



HIBISCUS INTERNATIONAL



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A Tribute to BOBBY DUPONT

and more!

ROBERT "BOBBY" J. DUPONT

October 1, 1928 - May 19, 2017

Robert J. Dupont Sr. passed peacefully from this life on Friday, May 19, surrounded by family and friends. Born to L.C. "Jack" Dupont and Eudora LeBlanc Dupont in Plaquemine, La. on October 1, 1928, Bobby Dupont was a life-long flower and plant enthusiast with an international reputation among Hibiscus growers and hybridizers, establishing the trademark "Cajun Hibiscus."

As an army veteran serving in post-WWII Germany, he made fast friends with German locals. Over the years, he and his wife Dorothy (Bootsie) returned several times to Germany to rekindle friendships and these memories were among his fondest.

From 1953 to 1991 he owned and operated Dupont Florist, and beginning in 1985 he co-owned with two of his sons, the Dupont Wholesale Nursery. He served on the Board of Louisiana Wholesale Florist for thirty-two years; and for many years was an elected member of the Iberville Parish School Board.

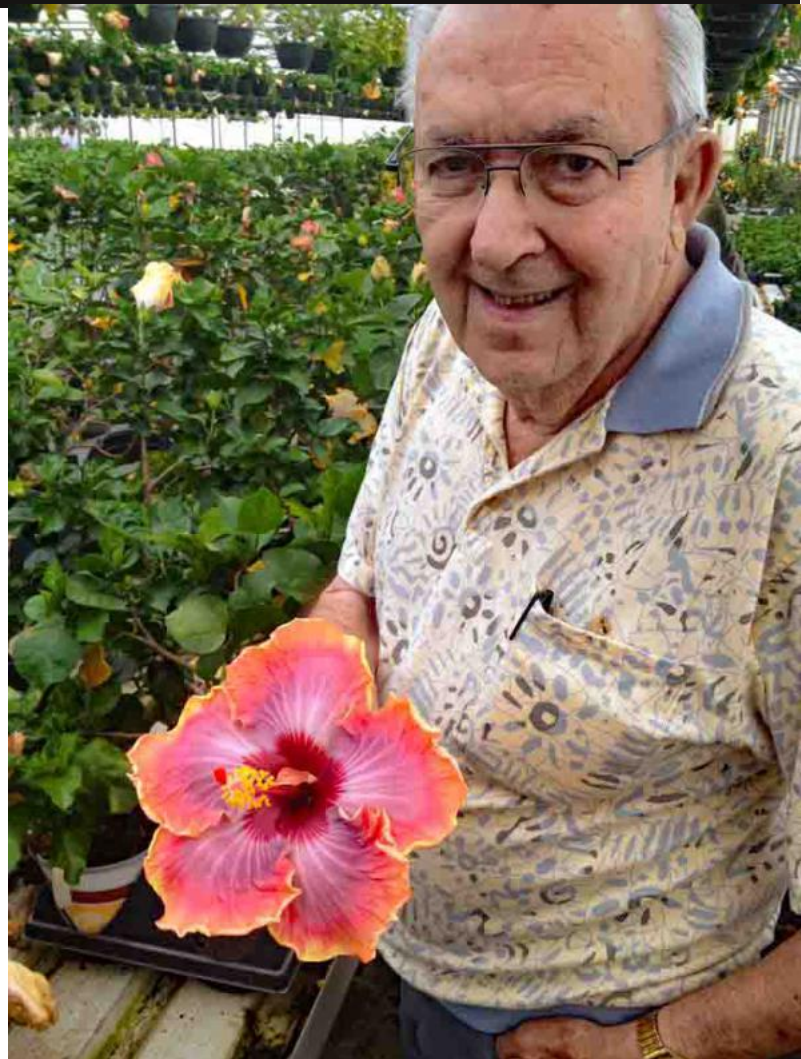
Funeral services were conducted by Rev. Robert Gerlich, S.J., a close personal friend and collaborator in all things Hibiscus, at St. John the Evangelist Church in Plaquemine, La. on Monday, May 22, 2017. Bobby was afterwards interred at Grace Memorial Cemetery.

