



Plumeria Potpourri

www.theplumeriasociety.org

Come to the January 12th meeting!

Tuesday, January 12, 2016, 7:30 p.m.

Cherie Flores Garden Pavilion, 1500 Hermann Drive, Houston, Texas

... anyone with an interest in plumeria is invited to attend ...

President's Corner

by Bob Arend
page 2

Winter Work

by Eulas Stafford
page 2

PSA Speaker

Highlights—10/13/15

by David Holloway
page 3

Flowers and Faces— The Queen

by Emerson Willis
page 4

Treating Plumeria Cuts: Part #1 of 5—Using Different Sealants

by George Hadjigeorge
page 7

Grafting Tools

by Bud Guillot
page 11

2nd International Plumeria Conference

page 12

SCPS 2016 Calendars

page 13

Back Page Photos

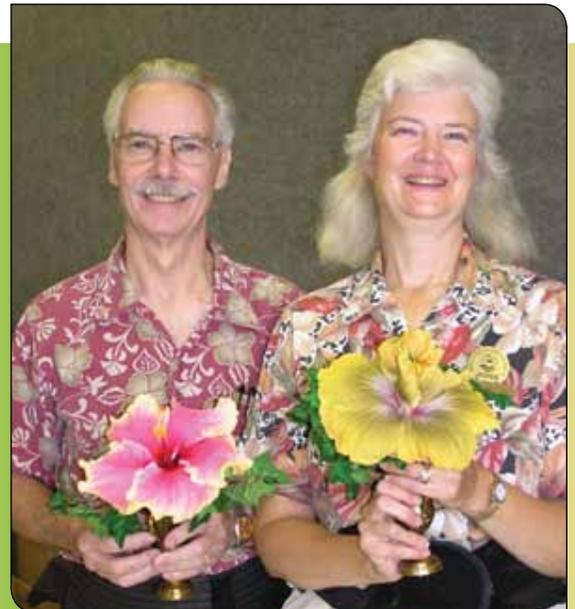
page 16

Marti and Greg Graves Hibiscus Rosa-Sinensis

Marti and Greg Graves will be presenting a slide program on the types of hibiscus rosa-sinensis, their care, pruning, grafting, and hybridizing.

Marti joined the Lone Star Chapter of the American Hibiscus Society in 1979 and has been growing, showing, and hybridizing ever since. She started with a few plants on her apartment balcony to now having over 300 plants and three greenhouses.

Marti shares her hibiscus obsession with her husband, Greg, who is the grafter in the family. Greg currently serves on the national Seedling Evaluation Committee, while Marti is the editor of *The Petaloid*, the newsletter for the Lone Star Chapter. Also, Marti is Executive Secretary for the national society. Both have held local officer positions and served on national committees.



The Plumeria Society of America, Inc.

January 2016

President's Corner

by **Bob Arend, Texas** (arendbob@gmail.com)

This is my last President's Corner, and writing it makes me think back on the past two years. I have enjoyed my time as President of the PSA. It has been a learning experience—both rewarding and challenging. I have tried to schedule interesting speakers for our meetings and produce a high-quality newsletter. There are so many people I would like to thank, but I do not have time to thank them all. I look forward to continuing my involvement with the PSA, but in a different capacity.

We began our October meeting with trepidation, as we crossed our fingers in hopes that members would volunteer to take over vacating board positions. The evening soon turned into a very positive and informative time. Members stepped up to run for offices. It is so important to have key positions filled in order to keep the PSA functioning.

We had two speakers that evening—Eulas Stafford and Dr. Bryan Holland who talked about how to protect plumeria in our area for the upcoming winter and dormancy season.

On Saturday, October 17th, we had our luau at Pearland Country Club. A big thank you to Jerry Hurlbert for organizing the event. We had a good turnout of PSA members and guests, with good food and beverages. The dancers of Pele O Polynesia performed many traditional Polynesian dances. The dancers and their costumes were very inspiring.

It has been a good year for the PSA. We had many successful events. The website is up and running, although it is a work in progress. We look forward to our January meeting where our speakers will talk about hibiscus, and we will meet our new PSA Board members.



Winter Work

by **Eulas Stafford, Texas**

Well our wonderful plants have gone to sleep for a long winter's nap. Now there's nothing to do, right? Wrong—there is a lot that needs to be done over the winter.

Were your plants in the ground? If you have pulled them up and stored them in a nice warm place, then you can think of what needs to be done. First you can work in some good compost or manure to help enrich your soil. Next you can check your plants for damage and cut it out if you find any. Then if you want to trim any of your plants, now is a good time to do it.

