian Tan [Richard Johnson].

Next popular flower, which has been used a lot in hybridizing is Topaz Glory [Grey Lady X Black Beauty by Joe Ludick], The Check List informs us that it was used 126 times as a mother and from the photos which are available there are 14 browns, the most famous is of course Herm Geller, and there is French Toast [Topaz Glory X Emma Jolly, by G & E Howard] and Hokus Pokus [Topaz Glory X Centaur by A & E Little].

When it was used as Father it produced 80 crosses, with 5 browns from what photos which are available, including Chico Leite [Old Spot X Topaz Glory by Joe Ludick], Mother Earth [Ruby Brown X Topaz Glory by Brian Kerr] and Muddy Waters Fiesta X Topaz Glory by Brian Kerr].

Tigerama [Katherine X For Pete's Sake by Maurice Clement] is the next bloom which I like and it is a HOTY winner in the USA in 2002, and there are no listings for Mother or Father as yet, but I do know there has been some crosses made using Tigerama, so we will see its offspring appearing in the register at a later date when they become available.

Devils Gold [Joyce A X Red Bomb by Harry Goulding] has produced 48 blooms as a mother, some of which are brown, Great Satan [Devils Gold X Lotta Luck by Harry Goulding], Jitterbug [Devils Gold X Sinbad by Harry Goulding] and Peeping Tom [Devils Gold X Lady Carol by Harry Goulding].

As a Father it has produced 11 flowers , but only one brown mainly in Golden Lotto [Inez Blue X Devils Gold by Hubert Groszmann].

Great Satan which Devil's Gold produced has itself produced 5 blooms as a father.

Other browns, which I like are Orville Davis [Wallflower X Willie Nelson by Tom Miller], Campfire Girl [Charcoal X Blackeye by Barry & Susan Schlueter], Surf N Sand [by Reg Cornwell], Golden Sunset [seedling 7/138 X seedling [Cinnamon X Harmony] by Reg Cornwell], Halloween Party [Unknown], Werribee Tan [Unknown parents by Reg Cornwell], Palomino [Native Dancer X Geisha Girl by Marie Yundis]

As I wrote this article for the Hibiscus International back in 30th January 2005, and it was never used, it does not cover all the good browns which have been bred since this article was written, and this could be the subject of another article at a later date

I am enclosing some of the photos of the brown blooms which I have talked about for your enjoyment and to further your knowledge of our favorite flower..