Bobby Dupont is survived by his wife of sixty-three years, Dorothy Evelyn Lefebvre, and a sister Ida Helen (Tootie) Guidry, wife of George Guidry, and by his loyal family friend and housekeeper of sixty-three years, Liddie Dickerson. His four sons are all residents of Plaquemine. His twelve grandchildren and eighteen great-grandchildren enriched his life.

(Adapted from an obituary published by Wilbert Funeral Home, Plaquemine, Louisiana)

"Very sad news indeed. We all will leave this life in time, but any of us should be so lucky as to have left such a heritage in the Hibiscus world. I have a number of his cvs, and I will remember him with each and every bloom."

Richard Johnson



*Bobby Dupont with Puff's Dragon
©2008 - 2017 Wilbert Funeral Home*



A WATERING SYSTEM

My solution to the daily care of about 2,000 plants

by Richard Johnson



Dick and Chantal

Dick and Chantal's beautiful mountain top home on the island of Tahiti.

I have an automated watering system that has evolved over the years. It now consists of a dozen battery operated timers feeding as many watering lines with from 150 to 400 water emitters per line. Each emitter services one plant potted in from 4 L to 30 L pots - somewhere around 2,000 plants in all growing on the roof of my house. I have recently inserted an EZ Flow 1.5 gallon inline fertilization system which fertilizes at low dosage with every watering – very efficient and economic. Fast flowing lines water for 5

minutes per day and slow flowing lines for 15 minutes per day. I fill the EZ Flow tank, approximately monthly, with 4.5 liters of water soluble Kristalon 15/5/30+3 Mg + minor elements and 3 cups of potassium nitrate [KNO₃] and 3 cups of magnesium sulphate [MGS04]. I use it at the lowest dosage setting so that I have to refill the tank less often. It has quadrupled my bloom count, bushes are looking better with notable new growth, and my ever chlorotic Rum Runner now has nice green leaves.



The battery operated water timer manifold



Above: The EZ flow 1.5 gallon tank, which hold about 5 liter of dry water soluble fertilizer. I will also be adding a fungicide to the mix in the future.

Below: The valve system modification to install the EZ Flow system. Looks complicated but in reality is fairly simple. On each side of the red "T" valve is the feed line to the tank "black' and the fertilized return line 'clear"- hard to see in photo.





One type of water emitter that I use for larger pots

This system replaces my older method of monthly application of a granular fertilizer of about the same formula. That was a half day back breaking job, which since I have a touchy back, I often paid someone to do. Can't imagine how much I spent on that, which could have been avoided had I gone to the above EZ flow system which only takes 10 minutes to refill.

I also treat with a foliar spray once monthly with a soup of insecticide, acaracide, fungicide, KNO₃, MGS4. If I stay on that schedule I get a lot of pretty clean to perfect blooms.

A fertilizer injection system has much more precise dosage control, but is costlier and has mechanical parts that can fail. For me its major drawback is that the injector cannot be installed with constant line pressure. The EZ flow system has imprecise dosage rates which I measure with a cheap TDS [total dissolved salts] tester I got from Amazon. In testing I have found the lowest flow rate lines have the lowest dosage - TDS. Nevertheless, even with such imprecision

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and variation from line to line [which might occur even with a fertilizer injector], the bloom count seems similar from plants on each of the nearly dozen lines.

I went with this system as it was cheaper, more maintenance free, and could be installed with constant line pressure. It was a bit of an experiment. If it didn't produce good results I had planned to upgrade to a fertilizer injection system, assuming I could create an installation that could feed the dozen watering lines I have. For the moment I am satisfied with the EZ Flow system I have installed. EZ Flow systems come in all sizes and price ranges. The least expensive is for use on a single line that will not withstand line pressure, while others, like the one I'm using will. I'm going to set up a single line system to fertilize a couple of dozen hibiscus planted in the ground around the front of my property and see what kind of results I can get, but I won't see the results of that experiment for a year or two as I am just now propagating the plants for that area.



One row of nicely flowered plants on my roof top garden in Tahiti.