Are your plants in pots that you have stored in a warm place? Do you need to trim them as you have them stored? You need to check your pots to see if your plants are root bound. Do you need to move them to a bigger pot? If you have roots coming out of the weep holes, then you definitely need to repot them. Do you need to root prune them? Before you take them out next spring, you should top dress them with high-quality compost and work it in.

Remember what you do now can benefit you all of next year. Good growing and lots of wonderful flowers.

Winter Storage of Plumerias (inside garage)

by Eulas Stafford

- Plumeria leaves with rust can be cut off now as leaves will soon be removed for winter storage anyway. Leaves should be cut and not broken off. The remaining stem will dry up and fall off within a couple of weeks.
- If stored in the garage, do not place the pots directly on the concrete floor. Place cardboard on the floor.
- It will be necessary to have a heat source in the garage.
- Cuttings can be taken now, but do not plant until spring.

Winter Storage of Plumerias (sheltered outside)

by Bryan Holland

If a shelter is going to be erected around a plumeria, it is best to have a plumeria that grows in an umbrella shape, such as *Mary Moragne*. Sheltered plants recover more quickly in the spring and produce more blooms.

- The framework of the structure can be made of rebar cut in 3.5' sections and PVC. PVC fittings can be used to adjust the lengths of the PVC.
- The structure should be no taller than nine feet.
- One-half inch PVC is flexible and can be used to form the arches of the structure.
- For the posts, set rebar through bricks on the ground and place one inch PVC over the rebar.
- Use three layers of frost cloth to cover the shelter. Use clamps to hold the frost cloth to the framework and stones to anchor the frost cloth to the ground. Frost cloth can be purchased online at Agriculture Solutions.
- Six mil poly can be used as a wind break.
- Use 250 watt heat lamps for heat. The lamps can be found at Tractor Supply and Lowe's. These lamps are also used to provide heat in chicken coops and in restaurants to keep food warm. Do not point the lamps up to avoid water dripping on them.
- A wireless thermometer is used to monitor the temperature inside the structure.



Joining the PSA ...

www.theplumeriasociety.org

Click on "Join the PSA" tab at the top of the home page.

To join by mail, select **PDF**.

To join online, select **Online Form** (Paypal).

When joining by mail, send a check to:

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P.O. Box 22791

Houston, TX 77227-2791, USA

Dues are \$25 per year

When does your PSA membership expire?

Look on the newsletter mailing label for your membership expiration date

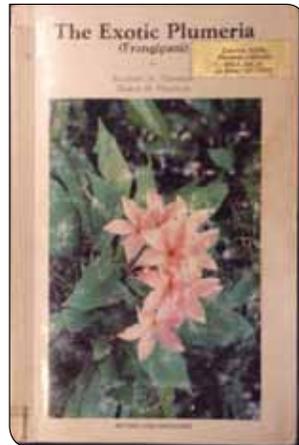
Flowers and Faces—The Queen

by Emerson Willis, Texas (theplumeriaman@aol.com)



I do not think it would be inaccurate to refer to the late Elizabeth Thornton as the “Queen of Plumeria Culture.” After all, she was the first person on the mainland, and possibly the world, to dedicate a book solely to our wonderful flowers.

The Exotic Plumeria (Frangipani) by Elizabeth H. Thornton was first published in 1978. The book was



revised in 1985 with her daughter-in-law, Sharon H. Thornton co-authoring.

Elizabeth Thornton was one of the co-founders of The Plumeria Society of America, Inc.

She was one of the first to raise seedlings, publishing all of the necessary information. Many of her named ones are being cultivated to this day in various countries of our world.

Here are the names of many of her seedlings: *Angela, Celebration, Cherry Parfait, Courtade Gold, Courtade Lemon, Elegance, Firecracker, 4th of July, Gold Cup, Honeysuckle, Jubilee, Lavender, Lemon Parfait, Mauve, Memo's Gold, Moon Glow, Painted Desert, Peaches, Peppermint, Pina Colado, Pink Parfait, Pink Perfection, Raspberry, Raspberry Parfait, Rose Red Too, Snow White, Sunshine, Symphony, Texas Aggie, Texas Beauty, Texas Fiesta,*



Texas Star, Texas Sunset, Thanksgiving, and Yellow Rose of Texas.

