



*Green Mountain Hosta*

***Hosta 'Aladdin's Lamp'***  
**D. and J. Ward, 1996**  
**Green Mountain Hosta offering for 2018**

## *President's Musings*



**Gregg Peterson**  
**President, American Hosta Society**

It has been a busy month in the hosta world with local societies hosting hosta sales, hosta shows and local garden tours. On a national level, the 2018 national AHS convention was hosted by the Delaware Valley Hosta Society (DVHS) and was held in King of Prussia, Pennsylvania. A big thank you goes out to the DVHS convention committee, tour garden hosts, society members and volunteers for a truly memorable convention. The tour gardens were magnificent, the educational programs were very informative and the hosta show showcased a wide variety of plants that are a part of the genus *Hosta*. In addition, they helped put together a great celebration of the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the American Hosta Society, capped off by an interesting walk down “memory lane” by Dr. Bob Olson, highlighting many of the people and events in our 50-year history.

I also want to recognize and congratulate the following AHS members who were awarded several of the highest awards and recognition by the American Hosta Society. They included Bev and Dave Stegeman, winners of the Eunice Fisher Distinguished Hybridizer Award, Steven Greene, awarded the Alex J. Summers Distinguished Merit Award and Bob Solberg, awarded the Benedict Garden Performance medal for his hosta *H. 'Curly Fries'*. A special Lifetime Service Award was presented to Warren Pollock for his service and numerous contributions to AHS over the years. Make sure you congratulate each of the award winners as you meet them at various hosta events and activities, as all of them are well deserving of their honors.



President Gregg Peterson addresses the Philadelphia Convention .

The Mid-South Hosta Society based in Memphis, Tennessee is the featured local society and they are a very active group involved in a number of civic and local community activities, including developing and maintaining three separate hosta display gardens. They hold a very successful hosta sale each year as well as having members go to individual gardens to identify mystery Hostas. My question to them is how far their members will travel to identify a mystery Hosta, as there are many of us that would like to have them visit our gardens!

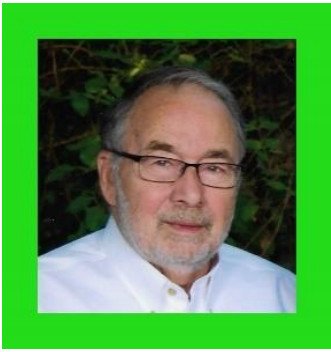
Check out the online catalog of our featured vendor, Green Mountain Hosta, including their introductions and the wide inventory of hosta varieties they offer. For those new hosta gardeners, don't be afraid to order hostas online, as they are one of the easiest plants to successfully ship bare root and it opens up a much bigger selection of plants to choose from.

Finally, one of the most frequently asked questions of inexperienced hosta growers is "How do you divide hostas?" The illustrated article, *Dividing Your Hosta Plants*, gives practical tips and techniques that you can pass along to new hosta gardeners. Many times, inexperienced hosta gardeners think dividing hostas is a daunting task that they can't do, when in fact the steps outlined in the article make the process quite easy to follow.

Invite someone to tour your garden this summer and always yours in the "friendship" plant.







**Warren I. Pollock**  
Glen Mills, Pennsylvania

# GO HOSTAS!

## 2018 AHS Convention

The American Hosta Society's annual national convention, hosted this year by the Delaware Valley Hosta Society in the Philadelphia area, ended Saturday night June 23. I was a member of the organizing TEAM—and, now weeks afterward, I still am on a considerable “high” on how successful the many complex and involved components came together to make an outstanding convention. I have some special observations, experiences and comments I want to share.

**Gift plant:** *H.* ‘The Big Five-oh’, the cultivar name of the convention’s gift plant, honors the event’s being the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration of the Society. Delaware Valley’s Charlie Seaver registered it last year. He is the son of Mildred Seaver, the late hosta celebrity and outstanding hybrid introducer especially noted for the popular classic *H.* ‘Spilt Milk’.

Herein I am not going to go into why the cultivar name ends with “-oh” and not, say, “oh” or “Oh” or perhaps just “o” or “O.” I plan to explain the not well-known *Cultivar Code* requirement in “What’s in a Hosta Name?” column in the upcoming Fall 2018 issue of *The Hosta Journal* (Volume 49, Number 2).

Instead, I want to highlight that each gift plant was wrapped in large gold foil: gold, of course, symbolizing the Society’s special anniversary.