HOW I ROOT HIBISCUS

by Jill Coryell

Here at Hibiscus Lady Nursery we ONLY clone our plants through cuttings and we have an average strike rate of over 86%. Although I've been taught how to graft by the best (including Barry Schlueter) I only succeed in grafting about 5% of the time, sigh. That's OK because I far prefer own-root plants anyway.

Our high success, in part, is because we stick the cuttings into wet potting soil within ten minutes of cutting. We leave the 3 top leaves, large or small, on the cutting and remove all other leaves and buds. They get sprinkled for one minute four times during the day in 50% shade.

Out of the thousands of cultivars (most of which are our own hybrids), I only found one that would not root. It was a plant that I had named to honor the deceased son of a friend so, of course, I HAD to get extra plants for her. I took the parent plant to my friend Glenn Nii and he grafted several plants for me. Once those grew out, the cuttings from those plants grew just fine. Go figure!



Hibiscus Lady Nursery

Click here to visit Jill Coryell's website:
www.hibiscuslady.com



HIBISCUS SCOTTII

Joey Carlson

Joey Carlson, who lives in Honolulu, took this photograph of a Hibiscus scottii flower at the Koko Crater Botanical Gardens, Hawaii Kai, Oahu, Hawaii.



Hibiscus scottii flower

Hibiscus Scottii is found in its natural environment only in Yemen where its habitat is subtropical or tropical dry forests.

Listed as 'vulnerable' on the IUCN Red List of threatened species, Hibiscus scottii is endemic to the island of Socotra. The Socotran Archipelago is a group of islands in the Arabian Sea belonging to Yemen. Hibiscus scottii is a rare species found in a limited area, restricted to the dense semi-deciduous woodlands and granitic slopes of the Haggeher mountains of Socotra.



Hibiscus scottii bush

Hibiscus scottii can be distinguished by its beautiful vivid yellow flowers, dark stigma pads and a split calyx. The species was named in honour of Robert Scott (1757-1808), an Irish botanist, physician, plant collector, and professor at Dublin's Trinity College.

Socotra is a jewel of bio-diversity with nearly 700 species found nowhere else on earth. Other strange inhabitants of the Island of Socotra include the Dragon Blood Tree (left) and Adenium socotranum (right).



Photo: Sergei Reoutov





A GRAFTING PARTY IN THE PHILIPPINES

by **Rodrigo Joseph Bautista**

Pictured left are Rodrigo and his wife, Maryjane Bel, who live in Malolos, in the province of Bulacan, 45 kilometres (28 mi) north of Manila, the capital city of the Philippines. The climate here is tropical with high humidity all year round. Temperatures rarely go below 20 °C (68 °F) or above 38 °C (100 °F).

Rodrigo, who represents Oceania on the Board of the International Hibiscus Society, shared photographs of the first grafting party of the Philippine Hibiscus Group which was held in a stunning Arid and Airoid garden. These are the photographs he took of the occasion and it is obvious that everyone enjoyed the experience and went home armed with new skills.



First a talk about grafting. One of the tried and tested ways of obtaining a clone of an established cultivar is by grafting. Although Hibiscus can be propagated in other ways (i.e. air layering and rooting) they are notoriously reluctant and slow to oblige so that in many cases grafting is the best method and every serious grower needs to master the technique. If you cannot find anyone to teach you about grafting in your area, then have a look at the excellent grafting video (in English) by Denis Bojic on the IHS website - just click on the web link.





Left: preparing the rootstock.

Below: Group members get hands on experience while the expert is on hand to help and advise.





OVERWINTERING IN COLD COUNTRIES

A conversation in the IHS Yahoo Group

Jeffrey Robinson (Ohio, USA): Hello fellow Hibiscus growers, I'm writing today to find out how Northerners grow their tropical hibiscus. I live in Ohio, I don't have a greenhouse but would love to grow more than two or three and over winter them in my windows. Any ideas?