Elizabeth Thornton did not list these two—*Ginger* and *Texas Fiesta II*—but personally placed them in my hands, informing me they were her seedlings

I received several of Elizabeth Thornton's seedlings from her daughter, Bette Gips. In my garden two of the best blooming, scented, shaped, and best everything are *Lemon Drop* and *Maverick*.

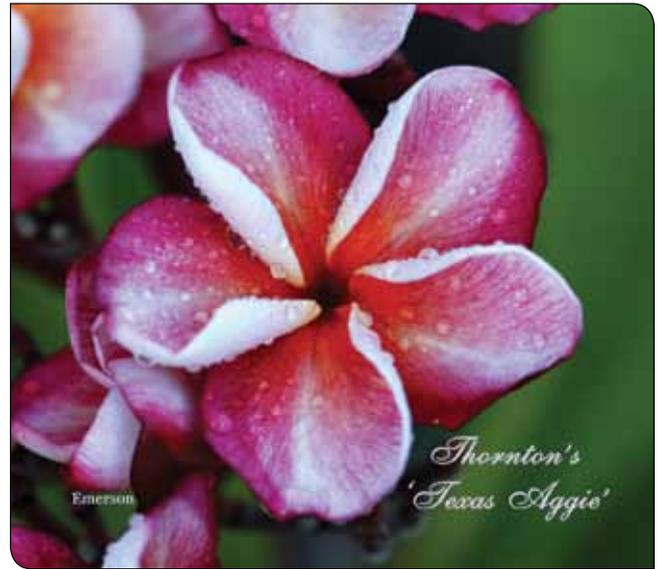
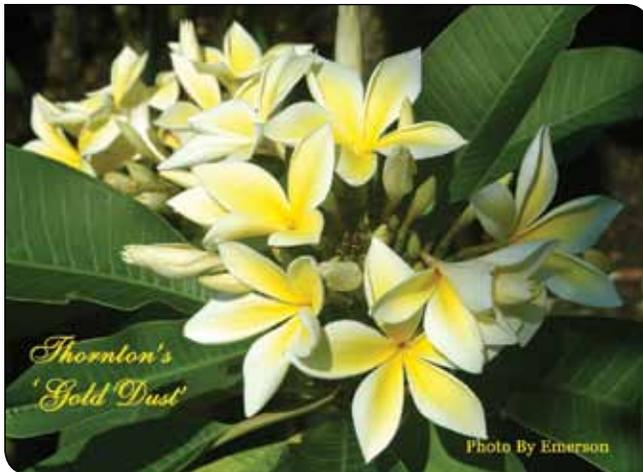


Her eye-catching, multi-colored, and very popular *Mardi Gras* is certainly at home amongst these winners.

Because I'm partial to yellow, I own the pointy-petaled *Gold Dust* and the rounded *Mellow Yellow*.



Texas Aggie, I commented on its beauty, and she admitted the difficulty of having enough cuttings of this cultivar. Every spring Aggies would swarm her looking for a start. She also confessed to me how badly she wanted to bloom a burnt orange seedling. But alas, it was never to be. You see, she was a University of Texas graduate.



And I have to mention the gorgeous *Lemon Parfait* which was given to me by my very good friend and fellow collector John Carroll.

If you possess the magnificent, very large *Thornton's Lilac*, I think you really have a *Mauve*. Elizabeth Thornton would playfully correct my



My mentor and guide to joining the PSA, Barbara Randolph, once said, "Elizabeth chose the most beautiful names for her seedlings." As you gaze over her list of plants, you will agree, I'm sure.

The Hawaiian plumeria guru, Jim Little, named in her honor one of his special seedlings—*Elizabeth Thornton*. The description (in part) from Diana Donnellan's compilation reads: Bright orange, pink, and red. Pez candy/carnation scent. 4" with showy "Las Vegas" colors. Good keeping quality. Pink veins

pronunciation of mauve. This was before some dictionaries began to allow two versions.

Years ago while admiring her heavy-blooming



into an orange center. The photo of *JL Elizabeth Thornton* was taken and allowed by PSA member Mark Terrill.

Elizabeth Thornton was one of the co-founders of The Plumeria Society of America. She was thrilled to see the popularity of our flowers grow by leaps and bounds with groups forming in Florida, Arizona, and Southern California. And, of course, not forgetting “down under” and the Frangipani Society of Australia.

Nancy and I were camped in our motor home when we received the heartbreaking news of Elizabeth’s passing. I picked up a pen immediately and put together a few words. I was conflictingly proud but sad when the family used them at the service.

Elizabeth Thornton has passed away. The torch has not been extinguished, but only passed along.