The TEAM chose Charlie’s big green hosta of unknown origin some two and a half years ago. He sent a piece of the original clump to A to Z Perennials, Mark and son Andy Zilis’s tissue-culture nursery in Rochelle, Illinois, who propagated the hosta to “TC Stage 3” size. Jeff Miller of the Land of the Giants Hosta Farm in Milton, Iowa, received these small plants and grew them to large divisions. He shipped the plants to Alan Russell at Russell Gardens Wholesale nursery in Churchville,



*H.* ‘The Big Five-oh’ (C. Seaver, 2017)

Pennsylvania, a community next to Philadelphia. (See RGW's advertisement in Spring 2018 *THJ*, page 43 and 45.)

Russell Gardens Wholesale overwintered them, wrapped each pot in large bright florist's gold-colored aluminum foil (at no cost to the convention) and delivered the plants to the hotel when the convention started.

The gift plants were exceptionally large. Pot size was 6-inch diameter x 6-inches high. Leaf height was about ~12 inches; leaf spread, 16-18 inches. I don't recall ever receiving so large a gift plant at other AHS national conventions. (Some attendees were concerned how they were going to get their gift plants in their luggage for the flights home. Often heard: "They are so big!" My suggestion was: Put them in the convention totes and carry them as additional luggage.)

The convention's registration tables were in a somewhat narrow corridor on the hotel's main level. You didn't see the corridor from the hotel's registration desk in the lobby. Only when you made the sharp 90-degree turn at the hotel restaurants did you observe the row of tables jam-packed with gift hostas wrapped in bright gold foil. What a wonderful welcoming reception for the convention's attendees!

I doubt that Russell Gardens Wholesale ever considered that the foil wrapping would be a non-leaking container for the plastic pot. At other conventions, to receive some natural light, I had my potted gift plant sitting on my hotel room's window sill or air condition unit beneath the window. I watered the pot, often daily—and, of course, the excess water leaked out of the pot's bottom hole(s). I then had to find paper towels to place under the pot and clean up the messy water puddle.

The 'The Big Five-oh' pot was too large to be on the window sill or air conditioner in this convention's hotel room. Instead, it was on a table in a usually dark corner. I watered it a bit each day—and the excess water remained in the foil. Thank you, Russell Gardens Wholesale for the helpful foil container.

**Optional Russo Garden Tour:** At AHS national conventions there usually are optional tour gardens before and/or after the official convention days. *Phifty in Philly* (yes, that's the 2018 convention's mellifluous moniker) had optional gardens, too.

The Gail and David Russo garden in Cedarville, New Jersey, was one of them. It has a mammoth outstanding collection that is not often visited because their residence is more or less "out of the way" in south-central New Jersey. It is an hour and 45-minute to two-hour drive from the convention hotel in King of Prussia, Pennsylvania, going through bustling

downtown Philadelphia and then crossing the Delaware River between Pennsylvania and New Jersey.

In 1998, AHS designated *Hosta* as the “Friendship Plant.” The late Alex J. Summers, a founder of the Society and its first president, declared that “The American Hosta Society is a society of people, not plants.” I couldn’t agree more and have always championed this understanding. Hostas may have brought gardeners together, but it is the friendship among us that I and numerous other AHS members value so highly.

During my many years of hosta activities, I have made many wonderful friends. A lot of them have markedly helped me in my writing, educational and technical endeavors. I basically consider myself an investigative reporter and story teller with a probing historical and scientific curiosity. Countless times they supplied me with hugely helpful information. Often there were detailed enlightening discussions, which went on for many emails over many months.

I visited the Russo garden last summer and I was most impressed. It occurred to me then that my making arrangements for some of my convention-attending friends to view this outstanding collection would be a long overdue, albeit small, “pay back” to them. Thus, a 25-passenger coach was obtained and a special friendship group of hosta aficionados (plus spouses, of course) journeyed to the Russo garden on Wednesday.

Included on the coach was Dmitry Komarov from Moscow, Russia, who I learned the week before the convention started would be an attendee. I had heard his “Hostas in Russia presentation” at the 2015 AHS National Convention in Raleigh and thought he would be much interested in the Russo garden.

Also on the coach was Koki Kuarta from Kamkura-shi Kanagawa Prefecture, Japan. He is a friend of June Colley from U.K., an Educational Session presenter on Thursday. Koki and wife Satoko often accompanied June on her garden visits in Japan. He told me the Russo garden was the first American hosta garden he had ever visited.

In addition, also visiting the Russo garden that morning were friends who drove themselves.

