



MAY NEWSLETTER 2011

Patty's Plants

Will This Planting Season Ever Start?

Have a Tropical Paradise in Wisconsin!

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New at Patty's

Patty's sister-in-law has developed a line of certified organic gluten-free flour. For anyone who is gluten intolerant or has celiac disease



Oh my goodness!

Is this really Gluten-free? Yes! Introducing Coogi Gluten-Free baking mixes. Made in small batches, with maximum taste and nutrition. Our motto? Don't settle, eat better. ORGANIC • WHOLE GRAIN • GLUTEN-FREE GOODNESS

This has to be the coolest spring in years. We have had such a long winter. Then to top it all off we continue with a very late start to this years planting season. We are all in need of getting our hands, shoes and jeans dirty again digging in the dirt. Some of us have even tried to rush this season with planting a few things a bit to early. I will take some of the blame this year for the awful weather. I actually wished that Mother Nature would be late so as I could get settled in my new location. I do apologize for that but I am now completely moved to 819 E. High St. (just a

block away). We are busy filling up our outside garden center area everyday. There are more and more



plants coming in weekly. We have gotten in many unique tropical plants as well as annuals and we have planted up some fun funky planters to start our 4th season. Come on Mother Nature, let the planting season can begin!

Patty

For those of you who haven't heard of our move, let me tell you a little about our new building. We are in an 1860's renovated Methodist Church which has not been used as a house of worship in many years. Previous to Patty's Plants Natural & Organic Garden Supply, the building was used as Small Wonders Daycare and Learning Center, then it sat empty for a year or so. Now, not only do I have my business in the old church but it also houses Charming B's Coffee Shoppe & More plus our Milton Area Chamber of Commerce Industry and Tourism office or (MACCIT).

Tropical Paradise Here in Wisconsin? Why Not!

Want to be in a tropical paradise? Can't afford to this year? Patty's Plants is carrying many tropical patio plants this season. With gas prices skyrocketing, why not turn your backyard into a tropical get-away. You can use large leaf plants such as



bananas, bird of paradise, cannas and palms in making the backyard your vacation destination this summer. Blooming hibiscus, mandevilla and tropical fruits can be grown in containers right in your own backyard. You don't have

to be an expert in flowers and plants to be successful in container gardening. It can be very easy. With the tips I will give you and the many different plant options you can create your own special outdoor tropical paradise right here in Wisconsin. Patty's also carries tropical container gardens all ready to go.

When going to your favorite garden center, make sure you have a salesperson help you pick the right plants for your area. Tell them whether you have sun or shade. Let them know whether you want a container full of tropical plants or flowers to make your backyard living space an instant jungle. Here are just few choices for tropical and annuals plants:

Hibiscus— This is one of the most popular tropical trees or shrubs. You can grow it in the house and it will bloom year round if you have a sunny area. Outside, they also need lots of sun. The night temperature should be above 50*.

Mandevilla-This is a vigorous vine with large rough leaves in the pink and white varieties, smaller leaves in the yellow. It can grow 8 to 10 feet and must have a good support system. Their large trumpet flowers are sure to attract hummingbirds. They love it sunny and hot.

Elephant ear (*Alocasia esculenta*): Dramatic, tropical tuberous perennial with huge lush foliage arising from the base on long stems. Some cultivars, such as 'Protodora Shield' have enormous leaves, up to 3' long. Use 'Black Magic' for its striking velvety, purple-black leaves, which are up to 2' long.



Canna (*Canna x generalis*): A fast growing plant grown for its beautiful foliage and colorful clusters of gladiolus-like flowers. Foliage is huge and banana-like, often in bold, dark colors, sometimes striped; it remains beautiful until frost. Blooms throughout the summer.

Coleus (*Solenostemon scutellarioides*): For season-long interest, few plants provide as much variety of brilliantly col-

ored foliage, leaf shape and plant form as coleus. Foliage ranges from velvety deep purple to multi-colored varieties, on plants that can be upright, bushy, or cascading.

Lantana (*Lantana camara*): A sprawling, tropical annual, grown for its vibrant verbena-like flowers in bright and multi-colored

hues. Depending on variety, they can be upright, shrubby or sprawling, weeping and trailing.

Sweet Potato Vine (*Ipomoea batatas*)

"Sweet Potato Vine" is in the same family as "Morning Glories"... both a climbing vine. The one in this picture is called "Ace of a Spades", 'Blackie' was the first "Sweet Potato Vine" introduced to gardeners. One of my favorites is "Marguerite" which is chartreuse in color.

Quality Soil is the Key!

Use a good quality potting mix. Do not use garden dirt, it is too heavy and will not drain as well. It could be full of weeds seeds and may have diseases that can hurt your plants. I recommend adding worm castings

to any good potting soil to get your plants off to a great start. In a very sunny spot you can add soil moist to your mix or purchase a mix already with this in it. There are some wonderful organic soil blends and moisture

control additives you can purchase here at Patty's. Happy Frog potting soil is one of the organic soil blends that we carry which has worm castings already in the mix.