She was a driving force behind the formation of The Plumeria Society of America.

She loved these trees and wanted to share with everyone the joy associated with them.

She had the patience and skill to raise several groups of seedlings that produced some of the most exquisite flowers imaginable.

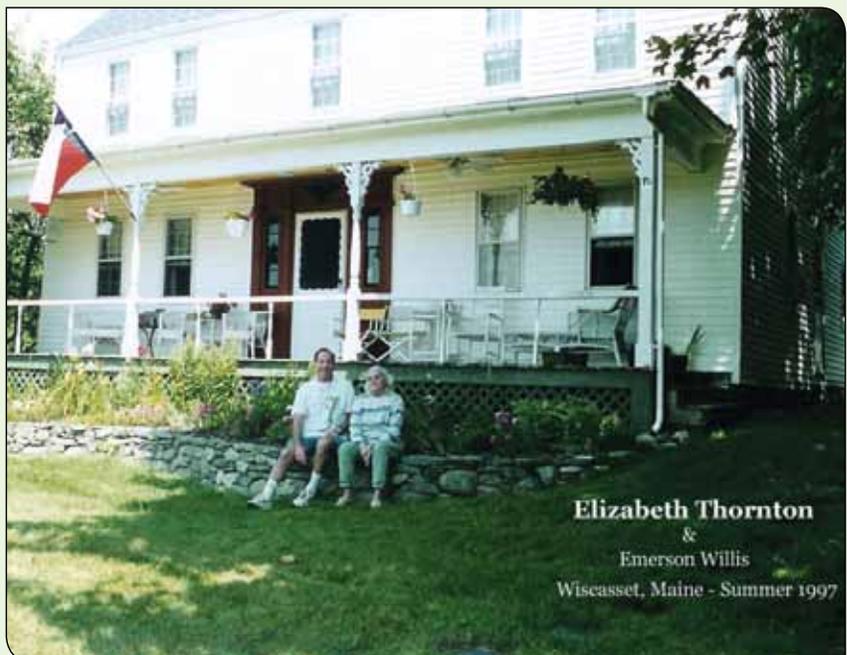
She chose wonderful names for her cultivars that captured their beauty.

She co-authored one of the only two books ever written on these plants, which without a doubt are the fastest growing in popularity of flowering trees in the world. This is so, in part, to her dedication.

After many years, she began to experience health problems. A summer home in Wiscasset, Maine would permit her to escape the oppressive heat of our Texas Gulf Coast. The people selling the old seaside home she wished to purchase had reservations about a “Texas Lady” possibly remodeling the homestead and destroying its northeastern personality. Quite the contrary occurred. The only change she made was to fly the Lone Star State flag high in the cool summer breeze. It was under this banner I had the privilege of discussing the early days of plumeria culture, as we sipped tea on the porch watching the irresistible flow of the Atlantic tide.

She is affectionately referred to as ET in my notes. It is through tearful eyes I write these thoughts. I can envision her in heaven above with a halo of plumeria blossoms ... breathing deeply and easily with youthful exuberance, wanting to share her insight with anyone interested.

When you admire the beauty of *Lemon Drop*, *Mardi Gras*, *Texas Aggie*, or one of many others, think of her. I will. And I also thank God I knew her.



Treating Plumeria Cuts: Part #1 of 5—Using Different Sealants

by George Hadjigeorge, Texas

Sealing plumeria cuts is often problematic. The cut develops a lot of damage over time, and unlike cuts on other types of trees, they take a very long time to fully heal. As I will show in this series of articles, plumerias are different from other trees and require a multi-step sealing procedure to do it right and get cuts that look attractive and heal in much less time.

Before I show all the data I have on the subject, I would like to show a few things about plumerias that will help the reader understand what the various cut-away views of plumerias really mean. The picture below shows the cross section of a mature plumeria branch. The center consists of a soft white



pith. It is like a sponge and stores a lot of sap, which is the lifeline of cuttings that can be stored on the shelf for months. Next there is hard wood, whose

thickness varies with age, which gives the branch strength. Outside the wood there is bark, which is about 1/8" thick on the average. The surface between the wood and the bark is called the cambium, and that is where nutrients flow up between the roots and leaves. The bark is white on the inside and green on the surface. The bark is protected on the outside by a thin skin, plastic-like material (right picture).

This skin is clear when the branch is young, and as a result the branch appears bright green in color. As the branch ages, the skin becomes more opaque, and the branch appears grey. The skin prevents the plant from losing a lot of moisture from the branches.



