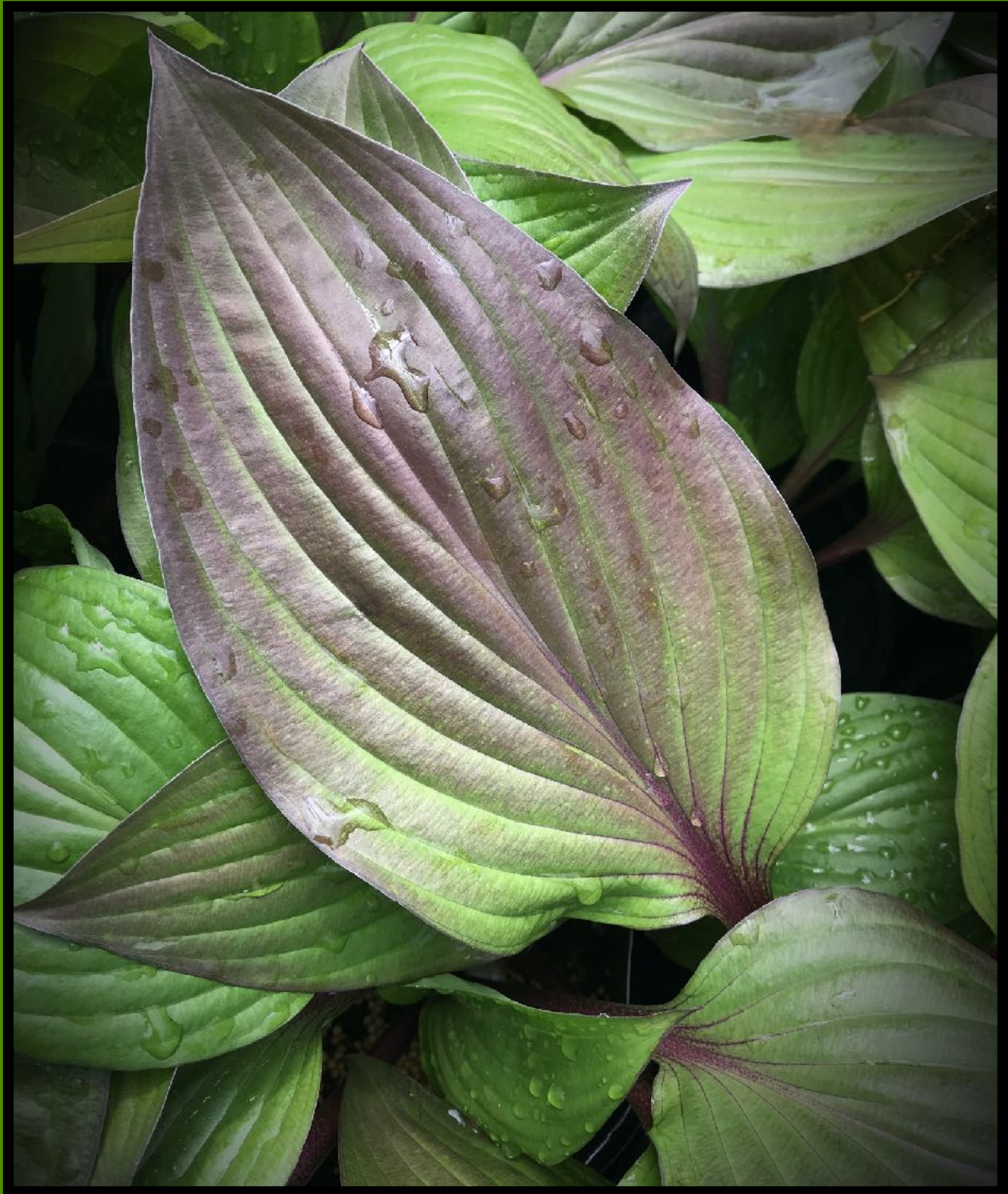




The American Hosta Society

November 2020

eNewsletter



***H.* 'First Blush'**

R. Solberg 2016

(Photo by Kathie Sisson)