The coach left the hotel soon after 8am, stopping at a Wawa convenience store just a mile away. Wawa (its emblem is a flying goose; its name, the squawking sound this bird utters) is a 5-star premium locally-headquartered, quick in-quick out food and sundry store specializing in coffee, pastries, egg sandwiches and other breakfast items. In an early email to the passengers I mentioned they might want to purchase items at Wawa and eat/drink them along the way.



We arrived at the Russo garden near 10 o'clock. Gail Russo had arranged for a photographer to take a group picture.



Photo left to right - Lew Meyers (Olga's husband), Herb Burgess (with Jim Henry), Olga Petryszyn (Fisher Award recipient), Marilyn Romenesko (convention tour gardener), Jim Henry (current AHS VP Genus *Hosta*), Ali Pollock, David Russo, Warren Pollock, Dick Ward (noted hosta introducer), Jane Ward, Clarence (CH) Falstad (Walters Gardens hosta authority), Carol Brashear (Hosta Library co-"librarian"), Janet Mills (*THJ* designer), Jonathan Hogarth (convention presenter from U.K.), Gayle Hartley Alley (Hosta Registrar), Phil Alley, June Colley (convention presenter from U.K.), Mike Shadrack (Summers Award recipient), Gail Russo, Kathy Shadrack, Mardy Beilstein, Doug Beilstein (Fischer award recipient, past AHS president), Hugo Phillips (convention presenter from Belgium), Dmitry Komarov (from Russia), Danny Van Eechaute (from Belgium), John Baker (with June Colley from U.K.), Koki Kurata (from Japan)

Jim Henry (AHS VP Genus *Hosta*) and Herb Burgess are in the photo. They already were at the Russo's garden, having driven from their residence in Lewes, Delaware, in the extreme lower part of the state near the ocean. David and Roberto Chopko (whose exceptional, renown hosta garden in Boonton, New Jersey, also was an optional convention garden) drove themselves, arriving after the photo was taken. Mark Zilis and wife Katie from Rochelle, Illinois, and Paula Lehtola (AHS VP Awards and Honors) and Mary Arnberg from Bridgewater, Mass., also drove and missed the photographer, too.

The Russos own 5.56 acres of pine lands. The builder carved out the first acre while building their home in 1992. Since then, they added four ponds, the largest, ~30,000 gallons, is 40 feet ovalish and has a waterfall and bog filter.

The gardens are separated into three sections: front, middle and back yards. The middle yard covers the back of the house. The back yard includes the big pond, two patios and an 80-foot long arbor/pergola that goes to the fence. The 89 panel Solar layout behind the fence is owned by the Russo's and powers the entire property.

The Russo garden has **1,800+** named hosta varieties. (*Let that gigantic number rattle around in your head for a while.*) All are labeled—and I would bet heavily the nomenclature is correct. A couple of weeks before the visit, Gail emailed to coach passengers a huge Excel summary **listing each hosta and where it is in the garden.**

The Russos are collectors of rare and older varieties. A hosta authority told me the Russos liked “the high-end stuff.” As examples, both *H.* ‘Alley Oop’ and ‘Bullfrog’, unusual variegated sports that I planned to mention in my Educational Session presentation that evening, were in their garden.

Lunch was in the middle yard where there were picnic tables and chairs. Featured was grilled thinly-sliced steak, cheese slices, onions and Italian rolls to make the famous Philly steak and cheesesteak sandwiches. Also available were potato salad, which Gail herself made, chips and other yummy foods. And, of course, there were deserts.

We left at about 12:30 and, as a bonus, drove to another optional garden: the extensive Morris Arboretum of the University of Pennsylvania, about an hour and three quarters away in north-west Philadelphia. It was a short visit, about 45 minutes, and we were back at the hotel before 4:00.

What great hostas at the Russo garden! What a great day! What great friendship!

Yes, *Hosta* is the friendship plant.

**Aeroponics Demonstration:** The Friday afternoon Educational Session by Jonathan Hogarth, who resides in U.K., was intended to concentrate on his British national collection of small and miniature hostas, especially the ‘Blue Mouse Ears’ sports. Late last year Jonathan informed me that he would be spending most of the presentation on his very successful experiences with rooting hosta cuttings using aeroponics—a topic he thought more interesting, exciting and especially useful.

When Roger Smith of Severn, Maryland, AHS Education Advisory Committee chair, got wind of Jonathan’s intended presentation, he offered to bring his aeroponic unit to the convention and he and Jonathan would have a live demonstration. Also, he offered to contribute the unit as an auction or raffle item.

