



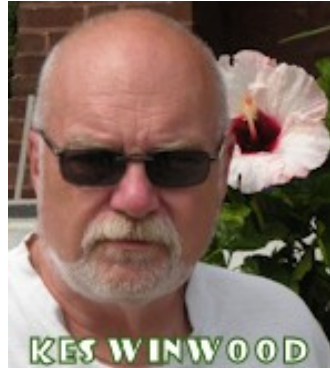
Hibiscus International

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Tah. Princess
2003 HOTA



KES WINWOOD



Tah. Trop. Splendor
2004 HOTA

SPECIAL
POINTS OF
INTEREST :

- > Presidents Message
Page 1
- > Editors Report Page 2

INSIDE
THIS
ISSUE :

Feature Story
Hibiscus of Moorea
By Charles Atiu Page 3

Inside Story
Valentines Day Love
Stories
Page 11

More Pictures from
Moorea
Page 12

PRESIDENTS REPORT

It has been said that ancient armies marched on their stomachs - in other words, without food and water they were in trouble. The IHS can be seen in a similar light except the IHS is sustained by all of our volunteers. Our volunteers are our lifeline and without them, we would cease to exist.

From the very beginning, the society has relied on volunteers to accomplish everything that now exists on our website. Over the years, the names and the faces may have changed but throughout, it has been the selfless dedication of countless individuals who have made the organization what it is today.

I think most members would be surprised by all the work that goes on unheralded behind the scenes to keep the society functioning smoothly whether it be committee work, being a judge for the HOTA competition, donating seeds to the auction, being a BOD member or writing an article for our quarterly magazine. Never have so few done so much for so many! I want to publically thank all these people for their ongoing contributions. You know who you are, so give yourself a pat on the back.

It is when we lose a long serving volunteer that we become aware of just how much they contribute. It reminds me of a famous speech by JFK, which I paraphrase, when he said - "Ask not what your society can do for you, rather ask what you can do for your society".

Can you help?



Moorea Baby Lou X Tahitian Fireball
Hybridized by Charles Atiu



Moorea Sangrilla Pourpre X Red Red
Wine Hybridized by Charles Atiu



Moorea Memory of July hybridized by Charles Atiu



Moorea Spring Ice hybridized by Charles Atiu

EDITORS REPORT

My hat is off to Jim Purdie who has decided to step down as newsletter editor. Jim has done a great job as editor the past couple of years and his shoes will be hard to fill. My special thanks to Jim for providing me with his Publisher template enabling me to continue the same newsletter format Jim has used the past few years.

The newsletter is always only as good as its contributors so I must also give a big thank you to Charles Atiu for his large contribution to this issue. Thanks also to Gail Cah, Finn Langwadt, and Damon Veach for taking the time to answer my Valentines Day questions. I hope all readers of this newsletter will find it interesting and entertaining.

Ian Rabenda

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HIBISCUS OF MOOREA

By Charles Atiu

Translated from French by Marie and Ian Rabenda

I'm originally from French Polynesia, the island of Raiatea, an island known as the sacred island because that is where it all started for the Polynesians. I have lived in Moorea since childhood on land inherited from my mother. The property is 100 meters wide and one kilometer long. Ten hectares of land to share in ten equal parts, because we are ten brothers and sisters.

I am a state certified professional horticulturist. My passion for agriculture comes from my grandfather who introduced me to the subject when I was thirteen years old. He taught me to have a basic elementary respect for nature. For over twenty years I worked as a commercial fisherman and at the same time I worked as a landscaper. My company operated in Tahiti and Moorea.

I first began looking at hibiscus over twenty years ago. The reason was to have a greater range of varieties of hibiscus to meet the demand of the local population. Years have passed and I have made progress with my hybridizing. Since my first days I have produced between 1,000 and 5,000 new varieties each year the numbers depending on the focus of my research. Currently, I am, frankly, unable to identify all of my plants because there are thousands, but the main thing for me is to leave a legacy, so my children and grandchildren can remember me wherever they go. In my garden, I kept a few thousand of my hybrids to keep myself busy and also to help my family in the commercial sector if they wish.

For several years now I am affiliated with the IHS on Richard Johnson's invitation. I have had the privilege of showing some of my hybrids. I present you with these pictures, the world in which I live every day. I certainly could not show you everything all at once, it's impossible given the very large size of my garden, about 400 meters long and 25 meters wide on average.



The entrance to my place starts with these rows of hibiscus that surround my house.



Some of my hibiscus in the mountains, mostly double flowers, these plants are a year and half old. This part of the garden will be done in three phases. Phase one above will be a first pruning in November of this year 2011.