Table of Contents

Barry Ankney
Vice President Publications

Danny Lawson
eNewsletter Editor

Josh Spece
Webeditor-in-Chief

Andy Marlow
Glenn Herold
Warren I. Pollock
Clyde Crockett
Featured Columnists

<i>President's Message</i> - Andy Marlow.....	3
<i>Hostas and Associates</i> - Glenn Herold	4
<i>GO HOSTAS!</i> - Warren Pollock	6
<i>Book Notice</i> - Clyde Crockett	12
<i>And In Other Hosta News</i>	14
<i>Advertising</i>	15

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President's Message

Andy Marlow, Hopkins, MN

Way back in 2019 (seems like decades ago) when the nominating committee asked if I would be willing to serve as President of the American Hosta Society, I weighed a number of issues like the time it would consume, any travel involved, could I effectively lead such a large organization. Never once did I consider whether there would be challenges posed by a global pandemic. And, boy, are there challenges! I may have written about a number of those challenges before, but the phrase keeps popping up in my mind, "I never volunteered for this!" But, here we are, and, like the rest of you, I am determined to make the best of the situation we continue to face.

Of immediate concern is the planned 2021 AHS convention in Kalamazoo, Michigan. Executive Vice President Tammy Borden (who is in charge of coordinating conventions for AHS among other things), Immediate Past President Mary Schwartzbauer and I have been talking with convention organizers about what we can do. There seem to be three options: go ahead as planned, postpone to a post-pandemic year, or find some ways to create a virtual convention online. We have not yet come to any conclusions, but will announce our mutual decision by the first of the year.

The AHS Board of Directors met via Zoom about a week ago. The 2021 convention was, of course, a major topic of discussion. We also reviewed and approved revised job descriptions for AHS officers and chairs, and began a review of all policies adopted by the Board over time. There are many of those policy decisions buried in the minutes of Board meetings that have disappeared from collective memories. Recording Secretary Marcia Sully did yeoman work collecting and assembling the job descriptions. Plus, she spent countless hours researching the minutes going back to the turn of the century and beyond to find approved policies and track any updates on them. Hats off to Marcia!

Vice President Judging and Exhibitions Michael Greanya has also headed up the Benedict Garden Performance Awards since 2014. He has noticed trends that have impacted the process of sectioning selecting the best plants in each category, and eventually the Benedict Award winner. He brought a proposal the Board to update the process and allow for the best plants to be honored, which was approved. There's too much to detail it all here, but I hope Michael will write something for the next *eNewsletter* explaining the changes.

Bob Olson also brought an intriguing proposal to the Board: conduct a DNA analysis of hosta species. He explained that he recently ordered two different lilies that DNA analysis showed to be genetically identical. He did not know such analysis was possible and thought that an analysis of hosta species would be very useful in assessing the background of hybrid plants. There are many plants that appear quite similar, but such an analysis could help determine if they are indeed the same plant. DNA testing has been getting more economical by the day, and, Bob notes, the rose and lily societies have already beaten us to the punch. The Board asked Bob to work with co-conspirator Bob Solberg to come up with a plan for pursuing this project.

Finally, it my sad task to announce the passing of Barbara Jones. In addition to serving as Chair of Member Display Gardens, Barbara was the 2012 recipient of the Alex J. Summers Distinguished Merit Award, the highest award offered by AHS.

In her current position, Barbara was liaison with individual gardeners who were willing to open their outstanding gardens to fellow hostaphiles and the general public. If you know of anyone who would be suitable to assume this job, please let me know.

Andy Marlow
AHS President



Hostas and Associates

Glenn Herold, Cedarburg, WI

'Fragrant Bouquet': 1998 Hosta of the Year

It almost seems like the Hosta Growers Association took a step back when they named 'Fragrant Bouquet' as the Hosta of the Year in 1998, for it is one of the parents of the 1996 selection 'So Sweet.' Or perhaps the 1996 selection allowed them to take a closer look at 'Fragrant Bouquet.' In any case, it is a plant worthy of the honor.

'Fragrant Bouquet' was registered by Paul Aden in 1982 as a cross between 'Fascination' and 'Fragrant Summer.' However, both of these items are incorrect. Dr. Kevin Vaughn was the person who actually introduced 'Fragrant Bouquet' and Mark Zilis disputes the parentage, which remains unknown. What is known, though, is that *Hosta plantaginea* is in the breeding line, for, as the name implies, the flowers are very fragrant.