Happy Frog by Fox Farm is the best organic soil on the planet in my opinion!

Caring For Your Paradise Garden

In the heat of the summer check your planter daily, usually in the morning. Water it thoroughly so the water drains out the bottom. This way you know the entire root system is watered. Don't let the planter sit in water for more the 15 minutes. If it's not soaking it up it's plenty wet. There

are all different types of fertilizers. From water-soluble to granular to organic. You can fertilize with a diluted solution every time you water or once a month using a granular slow-release fertilizer. Tiger Bloom is an awesome organic liquid fertilizer. Here at Patty's we fertilize all our plants

weekly with it to keep them happy and healthy. Pruning or deadheading will help your flowers and plants stay in the best shape by growing and filling in more. Remember the larger your container grows the more you'll have to check it for watering.



This works wonderfully on all your blooming plants!

Patty's Will Help You

We will help you plant your container garden. If you don't find the right container for you at Patty's, you may bring in your own container. We have an outdoor planting

area for you which you may use and leave all the mess with us. You may also leave your container with us and we will plant at for you.



Tropical Vines

Dipladenia-This is in the same family as the Mandevilla but is ever-



green. Which means, when you bring it in for the winter it won't dump it's leaves like it's cousin sometimes can. It has a smaller, shinier leaf. It is also not as vigorous. It needs bright indoor conditions but can take part sun outdoors. It works well in a hanging basket.

Passion Flower- Unbelievable wax-like or faux flower. This plant has a special story. Spanish missionaries are said to have seen symbols of Christ's suffering. The pedals were the



apostles, the thread-shaped secondary pedals resembled Jesus' crown of thorns, the five anthers were the wounds, and the stigmas the cross and nails. The fruit

is edible but may not produce any here in our area.

Jasmine- there over 200 species of Jasminum. They grow very well indoors as well as on the patio for the summer. The blooms are very fragrant all through the summer. This is one of the easiest.

Bougainvillea- This plant loves the heat. It has the most beautiful paper-like flower brackets, the real flower is tiny and inside the bracts.

It can be grown in a hanging basket or on a

trellis. Bougainvillea can never have enough sun and likes to dry out between waterings.

Pandorea Vine-This green or variegated vine loves sun. It can grow 8ft.



You can restrict it's growth by planting it in a container with a tepee frame or trellis. It needs a sunny cool room in the winter.

PATTY'S PLANTS

Natural & Organic Garden Supply



NEW
819 E. High St.
Milton, WI 53563

Phone: 608-580-0066
Fax: 866-336-6720
email:patty@pattysplants.com

WWW.PATTYSPLANTS.COM

Patty's will be carrying citrus plants, (limes, lemons and mini oranges) These make great patio plants for a sunny deck.



A Vacation For Your Houseplants

Your houseplants have had a long, hard winter. With little or no humidity, hot, dry temperatures or even cold drafts not to mention lack of light are all very hard on tropicals. I'll call them tropicals because that's where most of our houseplants came from, the tropics. Why not give them a little vacation outdoors for the summer? They will flourish outside in a protected corner of your garden or patio. It will remind them that they used to grow outside. They will love the extra light and the humidity. They will be happy once again. But there are a few steps to consider if your plants are to be but outside for the summer.

* **STEP 1: Acclimating:** Select a protected spot outdoors, away from direct sun and free from wind. A corner with a shade tree overhead is the perfect site for vacationing houseplants. The reason for this is that they are not used to the intense light and the leaves could sunburn. If your plant is a sun-loving plant, keep it in the shade for a few days then gradually put in more sun until you have it right where you want it. If you are acclimating seedlings or newly planted flowers and bulbs you may need to bring them in at night if the temperatures get to chilly. Then put them back outside in the morning. (Protected spot only)

* **STEP 2:** Move your houseplants outside in late spring, when nighttime temperatures are consistently

above 50 degrees F. Like I said before these are **tropical** plants and they like it warm.

* **STEP 3:** Spray the plants with a solution of mild 1/4 tsp. dishwashing liquid mixed in 1 qt. water to remove dust, dirt and insects. Wash the plants with fresh water after spraying with the soap solution. After being in the house, the plants will enjoy a refreshing bath.

* **STEP 4:** Repot your plants with a good organic potting mix. It's a lot easier to set up a repotting area outside in the shade. If your plant needs pruning, this is also the time to do that.

* **STEP 5:** Fertilize with a slow-release fertilizer and add worm casting to the soil when repotting. You can also use an organic liquid fertilizer throughout the summer.

* **STEP 6:** Watch for insect pests, and treat the plants with the soap solution or an organic control if pest problems develop.

* **STEP 7:** You can give your plants a weekly overhead watering during the morning hours so that the plants have time to dry during the day. Washing the foliage in the morning will prevent fungus diseases from developing and knock off any insects.