When a plumeria branch is pruned, the last 1/4" to 3/8" of the wood at the end always dies and appears dark in cut-away views. The wood is just dead, and it is not really rotting. If nothing is put on the cut, the pith develops a dead crust over it that protects it (right picture). The dead wood at the cut is used to identify the original cut in dissections of older branches.



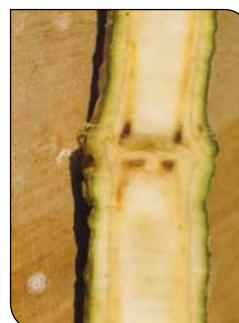
New side branches are supported



by new wood that grows over the old wood (all around) and encapsulates it (left picture). The dead wood at the cut plays a very important role in

extending damage to the cut over time. It rots and cracks and lets rainwater in, which causes the pith underneath to rot.

The dead wood at the end of cuts also appears in grafting, in both the scion and the rootstock. In a



cut-away view of a flat graft (left picture), we can see these black marks (dead wood) on both the scion and the rootstock. These dark marks help us understand that the scion and rootstock have been pushed apart by a thick layer

of wood that grew between them and cross-braced the graft union, making it much stronger. This shows that the scion and rootstock do not grow together by their woods fusing because the ends of those woods are dead. Instead, new wood forms at the cambium line and encapsulates both the scion and rootstock holding them together. This new wood is the thickest at the cut line of the graft union, making the graft union very strong. So a new cambium surface forms

over this new wood (right picture). This is the exact same mechanism on how new side branches are supported on pruned branches.

In rooting plumeria cuttings, the roots are supported in the exact same way as above, namely by new wood that



grows at the cambium line, all around the perimeter of the cut (left picture). The end of the cutting wood also dies and appears dark in the pictures. In time the cambium wood that

supports the roots spills underneath and covers the pith of the original cut with solid wood (right picture). This bottom wood protects the pith from rotting.



Summarizing—pruning, grafting, and rooting cuttings works in the same way. The end of the original wood dies back about 1/4" to 3/8", the old wood stops growing, and new wood grows at the cambium line to encapsulate the old wood all around and support new side branches, roots, and connects the scion and rootstock together.

Water is the worst enemy of the pith of plumerias. If freshly cut cuttings are planted immediately, they mostly rot, starting at the pith. Cuttings must be allowed to dry or callus with humidity for a few weeks to be successful in rooting them. In pruning plumerias, if the cut gets wet, the pith dies back and the cut sustains a lot of damage (pictures to the right). So, doing nothing to plumeria cuts is not a good



option. We must protect the pith in order for the cut to look attractive and to heal in a reasonable time.

Also in grafting, water is the worst enemy, causing grafts to rot. If a graft is sealed like a fruit tree graft with pruning paint or wax (right pictures), the graft rots 100% of the time.

This is because water evaporates from the fresh cuts of the scion and rootstock in the heat of the day, and the vapor is trapped under the sealed graft. In the evening with cooler temperatures, the water condenses and makes the graft wet, causing the piths to rot.

Summarizing—wet piths lead to rotting most of the time. The source of water can be external, from the ground in rooting cuttings, from rain on pruned branches with nothing on them, or internal from evaporation from the cuts and condensation on the



sealant cover at night. The picture to the left shows this internal moisture. A small clear bag was put over a freshly pruned plumeria branch. In the morning, there was a large amount of moisture inside the bag. Similarly, a bag was put over a branch cut a month earlier, and there was no moisture condensation inside the bag at all in the morning. This proves that the condensed moisture comes from the fresh cut. It takes about two weeks before the cut seals enough to stop leaking moisture.

Rotting of the pith by internal water is the reason why most sealants that make a waterproof seal do not work very well on plumeria cuts. Water evaporates from the fresh cut during the day and condenses with cooler night temperatures, making the pith wet. Occasionally they work but most of the



time they fail. Varieties like *Slaughter Pink* have a dense pith, and cuts always look good no matter what is put on them. The difficult varieties are most reds. Some varieties suffer from branch die back. Most of the time a pruned branch will die back to the nearest joint no matter what you do to it.

Tree pruning paints work well on most trees. However, they do not work well with plumerias. Tar-based tree sealants fail most of the time. The pith dies back, and the cuts look ugly and take a very long time to heal (two pictures below).



Occasionally a good seal is obtained on some varieties. Generally, sealing with pruning paints is not satisfactory.