Kevin states, "When I was a graduate student at Miami of Ohio, I passed a garden with a great clump of *H. plantaginea*. I purloined all the pollen and pollinated everything in the greenhouse with pollen from that plant. Nine months later I had a whole greenhouse full of fragrant hosta seedlings. The pods set included a whole stalk of 73-2 (from 'Beatrice,' selected for having the most substance), which was the basis of my variegated line."

'Fragrant Bouquet' likely came from this line. It is a medium to large plant with Granny Smith apple-green leaves that are surrounded with a creamy white margin. The leaf is slightly wavy and has a detectable bloom on the underside. Leaf substance is better than average and the plant has very good sun tolerance. It is a strong grower, one of the reasons for its selection as Hosta of the Year.

Flowers are pale lavender to almost white, blooming in August to September and, as stated earlier, very fragrant. Both pod and pollen viability are low, although some hybrids, including 'Blushing Bride,' 'Prairie Moon,' 'So Sweet,' and 'Sweetie' have been produced. Numerous sports have also been detected and introduced. They include 'Fragrant Dream,' 'Miss Saigon,' 'Color Parade,' and 'Guacamole,' which is probably the most notable of the bunch. 'Guacamole,' registered by Bob



'Fragrant Bouquet'
(Photo by Bob Olson)



'Prairie Moon'
(Photo by Glenn Herold)

Solberg in 1994, has a chartreuse center with a green edge and is very shiny. You'll hear more about this plant in a later article.

Though 'Fragrant Bouquet' may not be as well known as other Hostas of the Year, the fragrant flowers alone make it a necessity in every garden. Plant it next to your patio in half sun. Nothing is better than ingesting the flower aroma along with a glass of Pinot Noir!

Dr. Vaughn, the first scientific editor of *The Hosta Journal* and winner of the Alex J. Summers Distinguished Merit Award in 1999, received his Ph.D. from Miami University in Ohio, writing his thesis on the inheritance of variegation in hostas. A summary of this work was published in the *Journal of the American Hosta Society*, ("The Genetics of Hosta," vol. 13 (1982,) pp. 44-49.) This publication was the predecessor of what is now known as *The Hosta Journal*.



'Sweetie'
(Photo by Bob Olson)

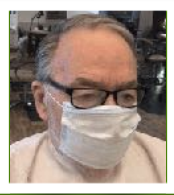
Though Kevin has been involved with breeding many other plants since the introduction of 'Fragrant Bouquet,' he is once again working on the plant that gave him his start. He was given some seed that derived from 'William Lachman,' a streaked, 1981 introduction of his (('Beatrice' x 'Beatrice') x 'Frances Williams'), by Don Dean and has used the splashed variegated seedlings for further breeding. He also has projects on breeding ultra-big hostas and hostas with purple petioles. This year is evaluating approximately 500 seedlings. No doubt we will be planting some of Kevin's new introductions in the near future.



'Fragrant Dream'
(Photo by Bob Olson)



H. plantaginea
(Photo by Glenn Herold)



GO HOSTAS!

Warren Pollock, Glen Mills, PA

BME: Acronym for *Hosta* ‘Blue Mouse Ears’? WHAT’S YOUR OPINION?

Bob Solberg, also known as Hosta Bob, proprietor of Green Hill Farm, Inc., the well-known highly regarded hosta nursery in Franklinton, North Carolina, publishes a printed newsletter, *The Green Hill Gossip Jr.*, twice a year. It is 8½ × 11 inches, eight pages, double column. It’s all words, that is, there are no photos, neither black-and-white nor color.

Robert M. Solberg is a talented skillful writer who doesn’t need accompanying photos to have readers’ attention retained to his interesting prose. He is an old and good friend. I initially met him at the 1982 AHS Convention in Raleigh. He was then living in Chapel Hill and just getting started in hostas. The next time we met seems to be at the 1991 convention, also in Raleigh, where his Chapel Hill garden was on tour. By then we had become hosta technology-seeking acquaintances. Some items herein were discussed with him via email.

Gossip Jr. is a subscription publication—meaning you pay a yearly fee, reduced if you subscribe for three years. You receive it “the old fashion way”: by postal mail in a business envelope—which I greatly prefer versus viewing on a computer, iPad or, especially, iPhone screen.

The Green Hill Gossip [note absence of *Jr.*] principally is his annual catalog, but also features a front-page technical article. As examples, in the March 2004 edition is “I want white hostas to grow!” and in March 2019 “The search for true *H. sieboldiana*.” *Gossip* is printed, tabloid-size 11½ × 16 inches, 12 pages. This publication is full of hosta descriptions, color photos and commercial endorsements, as would be expected.