In addition, Roger said he would bring a camera and photograph the demonstration, projecting it on the huge two screens in the ballroom so everyone in the room would have a close-up view. As it turned out, the aeroponic unit was conveniently located next to the lectern, which allowed the lectern’s microphone to be used. I can report that everything went well.





Many gardeners are familiar with hydroponics, a method of growing plants using mineral nutrient solutions, usually in water, without soil. Aeroponics is the combination of water and air: roots are in a mist of water like the freshening automatic sprays over vegetables in a grocery's produce department. The sprayers provide the ideal moist environment for rooting of cuttings. Aeroponic propagation units intended for home gardeners are commercially available.

Roger Smith's aeroponic cloning unit.  
It has 25 sites for cuttings and 11 misters.

We've had two articles on aeroponics rooting hostas in AHS's journals. The first was by John Carr, then British Hosta and Hemerocallis president, in the Spring 2015 *THJ* (Vol. 46, No. 1, pp. 23-25) titled "A Novel Method of Rooting Hostas."

The other was on Jonathan Hogarth's rooting methodology in the 2016 *The Online Hosta Journal* (Volume 47 Online). The information was from the June 13, 2016 edition of "BBC Gardeners' World," a popular weekly feature on BBC2 in the U.K. The program can be viewed on YouTube: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G\\_fhs71FTaQ](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G_fhs71FTaQ).

*The Online Hosta Journal* article is not easy to find: You need to go to the AHS website ([www.hosta.org](http://www.hosta.org)), select Members Only and insert the latest password. Then select Publications, Online Journal Archives and 2016 - Volume 47 Online. Click cover photo for the journal's content and select "This and That: 2016" column. Go down *nine* "pages" to article titled "Rooting Hosta Cuttings Using Aeroponics – Part I: A Method for Home Gardeners."

Jonathan's unit is 18 inches long by 15 inches wide by 17 inches tall. There are three main parts: base with pumps and spray bar, cover and tray. The base is 9 inches high and has an 8-inch clear plastic cover with a manual butterfly air controller in the center.

The online article has a photo of Jonathan and shows his aeroponic unit, the lid with slotted rubber plugs holding the cuttings, the H-shape spray bar with misting spray jets and the underside of the lid showing the rooted cuttings. There are 20 plugs for cuttings.

Roger's unit is similar but has no cover. The reservoir (tray) is 14 x 14 x 13 inches. The H-shape bar has 13 misting jets and the lid has 25 plugs.

Roger's aeroponic cloner was sold in the convention's raffle and went for more than the usual retail price. I understand the bidding was fairly active. The winner also received all of the little divisions of blue-green *H. 'Gemstone'* (T. Avent - 2005) that Roger brought to the convention for the demonstration. They will easily grow into a dozen plants.

At the end of the demonstration, I mentioned an article in the January 9, 2017 edition of *The New Yorker* magazine, pages 52-59, titled "High-Rise Greens: Growing crops in the city, without soil or natural light." It narrates that there are operating aeroponic farms in formerly empty, tall factories in industrial areas in or near some major American cities; New York, Seattle, Detroit, Houston and Chicago being a few. There are aeroponic farms in several European city areas, too.

These farms grow salad baby greens in beds, which are huge LED-lighted tubs with big misters in the them, stacked vertically, usually up the ceilings in buildings that are environmentally controlled. Thus, the operation is called "vertical farming," which explains the "high-rise greens" expression in the magazine article's title.

Instead of a lid with plugs, these farms use a specially fabricated (and patented) woven polyethylene cloth. Also, a specially formulated nutrient solution is used.

Salad seeds are spread on the cloth and germinate. On top of the cloth are the leaves, under the cloth are the roots being sprayed.

When leaves are marketable size, they are scraped off of the cloth, packaged and supplied, usually a day after harvest, to supermarkets and specialty food stores that unusually are close by. The roots are then scraped off of the underside of the cloth and, for the most part, become horticultural compost. The cloth is laundered, the solution is refreshed, and farming starts again. All operations are computer controlled; special algorithms were developed.

Why baby greens? Simply because a pound of lettuce can cost just a dollar, while a pound of baby greens can cost 13 dollars. A 4.5-ounce package of baby greens from vertical farming can cost \$3.99. There is enough of a premium in baby greens to make vertical farming profitable. The willingness of a certain kind of customer to pay a lot for greens justifies the investment.

Salad greens are about ninety percent water. Aeroponic farming uses about seventy percent less water than hydroponic farming; hydroponic farming uses about seventy percent less water than regular farming.

## TV Gardening Programs

If you have Netflix TV, I recommend two British programs that are currently available: “Love Your Garden” and “Big Dreams, Small Spaces.”

