

CALL FOR: GARDEN PERFORMANCE JUDGES

By Meg Dalton

The **AHS Benedict Garden Performance Awards Plan** recognizing performance excellence of individual hosta cultivars in the garden setting began in 2005. The system was approved by the Board of Directors in 2003 and the details of the plan are listed on the AHS website.

We need members to apply to become Garden Judges. The plan allows for a maximum of 15% of each Region's membership to be Garden Judges.

What is the Garden Judge expected to do? The requirements are simple and straight forward. First you will be expected to visit and observe hostas growing in as many gardens as possible in your own region.

For balloting purposes, your opinions on cultivar performance should be based primarily on your observations of hostas in your region. Recognizing regional performance is an important aspect of this plan. The second responsibility is to vote. A ballot will be sent to you by April 15 of each year. The ballot will list all cultivars eligible for the awards under consideration. You will circle the cultivars that you wish to vote for, using the selection criteria and point scales that are part of the plan to assist you in making your choices. Then return the ballot to the Garden Performance Chair by October 15. That is all you will need to do each year.

Who is eligible to become a Garden Judge? Anyone who has:

1. been a member of The American Hosta Society for three years
2. a demonstrated knowledge of hostas
3. a demonstrated ability to visit a representative cross section of gardens in his or her Region.

How do you apply to become a Garden Judge? Just download the application form found on the AHS web site (www.hosta.org) fill it out and send to Barbara Jones - Garden Performance Chair, 46 Bartlett Street, Chelmsford, MA 01824. You may also send it to her at her email address bbrownj@aol.com. OR if you can not access the form at the web site, send Barbara a letter of application listing your number of years as an AHS member, the number of hosta cultivars you grow in your own garden as well as the approximate number of cultivars you have added to your collection in the last five years, and the names of the hosta gardens you have visited in your own Region and at National Conventions during the previous two years. (List a maximum of fifteen gardens.)

Based on the information you provide, Barbara will determine if you satisfy the requirements to become a garden judge and will notify you within thirty days of receipt of application. Remember that a maximum of 15% of each Region's members can participate at one time so apply soon to assure your appointment as an AHS Garden Judge.