Gossip Jr. features Bob’s thoughts on what’s topically going on in Hostadom in a highly informative casual-style column called “Thoughts off the top of my head.” In addition, each issue has another column on a topic—sometimes technical—that Bob wants to specially expound on. And, of course, unabashedly there is some marketing stuff about hostas that Green Hill Farm offers.

The “Thoughts” column in the August 2030 *Gossip Jr.* [which I received in early October] is titled “Is ‘Blue Mouse Ears’ a hosta?” Bob jarringly started the column with “Mark Zilis [the highly regarded, authoritative author of popular *Field Guide to Hostas* (Rochelle, Illinois: Q & Z Nursery, 2014)] claims that ‘*Blue Mouse Ears*’ is not a hosta.” Now, of course we all know ‘Blue Mouse Ears’ is a hosta. Mark was implying in a bold exclamation that this universally known sport is an *odd, very odd*, hosta.

Emile Deckert of Hampstead, Maryland, found ‘Blue Mouse Ears’ in a flat of tissue-cultured *H.* ‘Blue Cadet’—a *H.* ‘Tokudama’ hybrid originated by Florence Shaw that Paul Aden registered in 1987. Deckert nurtured his dwarf sport for many years before giving it its famous name. It was introduced in 2001 at the AHS National Convention in Raleigh-Durham, North Carolina, when it was offered in the auction. In his field guide, Mark commented, “I recall the excitement among bidders as they viewed the tiny mound of blue leaves that seemed no bigger than mouse ears.”

[As an aside, ‘Blue Mouse Ears’ was described as an *odd* hosta. Coincidentally, the name of that convention was “2001 A Hosta *Odd-yessy*.”]

Bob's *Gossip Jr.* column explained that the sport was named "mouse ears" not after the annoying rodent, but after the ears of the most famous mouse of all, Mickey. Emile Deckert is credited with being the nominant. But possibly it was his wife Jane. She was active in developing the sport in the nursery, wrote its description in the nursery's catalog and is listed as co-registrant.

Bob further expounded that 'Blue Mouse Ears' maybe is **the best hosta name ever**. I pondered over that proclamation for some time, examining 20 other well-known hosta cultivar names that I considered candidates. I concluded: **Yes, 'Blue Mouse Ears' probably is the best hosta name ever**. My second choice was Bill Meyer-Carol Brashear's *H.* 'Wheee!'.

WHAT DO YOU THINK? What's your opinion? What do you think is the best hosta cultivar name ever? Please inform me before December 1st. Thank you. My email address is giboshiwip@aol.com. I'll report results in a *Go Hostas!* column next year.

Gossip Jr. has a deftly detailed review of 'Blue Mouse Ears' sports and possible mechanics for their formations. It is much too involved and complex to discuss here. I'm only going to comment on a couple aspects.

Among the outstanding characteristic of 'Blue Mouse Ears' is its thick leaves, considerably thicker than 'Blue Cadet' leaves. *H.* 'Blue Cadet' is diploid; it has two sets of chromosomes. It was initially thought that the substantial thickness of 'Blue Mouse Ears' leaves is due to being tetraploid. Tetraploids have four sets of chromosomes and have thicker and broader leaves than their diploid parents. But flow cytometric measurement by Dr. Ben J. M. Zonneveld in the Netherlands revealed that 'Blue Mouse Ears' is diploid, also.

I'd like to introduce here the 28-page booklet "Sporting in Hostas – A Primer" by Ben J. M. Zonneveld and Warren I. Pollock published in 2018. It's available from The American Hosta Society. On page 9 is a description of what probably happened involving 'Blue Cadet' → 'Blue Mouse Ears'. In tissue culture propagation of 'Blue Cadet', a rare mutation occurred in a dividing cell resulting in 'Blue Mouse Ears'. ***H.* 'Blue Mouse Ears' is a chimera.** A chimera is a single organism composed of cells with more than one distinct genotype.

In the shoot apex of a hosta there is an apical dome, or meristem, consisting of three cell layers designated L1, L2 and L3. ***H.* 'Blue Mouse Ears' contains both 'Blue Mouse Ears' genes and 'Blue Cadet' genes.** Likely, the 'Blue Mouse Ears' genes are only present in the outer layer, L1. The 'Blue Cadet' genes are present in the other two layers. They are not dominant but recessive and not visible. Importantly, they can therefore be transmitted to sports of 'Blue Mouse Ears'.