Herm Geller Joe Ludick



Ester Denslow Harry Goulding



Mango Chutney Beth Jordan



Puppy Beth Jordan



Renee Rose Harry Goulding



Tahitian Suntan R Johnson



Topaz Glory Joe Ludick



Hokus Pokus Allan & Elaine Little



Chico Liete Joe Ludick



Tigerama Maurice Clement

Hibiscus International



Devils Gold Harry Goulding

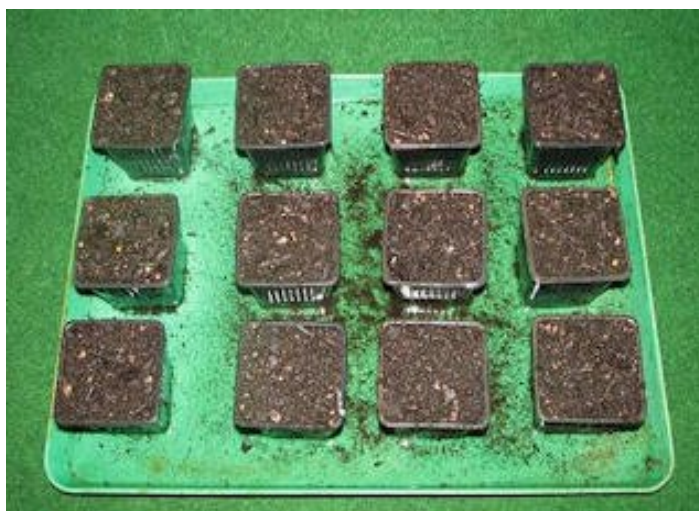


Great Satan Harry Goulding

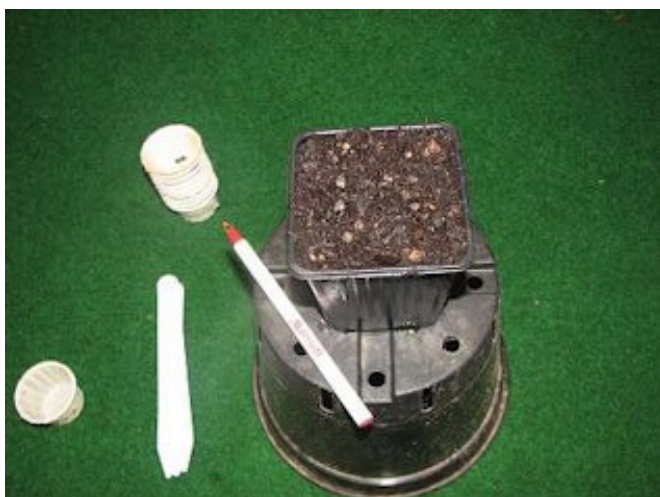
SEED GERMINATION AND GROWING METHODS - MY WAY

by Richard Johnson

I live in a sub tropical climate where annual variation in temperatures go from lows of 65 F (19 C) to highs of about 93 F (33 C) with humidity from 65 to 95%. For me what works depends upon the number of seed in the pod. If there are 1 to 6 seeds in a pod, I plant the seed individually in seedling trays. Below [left] is the arrangement with newly emerging seedlings just a few days after having been planted.



If there are more I simply to plant the contents of a pod in 4" square pots. If there are many seeds in the pod I will use a second or third pot with no more that 4 rows of 4 seed or 16 per 4" square pot. I start by first watering the pots, fully saturated as above [right] It is probably best to let them drain a bit, but I find it isn't really necessary.



Since I often do several dozen at a time, I set each individual pot on a bench at a height that I find comfortable. Otherwise, if I have been bending all this time, it kills my back. I use a pencil or pen to make holes in the planting media so that I can easily plant each seed around two or three times its diameter deep. The seed is nicked in advance and the tags prepared so that one can go from one community pot to the next quite quickly.[See above left] These seeded community pots are then placed on a bench in my shade house in the sunniest area. Full sun would be great, but they need to be protected from torrential rains which can wash the seed out of the pots. The first start to appear in a few days and most all are up within a month. Some may come up root first, in which case, using the tip of a pencil, I replant them in the same pot, root down and cotyledon leaves up. I plant seed at regular intervals to have a continuous supply of seedlings in various stages of development. In the photo above [right], you see the newly planted seed and those planted a couple of week earlier with good germination.

By about two months, I separate the seedlings and plant them separately in a 4" square pot. I find hibiscus seedlings are very tolerant and can be completely bare rooted when transplanting, although I avoid that as much as possible. Some few might wilt a bit, but in just a day or two all look like they have been growing in their new pot all their lives. However, care must be taken to keep these new transplants well watered and shaded for this couple of day transition period. When they have grown to 4 to 6" they are ready to be transplanted. [Those pictured on next page on left could have been transplanted several weeks earlier.]



From this stage, I transplant them into 4 L square pots and place them on the roof of my house where I grow most of my hibiscus. They are planted in rows 5 pots wide by 80 pots long or 400 per row, where they will remain until they bloom or even longer, until I decide what to do with them. They will either go to the to-be-disposed of area, the to-be-observed area or directly to the potential keeper area, where they are transplanted into 12 L pots. As the first bloom plants are removed, the taller plants are moved to the back of the row so that new seedling can replace those removed. This is an ongoing process, which accounts for why I have seedlings going most all the time at various stages. [see above right]

I used to try to acclimate the 4 to 6" tall seedlings grown in a shade house, and still do if I have the space, before moving them up on the roof in full sun. However, I have found if the stems are thick enough (at least 1/8 in - 3 mm in diameter) they can go directly into full tropical sun. In the following photo, [left] you see the sunburned leaves. There were many more earlier, but at this stage the burned leaves are being replaced by new ones as the plants adapt to full tropical sun conditions. Seedlings seem to do very well in full sun, but once planted in 12 L pots and maturing



The first blooms occur in our climate starting at 6 months. The majority bloom in 9 to 12 months but a few still haven't bloom after two years. The potential keeper seedlings are transplanted into 12 L pots and placed with the others for longer term observation in rows 3 pots wide by 40 pots long or 120 per row.