Above, phase 3 of the garden on the mountain. Note that 99% of these plants are my hybrids. In the background to the left you can see a small crop of hibiscus “sabdarifa”.

Below, the expansion project underway. Site preparation for a new planting of hibiscus. I still have 600 meters of unused land, so I have enough room to continue my projects if my health and my spirits are not lacking.



Now let me go down to the main part of the garden where I keep the major portion of my plants, some for work, and some for sentimental reasons.



About 55% of all of my plants are concentrated here. The plants are arranged at intervals of 70 to 80 cm in all directions.



In summary the land is intensively cultivated with many varieties combined, and it takes a lot of care, time, and energy. Much remains to be done to improve the site but it will take a lot of manual work. Plants grow in a natural environment, we try to minimize chemical inputs of fertilizers or pesticides. Most of my island has a problem with water supply. We have three tanks of water, Two with a capacity of 5,000 liters, and one with 3,500 liters. It is essential to have enough water if we want to grow hibiscus.

Hibiscus of Moorea—my thoughts on hybridizing

I'll try to explain the basics of how I see things in a way that is as simple as possible. Some may not agree with my way of doing things, nevertheless this is my personal rationale arrived at after years of work. In the area of genetics, one generally expects theory to be reflected in the results but with hibiscus, the outcome is often unexpected. In theory $1+1=2$ but this is not always the case when hybridizing hibiscus. Theory assumes and predicts a logical result but in practice, the results may either confirm or contradict what we expected. Theory goes hand in hand with practice but it is the results that matter. Our efforts need to be guided by the evidence or the concrete results.

This means that any one, whatever their social status or race, can do his own research provided that he is very attentive and conscientious. The results help us to progress and succeed with our research. There is a saying "associate with masters to become a master". Encouraging words for anyone who is a beginning hybridizer. Hybridizing should be more than just trying to duplicate what others have already done but be creative and inspired by other hybridizers. As a hybridizer I rely on three very important things:

- careful observation to detect the smallest details that might help us understand and manage most of our objectives.
- curiosity is helpful in pushing us to understand the why of things which is essential for learning.
- Intuition is a quality that helps one to discern what the eye cannot see. All human beings possess this quality to a greater or lesser extent.

I hope your curiosity will be aroused by the many pictures of my Moorea hybrids throughout this newsletter. As for your intuition, I'll leave that up to your own discernment. To help you in your research you can use the I.H.S. database. You have the genealogy and some flowers that appear for the first time, parents names are listed below the photo. If flower names do not appear in the records, just ask me.



Moorea Patarea



Moorea Hui Ohana X Starburst

More of Charles Atiu's pictures on page 12

Hibiscus of Moorea—New creations

Each hybridizer has his own criteria for creating a new variety and will seek to externalize what he thinks, feels and dreams in the depths of his soul. The majority of hybridizers seek to make their dream a reality. By all evidence this is also my case. The primary goal is not necessarily to please others, but rather to please one's self and to share our joy with those around us. The degree of beauty or ugliness is dictated by one's sense of learned aesthetics and for each of us this is different. So judge for yourself.

On the following pages some new hybrids are presented that I have not shown before. These flowers are still being tested to gauge their visual qualities and to test their potential for transmission.

Some of you will appreciate the color, others the size or shape or position of the flower, or perhaps even the longevity of the flower. For others, everything is significant. The purpose of all this is to understand how genes were able to express such colors. How does a hybridizer's dream come true? We would have to put ourselves in the place of the hybridizer to understand. I encourage you to analyze each cross closer; sometimes the genetic combinations have nothing to do with the immediate parents.

To conclude this article I would just direct you to the IHS website and refer you to the word Moorea under the letter "M" to see more examples of my hybrids. You will discover there some hybrids that may catch your interest, and perhaps, inspire some of you to become hybridizers yourselves.

<http://www.internationalhibiscussociety.org/SEArchive/M/cvindex1.php?letter=m>



Above: this hybrid is the result of crossing Moorea Mona Rainbow x Moorea Mon Petite Prince. The flower size is 18cm, the flower is upright to lateral and lasts two days.

Below: this hybrid is the result of crossing Moorea Coralie x Moorea Sublime A. The flower size is 14cm, the flower is upright to lateral and lasts one to two days.





Above: this hybrid resulted from crossing Moorea Ivory x Moorea Sumo Red. The flower size is 18cm, the flower is upright and lasts two days.

Below: this hybrid is a double, the result of crossing Moorea Tupuna Seven x Rosalind. The flower size is 17cm, the flower is upright and lasts two days.



A LOVE AFFAIR FOR VALENTINE'S DAY!

OR HIBISCUSITIS, HOW DOES IT GET STARTED???