On occasion, in tissue culturing 'Blue Mouse Ears'—and also its many first and later generation sports, the resulting sport from the dividing cell has characteristics, notably leaf shape and flowering, that derive from 'Blue Cadet'. If L1 is heterozygous, that is, contains both 'Blue Mouse Ears' and 'Blue Cadet' genes, the recessive 'Blue Cadet' genes could become visible, due to a recombining of parts of chromosomes.

Alternatively, if L1 contains only 'Blue Mouse Ears' genes, chromosomes with 'Blue Mouse Ears' genes in L1 could have been exchanged with 'Blue Cadet' genes in L2 or L3 layer.

H. 'Field Rat' (C. Wilson - NR), is a notable example. Chris Wilson was co-proprietor of Hallson Gardens in Cement City, Michigan, now shuttered. *H.* 'Field Rat' is a sport of *H.* 'Flamenco Mouse' (C. Wilson - 2012), which is a sport of 'Blue Mouse Ears'. *H.* 'Flamenco Mouse' has strongly ruffled and wavy blue-green leaves with green margin. Leaves of 'Field Rat' are spear shaped, not wavy, and blue-green. Also, flowers of 'Field Rat' are taller, more trumpet than bell shaped.

Here's what likely happened: In tissue culturing 'Flamenco Mouse', sporting occurred in a dividing cell causing 'Blue Cadet' genes to become visible, active. The resulting sport, 'Field Rat', has larger pointed blue green leaves. *H.* 'Field Rat' usually looks like it is halfway between 'Blue Cadet' and 'Blue Mouse Ears'. But some 'Field Rat' clumps look more like 'Blue Cadet'.



H. 'Ruffled Pole Mouse'
(Photo by Jan van den Top)

In tissue culturing other 'Blue Mouse Ears' sports, both first and later generations, 'Blue Cadet' genes probably were active resulting in different leaf and/or flowering characteristics. Jan van den Top's 'Ruffled Pole Mouse' (NR), a sport of *H. 'Green Mouse Ears'* (Deckerts - 2004), has distinctly pointed leaves and might be an example.

Alternatively, 'Ruffled Pole Mouse' might have occurred from a mutation in a dividing cell of 'Green Mouse Ears'. There are roughly 20,000 genes in *Hosta*. Each of them can mutate.

H. 'Ruffled Mouse Ears' (Zilis - 2011) might be another example. It is a sport of 'Blue Mouse Ears', also. Bob Solberg believes it has two types of tissues, a fast growing one on the margin and a slow growing one in the leaf center. This is what causes the ruffles.

Bob reported that in the hundreds of 'Ruffled Mouse Ears' that he grew from tissue culture, he found a larger flat-leaved form and a smaller form with more substance. The larger form grew very quickly and the smaller form more slowly. The larger sport resembled 'Blue Cadet' with its larger flowers and taller scapes than 'Blue Mouse Ears'. However, Bob did not think it was 'Blue Cadet' because it does not seem to have the same amount of substance. Even so, likely it has 'Blue Cadet' genes.

Interestingly, the smaller, thicker sport looked like 'Blue Mouse Ears' and likely mostly has 'Blue Mouse Ears' genes. Bob says 'Ruffled Mouse Ears' seems to grow faster than 'Blue Mouse Ears' and may get somewhat larger.

Bob also reported that 'Church Mouse' (Walters Gardens - 2012), also a sport of 'Blue Mouse Ears', commonly sports a larger form that grows very quickly and a smaller form that grows more slowly.

[Further accounts of 'Field Rat' and 'Ruffled Mouse Ears' are in articles by Bob Solberg and by Pollock and Zonneveld hidden away in the Winter 2015 *Online Hosta Journal*. They are archived on the AHS Website (www.hosta.org): Select Members Only, insert current password; then select Publications, Online Journal Archives and 2015 - Volume 46 Online. Click cover photo and select articles.]