The first is narrated by Alan Titchmarsh, the second by Monty Don. Both are highly regarded, veteran BBC horticultural commentators with tons of personality and tons of practical know how.

I find both programs, each an hour long, enjoyable and relaxing to watch. No one is murdered, no car chases, no explosions, no involved romances, no controversial political discussions and no one is involved in outlandish physical tasks.

It is interesting to see backyards that are mundane (which probably is much too kind a term) transformed in just a few months by a highly skilled work assemblage into horticultural showplaces with bountiful flowers, intricate paths, raised beds and seating and play areas. Further it is interesting to see what plants are chosen and how they are planted. Though shrubs and trees are used, I have yet see any balled-and-burlapped (all are in containers), and young trees are staked differently than in the States.

Hostas are rarely used because the yards are sunny. But in one program a hosta clump was planted by a fence. Alan Titchmarsh noticed a slug on a leaf. With a huge smile (which is his signature feature), he quickly pulled it off and threw it over the fence onto the neighbor’s garden. I guess he didn’t want to be seen on TV destroying any living thing. The crew smiled and went on with its activities.

Would you find this in an American gardening program? I doubt it. The scene would have been reshot with the hosta carefully inspected to have no slug on the leaves.

*P.S.:* There is a hosta with cultivar name ‘Alan Titchmarsh’. Richard and Mary Ford, whose Park Green Nursery in U.K. closed several years ago, registered it in 2006. It is a sport of *H. ‘Striptease’* with green margin and yellow center and is available in the trade.

# GO HOSTAS!



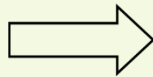
# New from AHS Publishing!

## Sporting in Hostas: A Primer

by  
**Ben J. M. Zonneveld**  
Leiden, The Netherlands  
&  
**Warren I. Pollock**  
Glen Mills, Pennsylvania, USA



Hosta 'Halcyon'



Hosta 'June'

Presented at a Special Educational Session at  
The American Hosta Society 2018  
National Convention

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For availability inquire at: [ahs.vp.publications@gmail.com](mailto:ahs.vp.publications@gmail.com)

This informative educational booklet explains the process of sporting in hostas.

Based on over ten years of study, Drs. Zonneveld and Pollock have produced the most definitive work on this subject to date. The serious hosta enthusiast will want to add this booklet to their hosta library. This booklet is filled with photographs and illustrations that supplement and enhance the scientific information.

You may order your copy from AHS Publications by mailing a check payable to [The American Hosta Society](http://The American Hosta Society) in the amount of \$10.00 (postage paid) to:

**Barry Ankney, V.P. Publications**  
**Sporting in Hostas**  
**330 South Michigan Ave, #1902**  
**Chicago, IL 60604-4352**



## FEATURED LOCAL SOCIETY



# Mid-South Hosta Society

**Shari Tucker, President**

**6331 Common Oaks Court #101**

**Memphis, TN 38120**

MSHS, founded in 1998, serves the Memphis gardening community plus the surrounding counties of West Tennessee, East Arkansas and North Mississippi. The society holds five membership meetings at the Memphis Botanic Garden on the third Thursday of February, March, September, and October.

Dues are \$10 for individuals, \$15 for families, and \$20 for commercial memberships. There are 280 active members. Attendance at meetings averages 75 to 80 members. The May meeting, being the annual hosta sale, attracts hundreds of members and non-members. The Mid-South Hosta Society publishes a newsletter, released prior to each membership meeting. About 25% of the newsletters are distributed in print format, while the remainder are sent electronically. Articles for the newsletter come from the President, VP/Programs, VP/membership, and club Historian. Occasionally, articles are contributed by members or from the AHS newsletter exchange.

The largest fundraising event held by MSHS is their annual Hosta Sale, held the Saturday before Mother's Day each year. The Volunteer Greenhouse at Memphis Botanical Garden (MBG) provides about 20% of the plants for the sale, with MSHS purchasing those plant for half-price. Other plants come from commercial members of MSHS. As the club's principal fund-raiser, this event covers expenses of speakers and helps finance development and maintenance of the Hosta Trail, an American Hosta Society National Display Garden at MBG. It also provides funding for the other projects sponsored by MSHS, including the Serenity Trail at Baptist Memorial Hospital. Serenity Trail is a walking, sitting, exercising and praying area of great peace and comfort for those waiting for word about loved ones, and those needing relief from their emergency room duties. There are big rocks with verses from scripture mounted on them, suggestions for exercises, benches, telephones, a gazebo, lights all along the paved



path, and identification of various plant materials. The Hosta section is filled with "The Hostas of Genny Gillis", donated by her husband, after Genny's death. The Gillis's were charter members of MSHS.