Liquid electrical tape (LET) became very popular with Facebook groups. It is easy to use, readily available, easy to apply, and not very messy. However, it does not work very well. It looks good for a while. LET disintegrates with UV light and starts to crack and fall off (two pictures below). Underneath



the piths have rotted (from trapped internal water) and have pulled back. A damaged cut like these will take a very long time to heal, plus they do not look good. In addition, rain water gets in and causes more rotting.

Some people use latex paints to seal cuts. Again, the cuts look good for awhile, but trapped



internal moisture makes the piths rot, and over time the cuts look very bad.

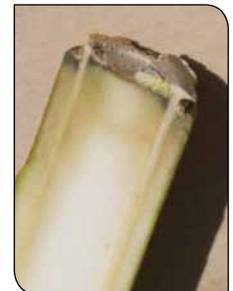


Some people use DAP sealant on fresh cuts. DAP sealants make a watertight seal. Trapped internal moisture causes the piths to rot most of the time. Anything that seals the cut watertight will fail. Some people let the cut dry for a few hours before sealing them. Still the cut will evaporate water in the heat of the day and trapped moisture will cause piths to rot. I used a paste of DAP with lime powder



(hydrated calcium hydroxide). It looked good for a while (left picture).

However, the seal was watertight and trapped



internal moisture, causing the pith to start rotting (right picture).

In Thailand it is very popular to use lime (hydrated calcium hydroxide) to seal plumeria cuts.

Lime forms a hard cake when it dries. The pith dehydrates by lime and collapses some underneath (left picture). The cake is vapor permeable, so it lets any moisture that evaporates from the cut to escape to the air, so the pith does not get wet and it



does not rot. However, in a short time the hard cake develops cracks and lets in rain water. The pith starts to rot and the cut sustains a lot of damage (right picture).

So lime does not work very well most of the time.



Summarizing—no sealant that makes a watertight seal works well with plumeria cuts, because trapped internal moisture causes the pith to rot. The seal must let the trapped internal moisture escape in order to have any chance. But on the other hand, it must not let in external moisture (rain). I have used wettable sulfur with some success. I use a spatula to press the sulfur down to make a cake with sap from the cut. The sulfur/sap cake dries into a hard cake that does not wash off readily with rain. It takes



months for it to wash off (left picture). In the meantime, the cake keeps the cut moist but not wet (like a humidity chamber) and allows the

pith to develop bark and skin (right picture). Once that happens, the cut will not evaporate moisture anymore, and there is no rotting danger from trapped internal moisture or from external moisture for that matter. The pith bark cannot rot if it gets wet. As the picture shows, the cut sustains no damage, and it looks good and will heal well.



Here is another sulfur example. The left picture below shows the cut after six months. Still some sulfur is on the surface. A ring of callus can be seen all around the cut showing that healing is well underway. The cut looks attractive.



The right picture shows this joint in two years. All the sulfur is gone. However, the pith has a well-developed bark and skin over it, protecting it. The healing ring around the cut is getting much



bigger indicating good healing progress.

Sulfur really works well with green branches with large piths. This very large pith looks good with no apparent damage.



However, even though sulfur works well most of the time, it does not always work. In time, sometimes the pith dries up and collapses, especially for woody cuts (pictures below). The pith separates from the wood and dries



up and collapses. When the pith collapses, it traps rain water which causes the pith to rot.

I have not found a single sealant that works well all the time if used by itself. Clearly both internal and external moistures are a problem, and it will take a multi-step solution to handle them both at the same time. A single step solution cannot possibly work, because it cannot handle the pith rotting that comes from internal and external moisture.

In future articles, I will show some good solutions to these problems and how to best seal plumeria cuts so that they look attractive and heal relatively fast and properly, like the two-year old cut in the right picture.

There is nothing on the cut, just natural bark and skin. The cut is completely encapsulated by natural bark and skin, and rain water cannot get in there to cause rotting problems.