Gossip Jr. didn't disclose why 'Blue Mouse Ears' leaves are substantially thicker than 'Blue Cadet' leaves. Since both hostas are diploid, it's not due to tetraploidy. *Then, what is the thickness of 'Blue Mouse Ears' leaves due to?*

To obtain insight on this question, a microscopy investigation currently is under way. Thin cross-section slices of 'Blue Cadet' and 'Blue Mouse Ears' leaves, obtained with a microtome, are being examined under an optical microscope. Revealed will be the leaves' anatomy—the cellular components and their arrangement, from top of leaves to bottom. The study will be completed soon, with anticipated publication of findings in *The Hosta Journal* next year.

Also, leaf anatomies of four other hostas are being examined. They are intended to give insight in why tetraploid sports of diploids have thicker leaves. They comprise 'Patriot' (tetraploid), which sported from 'Francee' (diploid), and 'Liberty' (tetraploid), which sported from 'Sagae' (diploid). These studies will be included in the *THJ* article.

The last paragraph in *Thoughts* concerns the title of this *Go Hostas!* item: “BME: Acronym for *Hosta* ‘Blue Mouse Ears’? What’s your opinion?”

Bob voiced, “Just a personal pet peeve of mine. I do not like acronyms of any kind. I understand that our government gives such long rambling names to its agencies that we must abbreviate National Aeronautics and Space Administration to NASA but *hosta* names should not be turned into alphabet soup. Write then out. ‘Blue Mouse Ears’ is not BME!”

I strongly disagree with my friend. I coined the acronym BME for ‘Blue Mouse Ears’ and have extensively used it successfully without issue for possibly over a decade.

Bob pointed out that ‘Blue Mouse Ears’ is only 13 letters. But he didn’t mention that there also are 2 quotation marks and 2 spaces between the 3 words. In total, that’s a whooping 17 keystrokes. BME, on the other hand, is *just 3 letters; just 3 keystrokes*. That’s a huge 14 keystrokes less.

Intentionally, I wrote-out ‘Blue Mouse Ears’ in the 30 or so times that it is mentioned above in this *Go Hostas!* item. I did this to illustrate 1) how much total space the full name consumed and 2) to illustrate that if I had written BME instead, how much shorter the item would be and likely easier to read or skim read.

An abbreviation is typically a shortened form of a word or phrase. An initialism is a series of initial letters of words or a phrase that form an abbreviation *and aren’t pronounced as a word*. Well-known examples are FBI for Federal Bureau of Investigation, pronounced as three separate letters F-B-I; CIA for Central Intelligence Agency, pronounced C-I-A; and URL for Uniform Resource Locator, U-R-L.

An acronym is an abbreviation made up of parts of the phrase it stands for *and pronounced as a word*. NASA is pronounced *nah-sah*, not N-A-S-A. NATO stands for North Atlantic Treaty Organization and is pronounced *nay-tow*. OPEC is Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries and pronounced *oh-peck*. UNESCO is United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization, pronounced *yoo-nes-ko*. Fiat stands for Fabbrica Italiana Automobili Torino (Italian automobile factory of Turin) and is pronounced *fee-at*.

BME is an acronym. Bob didn’t mention how it’s pronounced. BME is not pronounced B-M-E. BME is pronounced *be-me*. It’s two syllables. Its *be-me* pronunciation is its charming character.

(Early on I recognized that a likely suitable alternative to BME is BMe, which also is pronounced *be-me*. I didn’t introduce it because I thought the lowercase *e* would cause a problem.)

There is an important caveat concerning BME. BME should not be used on plant labels nor as the cultivar name in catalogs and stock lists: *‘Blue Mouse Ears’ should be written out*. But orally and in journal and newsletter items as this one—and especially in emails and text messages, BME is 100% suitable and seemingly highly preferred. BME is a classy *hosta* acronym. It has charisma and is easily remembered. It is *hosta-speak*. And, as I emphasized, *it’s just 3 letters*.

Bob Solberg gave his opinion on BME; I gave mine. **What is yours? I’m asking: WHAT DOES HOSTADOM THINK? Please inform me what *your* thoughts are before December 1st.** My email address is giboshiwip@aol.com. Thanks for your input. I’ll report results in a *Go Hostas!* column in 2021. Should be interesting.



Lady Wu's Exceptional Annual Rainfall

The *Go Hostas!* column in the last *AHS eNewsletter*, September 2020, has a lengthy item titled “*Hosta* ‘Empress Wu’ in John Ashworth’s garden, British Columbia.” John explained that Lady Wu—which is what he respectively calls his large ‘Empress Wu’ clump—grows at an elevation of 900 feet. **Rainfall at this particular elevation is about 72 inches yearly**, principally experienced between October and April. July and August are the driest months with relatively little rainfall.