**MSHS members also maintain hostas on an extensive walking trail at Baptist Memorial Hospital.**



**The Hosta Trail in Memphis was approved in 2006 as an American Hosta Society National Display Garden.**



The Hosta Trail, located at the Memphis Botanical Garden, hosted a special exhibition last year sponsored mainly by Terminex. "Big Bugs in the Garden" is a traveling exhibit. Ten of these giant bugs were positioned around the gardens. The Hosta Trail was able to have the dragonfly installed in their area. All of the bugs were "adopted" by local families and small businesses, with the dragonfly adopted by the Buzzy Hussey family.

**MSHS President Shari Tucker welcomes a 17-foot dragonfly to the Hosta Trail during David Rogers' Big Bugs exhibit at Memphis Botanic Garden.**





President Tucker is in the process of putting all communications in the hands of one member. That member will monitor production of newsletter, content of website, get Facebook up and running, communicate with print publications about meetings and connect with “Nextdoor” email server. Shari has also put together a working arrangement with students at University of Memphis to produce the newsletter and construct the website. Their services are “free” and they do this for extra-credit and for the experience to enhance their resumes.

Plans are underway to include more tours of member gardens during the summer months.

**A raised bed of minis is a high point of tours at Memphis Botanic Garden's Hosta Trail.**



**Customers fill wagons and buy more than a thousand hostas at our annual May sale.**



**Tours include lovely landscapes with hostas surrounding a peaceful pond.**





**Memphis garden tours provide surprises, such as a hard-to-grow 'Great Expectations'.**



**A bottle-drying rack was the centerpiece of this hosta garden table arrangement.**

There is also a display bed at Memphis Brooks Museum of Art. The display gardens are tended by MSHS volunteers. Education is the main purpose of MSHS. They have a speaker's bureau, national display garden, and they helped establish Hosta societies in Arkansas and Alabama. Also, members go to individual gardens to identify mystery Hostas. The MSHS is very active in giving to their community.

As a service to their members, MSHS sells Osmacote, plant markers, and "The Hosta Adventure". They make no money on Osmacote or plant markers, due to restrictions placed on non-profit organizations. They also order "members-only" plants for sale, as a service to members, rather than as a money-raising event. Shari and her husband Larry were founding members of MSHS. Larry is a featured writer for this and many other American Hosta Society publications, and recently produced "The Hosta Adventure, Third Edition" for AHS.

# *Hostas and Associates*

Glenn Herold, Cedarburg, WI



## The Japanese Hostas, Part 1

### *Hosta alismifolia* (Baran Giboshi)

There are approximately 41 species of hostas recognized world-wide. Eight of these are native to Korea and four are native to China. The remainder are found on the islands of Japan. Previously I wrote about the Korean hostas for *The Hosta Journal* (Vol. 45, No. 1, Vol. 45, No. 2, Vol. 46, No. 2, and Vol. 47 No. 1.) The Chinese hostas were featured in the last two issues of the *eNewsletter*. This article will be the first in a series about hosta species native to Japan. Some of the species have been widely used in hybridization programs while others are rather obscure and relatively unknown. Perhaps as our knowledge about these unknown species increases, they too will be recognized for their hybridization potential and stand-alone garden worthiness.



*Hosta alismifolia*, known by the common name Baran Giboshi in Japan, is found primarily in the Central part of Honshu Island. In its native range it is considered an endangered species. It likes marshy areas, inhabiting sunny bogs and wet grasslands. Early in the season it is often in full sun, but as the grass grows it shades the plant from the summer sun. The specific epithet, *alismifolia*, is derived from the word *alisma*, referring to the marsh herbs of the family Alismataceae, the Water Plantains.



*H. alismifolia* forms a vase shaped plant that can reach a height of about 20 inches. Leaves average about 11 inches long and 2 to 3 inches wide. The leaves are dark green, shiny, and have good substance. Margins may be wavy, but this characteristic seems to be somewhat variable. Some of the pictures I've seen show only slight waviness, but the specimen in my garden is exceptionally wavy. Inconsistency may be due to the fact that much variability of this species is seen throughout its native range.



Flowers are pale purple with a whitish petal margin, blooming in July. Scapes may be up to 37 inches long. The unstriped petals are an important identifying characteristic. I will be watching my specimen closely this summer to see if my plant is true to the species, for many of the plants sold in the US are thought to be *Hosta sieboldii*, not *H. alismifolia*. Petals of *H. sieboldii* are highlighted by prominent purple stripes.