Grafting Tools

by Bud Guillot, Southern California

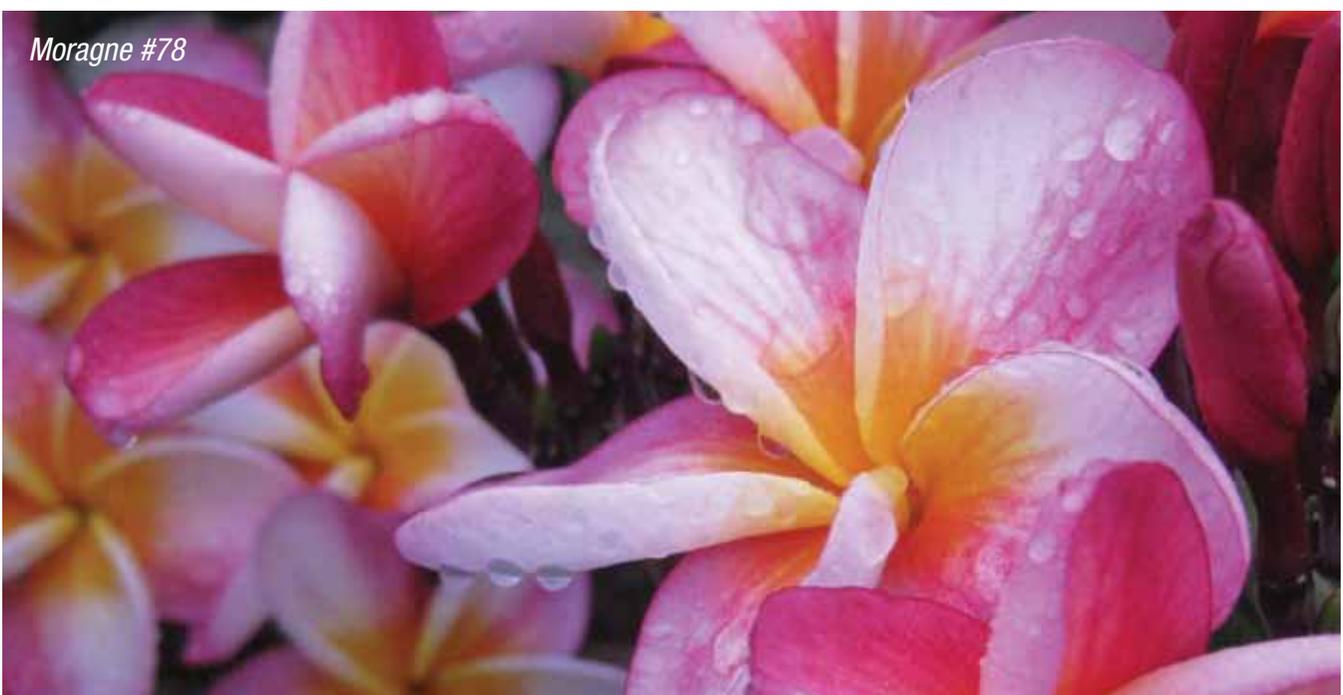
To make a tool for slant grafts, use a 1.5" or 2" diameter bathroom sink thin wall metal drain tube. Use a 1" diameter hole saw for drilling the thumb hole. Use a hacksaw for the angle cut.



Put your thumb through the hole and firmly grasp the cutting as you make your slant cut.



Use calipers to obtain the diameters of the rootstock and scion. If you do not have calipers, use a short piece of wire shaped in a semi-circle to compare the diameters of the root stock and scion.



Moragne #78

2nd International Plumeria Conference

Brought to you by Plumeria Society of America & Naples Botanical Garden

Plumerians Worldwide Are to Gather at the 2nd International Plumeria Conference

The Plumeria Society of America (PSA) and Naples Botanical Garden are pleased to announce the 2nd International Plumeria Conference (IPC), tentatively scheduled for May 18–22, 2016.

The site of the 2016 IPC is the renowned Naples Botanical Garden in Naples, Florida (www.naplesgarden.org). The Garden hosts the Nationally Accredited Plumeria Collection™, with over 500 plumeria trees. Field trips to other notable plumeria sites in the area are in the planning stages. More information coming soon!

Since the first conference in Galveston, almost 10 years ago, advances in plumeria cultivation and cultivar development have come fast and furious. The conference will gather the best minds in the plumeria world to share their knowledge and experience with plumeria enthusiasts—from hobbyists to vendors. The conference steering committee (Eulas Stafford, Hetty Ford, Tex Norwood, Karen Babb, and Mike Atkinson) is working closely with the PSA to craft an innovative, stimulating mix of workshops and presenters.

The conference will also feature a closing luau, and other fun surprises, including the introduction and auction of a new variety named in honor of the conference.

Make your plans to attend now! Go to the beginning of the conference website (www.2016IPC.com) and sign up for our email list for future news and notifications, including special conference rates at nearby hotels.

We hope to see you in Naples next year!



