HIBISCUS (Rose Mallow)
Big Statements for the Garden

Bob Lyons and Melinda Zoehrer

Big, bold, colorful, and flamboyant flowers…that’s what most people imagine when they think hibiscus. Well, they wouldn’t be wrong. After all, their first introduction to hibiscus may have been in tropical Florida or Hawaii where they grow outdoors, year round, as garden shrubs. Beautiful as they may be, they are not even close to being cold hardy in our area. However, that doesn’t mean that northern gardens cannot be graced with the elegance and flamboyance that characterize the tropical members of this genus. With over 650 hibiscus species, many are both native to and cold hardy throughout Delaware, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and Maryland.

We’re pleased to present a collection of perennial, native *Hibiscus moscheutos*, its selections and hybrids, as well as the native *Hibiscus coccineus*. Ornamental features include distinctive, large flowers, often measuring 6” or more in diameter, with red or softer pink petals, bicolors, and even pure white flowers. Individual flowers last only a day or two but the plant produces lots of them to extend the flowering season to several weeks. Flowering for wild species usually starts in mid to late summer, which is true for most cultivars. Shorter varieties, however, flower earlier in the summer. Overall plant habit can be variable, ranging from a commonly expected 6–8’ tall to less than half that in newer, dwarf cultivars.

Perhaps the most surprising feature about these *Hibiscus* is their versatility for variable site conditions. In the wild, they normally inhabit moist to wet soils, hence the common name “Swamp Hibiscus,” but they also thrive in average garden soil that sometimes flirts with drought. They are an obvious choice for rain gardens but also perform well in perennial borders. It is very important to understand that hibiscus emerge comparatively late in spring, waiting instead for the ground to warm up. They should not be mistaken for dead just because their new shoots have yet to emerge compared to surrounding perennials. Full sun is best, and while shadier conditions won’t kill the plant, it will result in reduced flowering and a weaker plant stature. For cultural and aesthetic reasons, cut their stems back to stubs in winter because it is highly unlikely that any above ground stems will survive.
Latin Name | Common Name | Mature Size | Light | Soil | Pot Size | Price
--- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | ---
Hibiscus | 'Ballet Slippers' Rose Mallow | 4 | 2 g | $12
Hibiscus | 'Berry Awesome' Rose Mallow | 4–5 | 1 g | $9
Hibiscus | 'Cherry Choco Latte' Rose Mallow | 4 | 2 g | $12
Hibiscus | 'Dark Mystery' Rose Mallow | 5 | 1 g | $9
Hibiscus | 'Evening Symphony' Rose Mallow | 4 | 2 g | $12
Hibiscus | 'Fairy Tale' Rose Mallow | 4 | 2 g | $12
Hibiscus | 'Heavenly Blue' Rose Mallow | 4 | 2 g | $12
Hibiscus | 'Hollywood Nights' Rose Mallow | 4 | 2 g | $12
Hibiscus | 'Lady Baltimore' Rose Mallow | 4 | 2 g | $12
Hibiscus | 'Lady King' Rose Mallow | 4 | 2 g | $12
Hibiscus | 'Lady Moxie' Rose Mallow | 4 | 2 g | $12
Hibiscus | 'Lady Sahara' Rose Mallow | 4 | 2 g | $12
Hibiscus | 'Mars Madness' Rose Mallow | 4–5 | 1 g | $9
Hibiscus | 'Mocha Moon' Rose Mallow | 4 | 1 g | $9
Hibiscus | 'Moonlight' Rose Mallow | 4 | 2 g | $12
Hibiscus | 'Mystical Rose' Rose Mallow | 4 | 2 g | $12
Hibiscus | 'Party Favor' Rose Mallow | 5 | 1 g | $9
Hibiscus | 'Pink Morn' Rose Mallow | 4 | 1 g | $9
Hibiscus | 'Raspberry Sorbet' Rose Mallow | 4 | 1 g | $9
Hibiscus | 'Rose Garden' Rose Mallow | 4 | 1 g | $9
Hibiscus | 'Starry Starry Night' Rose Mallow | 3–4 | 1 g | $9
Hibiscus | 'Summer in Paradise' Rose Mallow | 3–4 | 1 g | $9
Hibiscus | 'Vintage Wine' Rose Mallow | 4 | 1 g | $9
Hibiscus coccineus | Scarlet Rose Mallow | 3–6 | 2 g | $12
Hibiscus moscheutos | Scarlet Rose Mallow | 3–7 | 1 g | $9
Hibiscus moscheutos | 'Fantasia' | 3 | 1 g | $9
Hibiscus moscheutos | 'Lady Baltimore' | 4–5 | 1 g | $9
Hibiscus moscheutos | 'Mocha Moon' | 4 | 1 g | $9
Hibiscus moscheutos | 'PAS304889' | 2–3 | 1 g | $9
Hibiscus moscheutos | 'PAS351671' | 2–3 | 1 g | $9
Hibiscus moscheutos | 'PAS3551671' | 2–3 | 1 g | $9
Hibiscus moscheutos | 'PAS35603' | 2–3 | 1 g | $9
Hibiscus moscheutos | 'PAS3590714' | 2–3 | 1 g | $9
Hibiscus moscheutos | 'PAS3590715' | 2–3 | 1 g | $9
Hibiscus moscheutos | 'PAS3590716' | 2–3 | 1 g | $9
Hibiscus moscheutos | 'PAS3590717' | 2–3 | 1 g | $9
Hibiscus moscheutos | 'PAS3590718' | 2–3 | 1 g | $9
Hibiscus moscheutos | 'PAS3590719' | 2–3 | 1 g | $9
Hibiscus moscheutos | 'PAS3590720' | 2–3 | 1 g | $9
Hibiscus moscheutos | 'PAS3590721' | 2–3 | 1 g | $9
Hibiscus moscheutos | 'PAS3590722' | 2–3 | 1 g | $9
Hibiscus moscheutos | 'PAS3590723' | 2–3 | 1 g | $9
Hibiscus moscheutos | 'PAS3590724' | 2–3 | 1 g | $9
Hibiscus moscheutos | 'PAS3590725' | 2–3 | 1 g | $9
Hibiscus moscheutos | 'PAS3590726' | 2–3 | 1 g | $9
Hibiscus moscheutos | 'PAS3590727' | 2–3 | 1 g | $9
Hibiscus moscheutos | 'PAS3590728' | 2–3 | 1 g | $9