

Felder's Favorite Fall Flowers

*Lady Trojans

(Continued from page 1.)



November 7 - Wyche and Janet Hooker

November 8 - Johnny and Aleatha Pritchard, Joseph and Brittany Engle

November 9 - Donald and Shelbi Moore, III

November 11 - Conner and Kristan Pounders

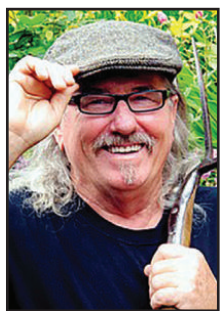
November 12 - Christian and Sydney Gardner, Randy and Linda Matthews

To add your birthdays and anniversaries to our list, please send your information by mail to P.O. Box 60, Lexington, MS 39095; fax 662-834-1074; email hcherald@gmail.com; or stop by our office at 308 Court Square in Lexington. No phone calls, please.

Who needs tropical hibiscus, when we have so many easier and sometimes edible relatives for our gardens?

when bark scale makes the latter untenable as garden mainstays.

For summer annuals I've grown "red leaf hibiscus" for its tall stems of deep



FELDER RUSHING

Across the state right now a fig tree-size bushy perennial called confederate rose is in full sway, loaded with its Autumnal show of huge double pink pompoms. Also known as cotton leaf mallow, it is unbelievably easy to root; I just stick foot-long, finger-diameter cuttings

in a bottle with three or four inches of water, and plant in the spring. But there are lots of others. Roadside ditches are brimming with native hibiscus, including the large-flowered marsh mallows with white or pink flowers, and scarlet rose mallow, sometimes called swamp hibiscus or Texas star hibiscus. Its large deeply divided flowers are iridescent scarlet. (Note: This old long-haired guy has had police about it in my garden, because its leaves look so much like marijuana.)

so are best grown as late summer- or fall-plant-ed annuals.

But my favorite mallow of all is, believe it or not, okra, which I use as an ornamental plant. Though different kinds have interesting pods, all with beautiful hibiscus flowers much loved by bees. My favorite is "Burgundy" with its deep reddish leaves and pods. I usually pinch the growing tip to make a bushier, more floriferous plant. All parts are edible, but I use pods in flower arrangements or paint 'em as holiday ornaments. This year I grew another incredible edible okra relative called roselle. The stems of the big bush were crusted with hundreds of small pinkish flowers and thumb-size bright red fleshy pods which can be boiled and the tea mixed with sugar and lemon or other fruit into a refreshing drink called Ja-



Flowers from Felder's garden: okra, roselle, confederate rose, white and brown cotton, and scarlet rose mallow.

maican sorrel. It also makes a delicious, tart jelly. The stunning ornamental plant grows very easily from okra-like seeds and thrives on total neglect and stops people in their tracks.

Last garden mallow I want to mention is a surprisingly easy annual cultivated in both the Old and New Worlds for thousands of years. Known far and wide as cotton, it makes dandy heat- and drought-loving garden plant. Not many folks grow as an ornamental plant it, but it most certainly is,

with its pretty leaves, beautiful yellow hibiscus flowers much loved by bees, and of course the seed pods which erupt in the fall with what was described in the 1300s as "tiny lambs on the ends of its branches."

Commercially, the once-prevalent pre-1900s Levant cotton native to Africa and Middle East has been almost totally displaced by species native from Mexico to the northern parts of South America. But not all cotton is white - I have grown cotton plants with deep burgundy

leaves and played with pale green and brown strains; the brown looks like white cotton that's been steeped in coffee. I hear it's illegal to grow colored cotton near commercial fields let it cross pollinate, but I doubt my little inner-city patch is a threat to Big Ag.

So, these are a few great mallows worth trying in next year's hot summer garden.

Felder Rushing is a Mississippi author, columnist, and host of the "Gestalt Gardener" on MPB Think Radio. Email gardening questions to rushingfelder@yahoo.com.

Planning committee working towards Lexington's December 5 Christmas parade



The planning committee for the 2019 Lexington Christmas Parade met at Lexington City Hall on Monday, October 28. The volunteer attendees along with Santa Claus discussed details of the Thursday, December 5 event. Parade route, line-up, judging, bands and entertainment were highlighted during the meeting. The parade is set for 5:15 p.m. that Thursday with line-up at 4:30 p.m. at the Highway 12 east/Highway 17 south bypass to South Vine. New this year will be live musical entertainment before the parade provided by the Holmes County Central High School (HCCHS) Choir. Parade Grand Marshals this year are Charlie Mae Joiner, county administrator, and Larry Davis, county supervisor. Marching bands planned for the parade include: HCCHS, Yazoo City, Greenwood High School, J.Z. George, Holmes Community College and Leake Central at Walnut Grove. Pictured above are, children in front (from left): Leslie Easterling and Klausen Killebrew; First row (from left): Sherri Reeves, Carolyn Love, Brenda Powell, Mayor Robin McCrory, Santa Claus, Kristy Ingold, Alderwoman Clementene Cooper, Arnita Knight and Robert Johnson; Second row (from left): Linda Sallis, Maudie C. Wilcoxson, Arlene Easterling, Fran Thurmond, Sterling Starns and Nanci-Taylor Maddux; Back row (from left): Officer Elizah Brooks, Officer John Newton, Fire Chief Derrick Hodges, Jeannette Neal, Jerry McCrory and Leroy Riley. (Photo by Matthew Breazeale)

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