Finn Langwadts

First of all, I live in Denmark and the climate is rather hostile to hibiscus. You can't grow them in your garden because it is too cold most of the year, so you have to grow them in pots and keep them indoors for most of the year. I have mine outside from late May to mid September. This year temperatures have been below zero degrees Celsius since early December and down to -28 Celsius. Today it is -2.

I got my first hibiscus some 20 years ago and I still have that plant. It is now a small tree with a stem at 15 cm in diameter and 2,5 meter in height. I have made a lot of grafts on it, more than 15 I think and some 15 years ago I thought I was one of the first to graft hibiscus. I got a lot wiser. I have had up to 8 different blooms at the same time. In 2004 I saw the IHS homepage for the first time and I realized that hibiscus was more than the 4 or 5 no-name hibiscus I had. At that time the IHS homepage had a hibiscus seeds auction and I had never tried to grow hibiscus from seeds so I started bidding. I won two lots, one from Dick Johnson and one from Sonny Stollings.

My first registered hibiscus came from the cross Calico Cat X Impossible Dream (hybridized by Dick Johnson) and the first bloom came exactly on the day my first granddaughter was born and of course I named it after her as Langwadts Tilde Thrysoe. Eight of the nine seeds in that cross gave blooms worth keeping and **if that doesn't give you the hibiscusitis virus nothing will**. Also the cross from Sonny (Smokey Mountain X Blue Thunder) gave 4 blooms worth keeping. Over time I have grown (still do) many seedlings from Dick, Sonny, Allan Little and Charles Atiu and the virus hasn't left me yet.

Gail Cah

Here in South Africa there have always been the more common varieties of Hibiscus Rosa Sinensis such as Brilliant, Apple Blossom (known here as Canary Island), Ross Estey, White Dainty etc, some of which have been growing in my garden since I bought this property over 20 years ago.

About three years ago, my younger son, Malcolm (who can get anything to grow), came back home after working in the U.K. for six and a half years, and we decided to start up a small nursery from scratch on my property of just over half an acre. We started with one small green-house in which to grow seedlings, and I started looking on the Internet for seeds of plants that one doesn't normally see in South Africa. And thus I discovered **HIBISCUS ROSA SINENSIS SEEDS !!!**

These CV's pictured as parents, we had never seen in South Africa and the varieties available in other countries was just mind boggling. **WE WERE TOTALLY HOOKED !!!**

Then began the process of actually seeing what was available here and looking to see if anyone was hybridising in South Africa. Nobody is doing this and the only available CV's were from grafted plants. So we decided to start buying & germinating seeds, and, at a later stage, becoming Hybridisers ourselves. Still, we both knew very little about Hibiscus and the different species, and were taken for quite a few rides by fraudulent sellers of "Hibiscus Rosa Sinensis" seeds on the Internet – but we learnt from our trusting mistakes !!!

Then I discovered the International Hibiscus Society !!!

The luckiest day of my life was when I signed up as a member, and since then we have received seeds from the Seed Bank, have learned who we can trust when buying seeds through the Internet, what to do and what NOT to do, met fabulous and generous people who are only too willing to help those who know virtually nothing, with advice, seeds & cuttings, and made sure that we both contracted the Deadly and Incurable **Hibiscusitis Virus !!!**

We now have about 300 seedlings in total ranging from 3 weeks to 14 months old, and more waiting to be set for germination, about 50 cuttings that are growing on their own roots and about 20 different grafted CV's that we bought which are growing in the garden.

Damon Veach

While working for the newspaper here in Baton Rouge, a friend on the copy desk was chosen to be the new editor of the San Juan Star in Puerto Rico. One of the first things he did when moving there was to purchase a guest house. Everything was going just fine until he ran out of money and couldn't buy the furniture to complete the project so he could open it to the public. I became an investor in the Wind Chimes Guest House at this time, and on my first trip down to the island, I fell in love with all the hibiscus on the property and all over the city and up into the rain forest. I brought back cuttings and then made my first purchase of a White Wings hibiscus from a local nursery. From that point on, my collection and interest grew until I took my family on vacation to Florida.

It was at Fairchild Gardens that I came across information on the American Hibiscus Society, so I immediately joined. This was in the early 1980s. The rest of the story has been a continuing love of this beautiful flower, and I continue to study and learn as much as I can. I now find hybridizing to be a rewarding part of my life. I guess you could conclude that I have found peace in my gardens among my hibiscus.



Above: Moorea Shadow Shadow



Above: Moorea Parade Sun



Above: Moorea Senior Charles



Above: Moorea Yellow Crown



Above: Moorea Snow Splashes



Above: Moorea Vaiete