There is some discrepancy regarding the fertility of *H. alismifolia*. George Schmid states that it is mostly infertile but will form seed pods on rare occasions. Mark Zilis states that it readily forms seed pods. In the wild it reproduces both vegetatively with rhizomes and sexually by seed. Hybrids and sports are a rarity. Schmid made a successful cross of *H. alismifolia* with a yellow form of *H. rectifolia*. His selection was registered as 'Gosan Gold Sword.' Zilis found a couple derivatives of *H. alismifolia* in Japanese collections. 'Ogon Baran' is a seedling with gold foliage. 'Shirofukurin Baran' is a variegated form with leaves that are 5 1/4 inches long and 2 inches wide with a 1/4-inch-wide white margin.

This is a plant that needs to be used more by hybridizers. The narrow, sword-like leaves, wavy margin, shininess, and good substance are all desirable qualities for the hosta garden. Even the green plant in my own garden catches the eye. Maybe hybridizers will now also take a second look at *Hosta alismifolia*.

# FEATURED VENDOR



**Business name:** Green Mountain Hosta  
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**Green Mountain Hosta**  
quality hostas at reasonable prices 

**802-348-6368**

Green Mountain Hosta has been in business since 2001. Our inventory is always growing with new and exciting varieties of hosta plants. Michael, our plant expert, has been in the perennial plant business for over twenty years, having owned a wholesale perennial business in Rhode Island. Since moving to the beautiful state of Vermont, he has continued in the plant business with the focus on hosta. His wife, Judy, manages the office and Shipping Department. Now the focus is field grown hosta. Make sure to browse the online store where you can shop for an amazing array of varieties including blue, variegated, gold, green and miniature hostas. We love them all and hope you enjoy this wonderful perennial plant.

At Green Mountain Hosta we grow only hosta plant varieties. All our plants are field grown which will result in the faster establishment of a mature plant. This perennial plant is quite hardy.

We sell large divisions at reasonable prices depending on the size of the variety. This means a minimum of one to two eyes for larger varieties and two eyes to three eyes for smaller ones.

Our field grown hostas are shipped bare root starting from early April to early May. Let us know if you have a preferred shipping date and we will ship as close as possible to it.

Our plants are shipped bare root. Bare root means there is no soil on the roots when shipped. These bare root plants are large and mature. Each plant is protectively wrapped for shipment. All our hostas are field grown. This results in a much bigger plant than a container plant or tissue culture. If plants are shipped when dormant (spring), the eyes will not yet be leafed out. Plant it and it will grow! If shipped during growing season, the plant will have leaves. Either way, the hosta will flourish in its new home!

We are in a cooler mountain climate, so our plants break dormancy late and are in spring condition well into June. We ship spring, summer and fall until approximately October 7.

We send a planting and growing guide with each shipment.

Please shop and order early as we sell out of some varieties. We sell only retail online, so this also means that there is often no one in the office, so please leave a message, e-mail or fax so we can respond.

*Here are some of our introductions:*



Hosta 'Alpine Ice' - large  
sport of Hosta 'Robert Frost'



Hosta 'Fire Starter' - large  
sport of Hosta 'Parhelion'





Hosta 'Inkwell' - very small  
sport of Hosta 'Lakeside Zinger'



Hosta 'Leather Strap' - small



Hosta 'Number 9' - large  
This sport of Francis Williams is non-burning,  
does well in shade or with half sun exposure.



Hosta 'Sky Pilot' - giant  
sport of Tokudama Aureonebulosa



Hosta 'Sum Ringer' - large  
sport of Hosta 'Sum and Substance'

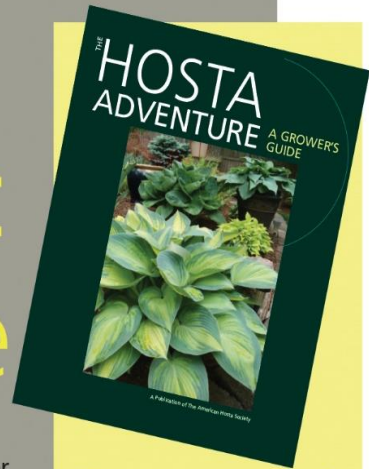


Hosta 'Zing Me Yellow' - mini  
sport of Hosta 'Lakeside Zinger'