Linda Eastman (in the Great Adirondacks of Upstate New York, barely in zone 4):

Hi Jeffery, I have grown hibiscus in upstate NY for many years, in the front windows of my house. I found 4 problems, that can be overcome:

1. They tend to drop a LOT of leaves when they are brought in. Plan on lots of clean-up. Water lightly through the winter until they show new growth.
2. For me, aphids are a major problem about a month after they are brought in. Not wanting to use harsh chemicals, I found that vacuuming the aphids off the leaves helped.
3. Once it is safe to put them back out in the spring, the leaves are so used to the lack of light they will sunburn if you are not careful. Either put them out gradually or cover them with a sheet for the sunniest part of the day to avoid sunburn and further leaf drop.
4. If you have pets, be aware that hibiscus leaves are toxic to cats and dogs. Either be sure to keep them separate or be VERY vigilant.

Jacqueline Abello (south of France): Thank you for your explanation Linda. For me the problem is not watering, because I use a device to test the moisture of the earth, but the white flies that invade my Hibiscus in the spring.

I use natural products, but having my Hibiscus close to my windows, it is impossible to spray, and I do not know any natural systemic natural products, so I fight against these damned flies!

Dick Johnson (Tahiti): I live in the tropics so whatever information I can provide comes from things other people have posted.

The big problem is finding enough space to overwinter your hibiscus when they cannot be placed outside. Assuming you have a period during spring and summer in the temperature range for tropical hibiscus, i.e. above 50 F up, they can go outside. Actually they can survive very brief periods of temps at freezing, but below 50 F, they don't grow, just subsist. Some leave them in their pots on a terrace and some even plant the pots in the ground so that they can be easily pulled when it is time to overwinter them.

Overwintering takes all kind of forms, from just growing them on a window sill, to putting them



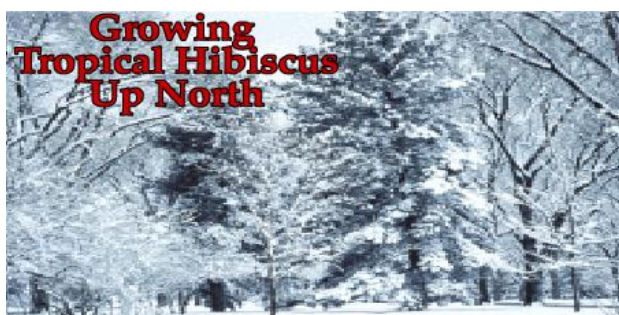
in garage or even a spare room or porch. Often supplemental lighting is provided. I have seen it posted that some say you can even put them in a cellar, don't water, let them essentially dry out, and in spring water them and they will come back. I find that hard to believe, but I have seen it posted more than once.

In most cases, it is a matter of trial and error and depends very much upon the space you have to commit to overwintering hibiscus. It is infectious and starting small, can end up in hibiscus taking over your house.

Ian Rabenda (southern Ontario, Canada): I've been growing a large collection of about 250 tropical hibiscus for close to a decade. Dick Johnson is mostly correct about what he has said except that it is best not to let them get below about 40F in a greenhouse (they can be damaged by cold winds below 50F) and not to let them dry out in winter but rather to keep them a little moist. The moisture in winter is a delicate balance because they don't like to be too wet and they dry out more slowly under the cooler and darker conditions of winter. They can take over your house as Dick has suggested. I have overwintered most of mine in a basement cellar with artificial lights for many years and this actually worked better than my sunny picture window. They seem to dry out too much in the window. In any case winter is very hard on them here. They will lose most of their leaves, get terribly stressed out and I always lose a few over winter no matter how hard I try. A heated year round greenhouse would be best of course but with very cold northern winters you have to be rich to be able to afford that. I have used a sort of hybrid solution by heating them in a greenhouse for only a few months in spring and fall when the cold is not yet too bitter and the heating not yet too expensive and this substantially reduces the stress the plants have to endure.

Jeffrey Robinson: Thank you friends for the great feedback. I got back from Florida a few weeks ago where I rediscovered the beautiful hibiscus; I brought back with me 2 plants, several wood cuttings and I just started some seeds Saturday and I live in a condo.

After I started doing all of this, it dawned on me, how am I going to overwinter all of them. Anyhow, thanks again for the great advice.



Click on the Web Link to visit a page all about overwintering Hibiscus in cold climates.