This is the system I currently use, which has been developed over time. Actually it is more of less the first system I used, but I experimented for a time with planting seed directly into the 4 L pots on the roof. That saved many steps; however, even though the seedlings germinate very well in full sun, I found it takes them a long time to adapt and start growing vigorously. I also use to wait until a lot of bloomed seedlings had been removed and then plant a whole row, but I found that wasteful since by routinely filling is the spaces with new seedlings, I get a maximum utilization of the space available.

As to the planting media, for germination I use Bloom Potting Mix, which does have fertilizer. I use to use seed germinating mix with no fertilizer, since fertilizer can burn new seedlings. However, I have found the time release fertilizer in Bloom Potting Mix works great and seems adequate until the final transplanting into 4 L pots. At that stage, since the volume is such that it is too costly to use prepared potting mixes, I use a mix of 1/3 rd coarse cracked sand, 1/3 rd stable dropping with saw dust and 1/3 rd normal soil, all of which is by no means sterile. It isn't the best solution since the soil will eventually compact reducing drainage which results in root based fungal problems and tip die back, but I just live with those losses, which are only a very small percentage of the plants I grow. Nevertheless, the loss of an exceptional seedling, uncommon as that might be, is painful. Hence, for the best seedlings, I do try to get grafted duplicates growing and get wood to others as a safe guard.

2008 SOTY WINNERS



Winner of the SOTY Competition for 2008
Tah. Imperial Topaz with 79.28 votes
Richard Johnson



Second Place with 78.14 votes
Tah. Sable Twin
Richard Johnson



Third Place with 76.5 votes
Tah. Double Splashes
Richard Johnson



Fourth Place with 75 votes
Tah. Pretty Boy R Johnson



Fifth Place with 74.85 votes
Tah. Drtagon Queen R Johnson



Sixth Place with 74.28 votes
Tah. Gabonaise R Johnson



Seventh Place with 72 votes
Tah. Gray Ghost
Richard Johnson



Eight Place with 71.92 votes
Tah. Pink Parade
Richard Johnson



Ninth Place with 71.42 votes
Tah. Ring of Fire
Richard Johnson



Tenth Place with 71.18 votes
Cherry Blossom X Anita R
Peter Moll.

These 10 plants will now go into the HOTY {Hibiscus of the Year} Competition and will be grown by the Evaluators and the Judges will select a winner from the information sent by the Evaluators.

GOING GREEN

By Bob Carran from the USA

Are you thinking of going green; greenhouse that is? If you have a little space to put your potted plants why not build you own greenhouse to shade them and keep them warm during the winter.. One easy way is to use pvc pipe. It is rather inexpensive, light, and easy to work with. Although I had never built anything I saw some similar plans on the internet and decided to sit down with a pad of paper and a pencil and create my own plans.

I decided to make a greenhouse 8' x 16' since the pieces of pvc came in 8' lengths and I had the area in which to put it. Everything I cut would be in multiples of 2' or 4'. I went to a home improvement store and looked at the sizes of the pvc pieces and the connectors and decided on a little building with a pitched roof since the connectors were either a 45 degrees or 90 degrees. The base would be cheap landscape timbers and wouldn't have to be cut and they also come in 8' lengths. Being heavy they would hold down the frame and hold up in fairly strong winds. A little can of pvc glue to join the pvc, some U shape connectors would hold the frame to the landscape timbers, and a few screws would keep the frame secure. And of course you would need a little hand held pvc pipe cutter to cut the pvc into proper lengths. Once the frame was built I had to find an easy way to attach the plastic cover to the frame. Some cheap lath strips could be attached along the pvc with electrical ties and after finishing that the plastic could be stapled to it . Making a door was a bit harder for me. I made it out of a few pieces of wood. Being made of wood it once again was an easy material to cut (with a jig saw) and to staple.