3<sup>rd</sup> —  
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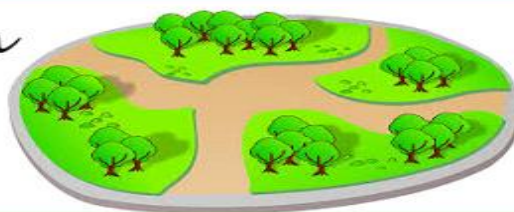
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# Down the Garden Path

## Hosta Gardening 101



Barry Ankney  
Chicago, IL

## ***Dividing your Hosta plant***

There are many ways to go about the task of dividing a hosta clump. Here is one method that we have found effective. This is most useful when you are dividing the plant after the foliage has fully emerged. Dividing your plant early in the spring, when only the “pips” are showing is easier, because you do not have to contend with all of the leaves. Sometimes, you may not have a choice. When you must move or divide a plant during the summer months, when the plant is fully leafed out, this method has worked well.

In this particular case, this clump of *Hosta nigrescens* was growing well in its present location, until a lightning strike took out a nearby tree, which had provided shade from late morning and throughout the afternoon. As you can readily see from the degree of green in the plant, this *nigrescens* was getting nearly full sun, and to restore its blue coloration, we wanted to find it a new home where it would receive more shade.







We use bungee cords to keep the leaves out of the way as we prepare to divide the plant. Once the leaves are out of the way, we take a flat landscaping shovel and position it between the divisions of the plant, where we want to make our first separation.



Using the landscaping shovel, we cut down between the divisions of the plant, and rock the shovel back and forth to loosen the soil in the center of the plant. Then, using a landscaping fork, we dig into the soil outside of the plant, opposite to the landscaping shovel. Here, we have pulled back the mulch from the plant and begun to dig the fork into the soil surrounding the plant.





With the landscaping shovel still in place, (here looking from the other side) we use the fork to dig this part of the plant from the ground. You can see that the roots remain well intact and relatively unharmed. In this case, the plan was to move this largest division of the plant to another location. The new location was not quite ready for the new plants, so we chose to pot this portion of the plant to keep it until the new bed was ready.







With the remaining part of the plant, we wanted to make several smaller divisions to be able to give to friends and family. So here, with the landscaping shovel still in place, we take the fork to the other side of the plant and dig out the remaining portion of the plant. While some like to separate these smaller divisions by hand, by simply holding the division close to the roots and twisting the plant to separate, we find that using an old, very sharp butcher's knife quite effective in cutting the plants apart.



Here, we have cut the smaller portion of the plant into two plants, each with several divisions. One could divide the plant further into individual plants, if desired.

This method has proved effective for us. There are many other ways to divide your hostas, but this has proven to be quick and easy.

A note about your tools. We always rinse and brush the shovel, fork, and knife with a solution of water and bleach to sanitize the

tools. We spray the tools with a 10% solution of bleach and brush them with a stiff plastic brush to avoid transferring pests or diseases, just as a precaution. After brushing, we give another spray of the bleach solution. We just carry a spray bottle and brush with us in the garden.

Please send us your favorite tips and tricks in dividing your hostas. Send us some photos about your methods, and we'll include them in future issues of the *eNewsletter*.





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Hosta of the Year, *Hosta 'World Cup'*, Beilstein / Zilis 2006



# AHS Membership



The American Hosta Society (AHS) is a society dedicated to the study and improvement of the genus *Hosta* and the dissemination of general and scientific knowledge about hostas. There are many benefits for the members that result from these efforts, both social and in nursery trade. AHS members receive several publications a year, including two colorful issues of *The Hosta Journal* (mailed), four eNewsletters (emailed), and *The Online Hosta Journal* (posted on the web for members only). These Journals include articles on cultivation tips, propagation techniques, landscape uses, new cultivars and old species, pioneers and personalities, scientific advances, convention awards, gardens, and news about the AHS.

Membership provides an opportunity to attend national meetings and conventions which offer educational and scientific presentations, garden tours, judge's clinics, and a chance to see the latest and best hosta in the hosta show.

## Other membership benefits:

A Biennial AHS Membership Directory.

The privilege of visiting display gardens throughout the country, many of which are only open to AHS members.

An invitation to exhibit your favorite hostas and compete for recognition in various AHS national and regional hosta shows.

Developing friendships with people who share an interest in growing hostas.

Access to Members Only section of the AHS website.

**Another benefit of becoming a new member is you receive a voucher from the AHS Membership Secretary good for \$15.00 towards any purchase at sponsoring nurseries.**

**For information about this program, go to**

<http://www.americanhostasociety.org/Membership/AHSVoucherProgram.htm>

**Print and mail the application form on the next page, or to join online, go to**

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