My green thumb came only as a result of the mistakes I made while learning to see things from the plant's point of view. ~H. Fred Dale

Don't wear perfume in the garden — unless you want to be pollinated by bees. ~Anne Raver

Anybody who wants to rule the world should try to rule a garden first. ~Anon.

A CELEBRATION OF BEAUTY

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



BLACK RAINBOW

(White Diamonds x Stormy Rainbow)
Hybridized by Nola and Carlos Reynolds
Photographed by Anjali Blakeley



AMETHYST ORE

(Formosa Huck x Chocolate Love)
Hybridized by Wang Kuei Sheng
Photo by Chunyu Chen



TENG'S AMAZING GRACE

(Fifth Dimension x Moorea Vatina)
Hybridized and photographed by Huang Yuan Teng



MILLENNIUM SUPERSTAR

Parentage unknown
Hybridized by Curt Sinclair
Photo by Tatyana Voinova



CARIBBEAN GLORIOUS DUSK

(Tahitian Red Leopard x Caribbean Silver Sophistication)
Hybridized and photographed by Adil Demirboga

WILD GRAPE

(Born to Be Wild x Allure)
Hybridized by Charles Black
Photo by Anjali Blakely



WHITE HOT

(Saffron x Some Like it Hot)
Hybridized by Charles Black
Photo by Darren Eminian



MOOREA TEANIHEI

(Moorea Hot Charley x Moorea Bibop)
Hybridized by Charles Atiu
Photo by Aneela Lee



ANTIQUÉ TREASURE

(Soft Touch [Sinclair] x Unknown)
Hybridized by Curt Sinclair
Photo by Anjali Blakely



TAHITIAN DRAGON'S LAIR

(Rosalind x Black Dragon)
Hybridized and photographed
by Dick Johnson



TAHITIAN KING

(Charles Schmidt x Georgia's Pearl)
Hybridized and photographed by Dick Johnson





PROTECTING MY SEED PODS

Daniela Pradais



Bacau panorama

Daniela lives in Bacau, Romania. The city is situated in Western Moldavia at the foothills of the famous Carpathian Mountains. The Ghimes Pass links Bacau to the equally famous Transylvania.



This is Daniela's balcony garden in Bacau where she grows her Hibiscus. They enjoy this sheltered spot in the summer months, but winters can be cold here so more protection is needed then.



When Daniela has a seed pod on her Hibiscus, as soon as it shows signs of maturing she pops a little bag over it to prevent the seeds from falling on the ground.

Similar bags can be found cheaply on ebay using the search terms "wedding favor (or favour) gift bags".



The Weird and the Wonderful

MEET PANDO, THE TREMBLING GIANT



One of the oldest and largest known living organisms.

Pando (which is Latin for "I spread"), is also known as the Trembling Giant. It is a clonal colony of a single quaking aspen tree (*Populus tremuloides*) estimated to be 80,000 years old making it one of the oldest known living organisms.

The huge stand of about 47,000 'trees' share one massive underground root system, so that each 'tree' is actually a stem. As each stem dies it is replaced by new stems growing from its roots. The entire plant is estimated to weigh 6,000,000 kilograms (6,600 short tons) making it possibly the heaviest known organism.



USDA Forest Service

Pando was born in a very different climate to that of today and it is thought to be as many as 10,000 years since Pando's last successful flowering because post-glacial conditions make it difficult for seeds to sprout.

Pando is situated at the western edge of the Colorado Plateau in south-central Utah, U.S.A. Sadly, this amazing tree is currently thought to be dying and the U.S. Forest Service is experimenting with sections of it in an effort to find a means to save it.

The quaking aspen is named for its leaves, which stir easily in even a gentle breeze and produce a fluttering sound. The effect of this in Pando, multiplied over the tens of thousands of 'trees' and hundred of acres, can be unsettling, and gives a voice to the ancient trembling giant.

Left and above: Views of Pando in the fall (autumn).

[Click here to see a short video about Pando.](#)





Palfi Mariann



Some summer nail art for the ladies. Here are just a couple of the amazing designs that can be found on the internet. However beautifully painted, the ones on the left look positively dangerous! I don't think they would last long doing the gardening!

Complex designs like these are achieved using acrylic paint topped with a clear gloss varnish.

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