The greenhouse is now 3 years old and has withstood hurricane force winds a couple of times. Attached is a picture of the inside showing the frame and the inner workings. It holds about 250 gallon size pots which are placed on 8' x 1' closet shelves. An 8' x 8' greenhouse would hold about 125 plants. As the old saying goes, "If I can do it so can you".



TPC Winners 2009-1



HOOSIERS [Winner]



Tah. Sable Twin [Second]



Cubed Harvest Moon [Third]



Simply Stunning [Fourth]



Touch of Class [Fifth]

Hoosiers entered by Dennis Bojic
 Tah. Sable Twin entered by Richard Johnson
 Cubed Harvest Moon entered by Sergio Fonseca.
 Simply Stunning entered by Mark Davidson.
 Touch of Class entered by Mark Davidson.

Seedling 2009-1 Winners



Gray Goddess [First]



Tah. Silver Rainbow [Second]



Tah. Black Rainbow [Third]



Tah. Antique Purple [Fourth]



Tah. Dearest Virginie [Fifth]



Tah. Imperial Midnight [Sixth]

BUD DROP

Written by Jim Purdie.

Below is my answer to the question which is put to me by people when I give talks and at displays "Why do the buds drop off my hibiscus".

There are many causes for this problem, and it occurs when the plants are under some type of stress, like too much water, or not enough water, especially in hot weather. Make sure that you keep the water up to your plants regularly, and you have to be very careful in the heat that you supply enough moisture to the soil for the plants to be able to draw up enough moisture from the ground, otherwise they will drop their buds. Never allow the soil to dry out. Over watering can also cause the buds to drop, by causing the essential nutrients to be leached from the soil, thus causing a lack of nourishment to the buds, and they fall. This can happen when we get a lot of rain and the ground is saturated. Excessive amounts of fertiliser can also trigger bud drop, especially if you use large amounts of Nitrogen, as this will trigger a burst of new growth, and all the energy will go to the new leaves and the buds will not get enough of the nutrients, and bud drop will follow. Changeable weather patterns will also cause bud drop, especially if there is a big difference in the day and night temperatures. Rainy weather after a dry spell will often start the buds falling, as the rain acts the same way as too much nitrogen and causes a burst of new growth, to the detriment of the buds, for a little while. Insects are a big cause of bud drop, especially the Harlequin Bug and the Harlequin Beetle, as they suck the juice from the junction where the bud joins the stem, and this causes the bud to fall. I have seen buds fall after people have sprayed with insecticides, especially if they use too strong a mixture. Mulching the garden beds will help with the moisture problem in the hot weather, as it stops the moisture from being dried up by the sun, and the soil stays nice and moist and cool and the plants are not so stressed. This is especially so when there is no rain and severe water restrictions are enforced. Some varieties have this tendency to drop their buds more than other plants, and hybridisers should take this into consideration when they are choosing their parents for their hybridising. Doubles in hot weather are known for dropping their buds, as they take so long to open, and they can be affected by all of the above symptoms, while they are trying to develop. There can be a combination of all of these symptoms which will cause your problem with bud drop, so you have to look at fixing all the problems, if you are going to stop the bud drop, although in the hot weather, I am afraid it is a bit of a losing battle. It is best not to expect too many flowers in the hot weather, and be content to wait for the cooler weather to come.

I have it said to me that people think that some insect nicks the buds off, which can happen if you get an attack of the Harlequin bugs and beetles, but it can be a natural thing for the plants to do this whenever the plant is under some type of stress, and it is usually during the summer heat, and soon as the weather cools down the buds will stay on, and you will start to get more flowers.

I.H.S. SEED BANK OFFICER'S REPORT

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Species Seed stock 31st December 2008; 5010 seeds [being almost 3000 H. syriacus seeds]

Seeds distributed Jan/March 2009; 550

Seed stock per 1st April 4460 seeds

Rosa Sinensis Hybrid Seeds;

Seed stock 31st December 2008; 2868 seeds

Entries Jan/March 2009; 1028 seeds

Distributed Seeds Jan/March 2009; 448 seeds

Hybrid Seed stock 1st April 2009; 3448 seeds

During these three months we have distributed seeds to 22 members in 15 countries