

Houseplants join “Year of” program; new DIY book, and a little help please!



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# TROPICAL TOPICS

## COMING UP THIS WEEK:

"Year of" for Houseplants  
New DIY Houseplant Book  
Hensen Joins J. Berry  
Help An Editor Out



## NGB Creates "Year of" for Houseplants

I heard rumblings of this development and am glad to have heard that it's true: The National Garden Bureau has created a new plant category within its popular "Year of" program, and that category is Houseplants.

"With National Garden Bureau's expanding member base and more members offering houseplants, it's natural to add this category to the long-established 'Year of' program," reads a press release announcing the new category. Houseplants joins five existing categories: Bulbs, Annuals, Edibles, Perennials and Flowering Shrubs.

The "Year of" program is one of the more popular offerings that National Garden Bureau runs for the gardening consumer public. It's consistently in the Top 10 visited pages on the NGB website (<http://www.ngb.org/>), which is itself visited by thousands of people every month.

What does the "Year of" program hope to accomplish? The Bureau and its member companies choose crops specifically well-suited to the North American market so they are easy to grow, genetically diverse (giving consumers plenty of options to pick from) and have plenty of new breeding to show off. In all, the "Year of" programs are an important component in the marketing programs of everyone from the breeders on through to the garden centers.



The Year of the Houseplant program kicks off with the 2022 season and the inaugural plant will be Peperomia. With “genetically diverse” being one of the crop requirements, this genera surely checks that box. Consumer publicity for the 2022 “Year of” crops will begin in January 2022.

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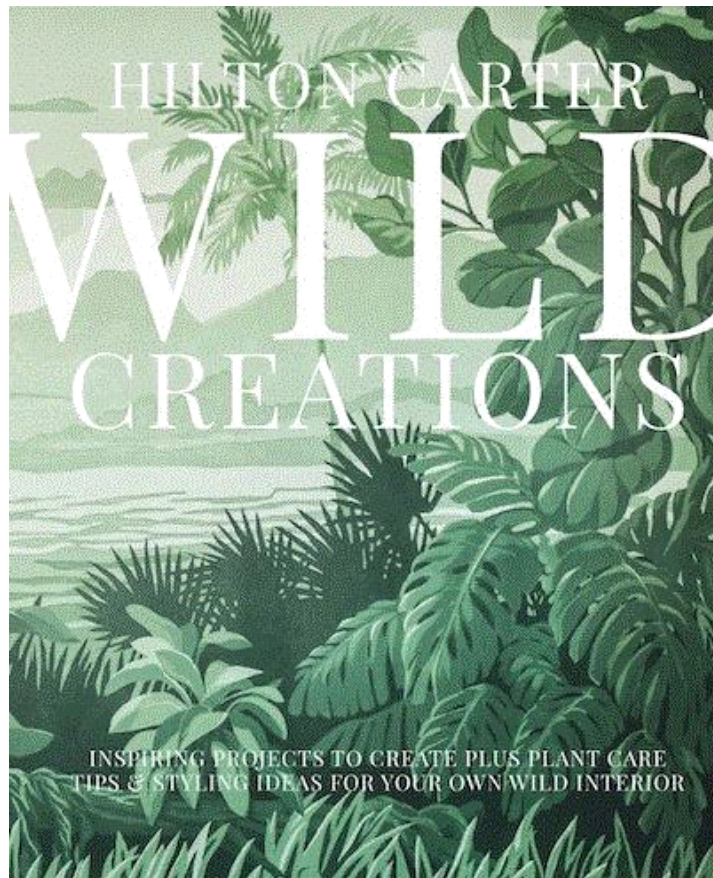
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## New DIY Houseplant Book

I bet this author has about eight of every plant that will appear on NGB's Year of the Houseplant list for the next 10 years—even the hard-to-get ones. I'm talking about Hilton Carter, who has become a bit of a celebrity in the consumer houseplant fan club world. The first I heard of him was in a *New York Times* article about trendiness of houseplants maybe three years ago. Fast forward and Hilton is now celebrating the April 6<sup>th</sup> release of his third book, “Wild Creations: Inspiring projects to create plus plant care tips and styling ideas for your own wild interior.”





In his previous books (“Wild at Home” and “Wild Interiors”) he gave readers glimpses into beautifully designed, plant-filled homes. In “Wild Creations,” Hilton shows how you can create these over-the-top (or just plain simple) houseplant fantasy-scapes yourself.

The book is laid out in a number of sections: a step-by-step DIY section, a tips-and-tricks section, a Hilton’s-favorite-indoor-plants section and a chapter on the transformative power of plants.

“Wild Creations” is published by CICO Books. Order some to have on hand in your houseplant department as folks start coming in for spring!



## Hensen Joins J. Berry

Outdoor patio weather is right around the corner, which means hibiscus for porch pots and such will be in great demand. If you get your hibiscus from the folks at [J. Berry Nursery](#), then Jesse Hensen will be a name with which you’ll become quite familiar.



Jesse, whom I have known for years as the Customer Service and Vendor Relations Manager at Eason Horticultural Resources (EHR), will now serve as J. Berry's Hollywood Hibiscus Supply Chain Manager. In this role Jesse will be the liaison between the Nursery, the young plant brokerage community, the young plant producers and the finished growers. He'll also support and coordinate with trialing programs.

"I'm thrilled to join the J. Berry Nursery team," says Jesse. "The company's outstanding genetics and commitment to grower support, along with my horticultural and service background, makes this position an interesting, exciting opportunity to serve as an intermediary between J. Berry and our growers. I'm especially excited to work with the Hollywood Hibiscus 'stars,' because they're a beautiful line of products that consumers will relish adding to their gardens and containers this summer."

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## Help An Editor Out

I could use some suggestions for an article I am working on about the best tropical plants for outdoor combo containers. If anyone should be able to provide some stunning suggestions, it would definitely be the *Tropical Topics* audience!

I put a request for suggestions in my *buZZ!* e-newsletter last week and received this combo (along with several others) from Julie Hoffmann from East River Nursery in Huron, South Dakota. Hot tropicals aren't just for the south—and this is the proof.



Please share with me your favorite combos for a stunning season-long tropical container display. Ideas? Drop me a line about them at [ewells@ballpublishing.com](mailto:ewells@ballpublishing.com).

Any suggestions, comments, questions or news to share? Just drop me a line at [ewells@ballpublishing.com](mailto:ewells@ballpublishing.com).

**Ellen Wells**  
Editor-at-Large  
**Green Profit**

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