JL Amber Starburst



South Coast Plumeria Society
Anaheim, California
www.southcoastplumeriasociety.com

Meeting time: 1:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.
Meeting location: 1000 South State College Blvd.,
Anaheim, California 92806

Calendar 2016

March 6	Topic TBD
April 10	Topic TBD
April 16 & 17	Green Scene at Fullerton Arboretum (CSUF, 1900 Associated Road, Fullerton, CA)
June 5	Topic TBD
July 9	Grafting demo and culture seminar, 9:00 a.m., Roger's Gardens, Corona Del Mar, CA
August 7	Tentative: Eleventh Annual Flower Show
August 20 & 21	Seventh Annual Home and Garden Tour, 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. (members only)
October 2	Topic TBD
November 6	Member Appreciation Luau (members only)



Pineapple Passion

Southern California Plumeria Society
San Diego, California
www.socalplumeriasociety.com

Meeting time: 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.
Meeting location: Roosevelt Middle School,
3366 Park Blvd., San Diego, CA 92103

Calendar 2016

February 7	Plumerias We Love (panel with Roland Dubuc, Bud Guillot, Joy Herzog, and Jean Thielmann)
March 13	Topic TBD
April 2 & 3	Plumeria Cutting Sale
May 1	Topic TBD
June 12	Topic TBD
July 10	Topic TBD
August 14	Topic TBD
September 3 & 4	17th Annual Hawaiian Plumeria Festival—Flower Show and Plant Sale



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<http://www.theplumeriasociety.org>

Our new website is easier to navigate and to find information about plumeria care, cultivar registration, society news, events, and much more! Since the website is new, please refer back often to check for updates and to see updated added features such as the flower identification database and a members only newsletter archive! See below for the current MEMBERS ONLY login and password information that will be needed to access the website's newsletter archive.

Log in: **psamember**

Password: **Scottpratt93**

Twitter feed: **@plumeriasociety**



Purpose of The Plumeria Society of America

- (1) Promote interest in and increase knowledge of plumeria hybridization, propagation and culture of plumerias.
- (2) Share this knowledge with hobbyists interested in plumerias.
- (3) Provide a register for recording, identifying and classifying by name new types and varieties of plumerias.
- (4) Encourage and unite plumeria enthusiasts around the globe, throughout America and across the seas.

The Plumeria Society of America, Inc.

P.O. Box 22791

Houston, TX 77227-2791, USA

Dues are \$25 per year

PSA Calendar — 2016

January 12 meeting
March 8 meeting
May 10 meeting
June 11 Show & Sale I (Seabrook/Clear Lake)
July 12 meeting
July 23 .. Show & Sale II (Fort Bend County Fairgrounds)
October 11 meeting
October 15 Fall Social and Luau

- Meetings are held at Cherie Flores Garden Pavilion, 1500 Hermann Drive, Houston, Texas 77030.
- Meetings begin at 7:30 p.m. Please feel welcome to come 30–45 minutes before the meeting for snacks and chat.
- We have a raffle, guest speakers, and more. Please join us for the evening to learn more about plumeria care and collecting.
- Non-members are always welcome!
- Bring your blooms. Bring your friends.
- Bring plants, cuttings, etc. for door prizes! These can be anything, not just plumerias.

PSA Officers/Committee Members—2015

Bob Arend <i>President</i>	arendbob@gmail.com 936-321-5151
Jerry Hurlbert <i>Vice President</i>	newflora@swbell.net
David Holloway <i>Secretary</i>	d-holloway@sbcglobal.net 281-251-1478
Virginia McClosky <i>Treasurer</i>	v.mcclosky@yahoo.com 713-449-6424
Eulas Stafford <i>Registration</i>	estafford01@att.net 713-946-9175
Karen Babb <i>Director</i>	kbabb4@comcast.net 713-721-4197
Jeff Timme <i>Webmaster</i>	jeff.timme@gmail.com 281-996-8427
Loretta O'Steen <i>Director</i>	LoFresh@aol.com 409-939-4765
Vicki Jenkins <i>Director</i>	LovePlumeria@aol.com
Liz Dethloff <i>Membership</i>	edethloff7@gmail.com 713-459-9462
George Hadjigeorge <i>Research</i>	ghadjigeorge@comcast.net 281-265-5945
Diego and Vicky Tristan <i>Social</i>	vtristan60@sbcglobal.net 713-433-0310
Trish Weeks <i>Publicity</i>	marinertw@comcast.net
German Collazos <i>Plant Sales</i>	german.collazos@toshiba.com 713-896-5500 x2539
Irene Jones <i>Newsletter</i>	ijplume@sbcglobal.net 760-436-6885