Probably not surprising, I received a handful of queries from hosta enthusiasts asking: Why was a “big thing” apparently made about Lady Wu’s annual rainfall?

I say “probably not surprising” because all these folks, I found out, are *not* members of The American Hosta Society, the not-for-profit membership-fee organization founded in 1968 to foster and promote interests in the genus *Hosta*. Thus, the queriers most likely did not have information that likely is known to AHS members from comprehensive information in the AHS’s membership periodicals, *The Hosta Journal (THJ)*, published biannually, and *Online Hosta Journal*, issued annually.

Who, then, are these folks? First you have to be aware that The American Hosta Society’s *e-Newsletter*—what you’re reading right now—is free, no charge, and available online to anyone who simply keystrokes AHS’s URL (www.hosta.org) in their computer browser to access the society’s website and selects Publications and then E-Newsletter.

The folks who queried are AHS Facebook Page users who are not AHS members. Facebook is a social media website which allows users, who sign-up for free profiles, to connect with people online. AHS Facebook Page is open to all interested in the exchange of photos and cultural information about hostas; AHS membership is not required. Most important, *AHS Facebook Page is not directly associated with The American Hosta Society*.

Currently, AHS Facebook Page group has about 20,000 members, also called users. In comparison, current AHS membership is about 1,700. In other word, probably *more than 90%* of AHS Facebook Page members are *not* AHS members!

AHS Facebook Page users who *are* AHS members probably know that hostas, in general, have huge water requirements. The classic reference on this subject is the well-researched article by W. George Schmid of Tucker, Georgia, who passed away last June, age 89. It was in the Spring 2012 *THJ* (Volume 43, Number 1, pages 15-17) titled “Magnificent Hostas: It’s All About the Water.”

George began the article with “Before starting a presentation, I sometimes ask the audience what they consider the most important ingredient for hosta cultivation. I rarely get the right answer, which is water.”

How much water do hostas require? George’s response: “In most of their native habitats, **hostas get 70 inches and more of annual precipitation, on average**, and frequently a bit more in autumn due to monsoon rains. Annual precipitation, as recorded by climatologists, includes all water received during an entire year, including rain, snow and ice. Even though hostas are dormant when ice and snow are prevalent, spring snow melt in northern snow areas contributes to the soil’s moisture content.”

George did some research and found that in virtually all natural hosta habitats, the rainfall has two peaks. The first occurs in spring and the second in late summer and fall. (See figure.)

“In the U.S.,” he wrote, “one of the main areas of *Hosta* cultivation is around the Great Lakes. There the average precipitation measures between 30 and 40 inches. In contrast, **the *Hosta* habitat in Southeast Asia receives, on average, rainfall amounts around 75 inches.** In addition to normal rainfall,

substantial amounts of precipitation occur due to the East-Asian monsoon rains in most of the region. The additional rainfall amounts vary considerably from year to year and for different regions of habitat, but, on average, can reach 50 to 200 inches.”

The bottom line: **For magnificent hostas, most gardens in U.S., Canada and Europe require water in addition to the annual rainfall.** Even with some 70 inches of rainfall, John Ashworth watered Lady Wu twice after late June this year.

I am reminded of two former magnificent hosta gardens that were copiously watered because annual rainfall was inadequate. One was the late Van Wade’s garden in Ohio. It had a huge overhead irrigation system that turned on soon after 5 o’clock in the afternoon very day, regardless if it was raining or had recently rained or was forecasted to rain that evening. The hosta grounds were always moist.

The other was the late “Herb” Benedict’s garden in Michigan. He plentifully watered each of his hostas by hand with a hose, usually every day. I asked him, “Didn’t this take up almost all of your time outdoors?” His response: “Yes. But I’m retired. What else do I have to do?”

Let me say here: *I question whether, in general, established hostas can be overwatered.* I’ve had clumps sitting in puddles of water for long times and they seemed to love it.

In 2021, I am planning a *Go Hostas!* column on irrigation systems being used for hostas in the ground. I will be seeking input from readers.

I’m also planning a column on overwintering hostas in containers. This was the topic numerous people last fall told me would be most worthwhile as a Zoom presentation by the AHS. From my over 25 years of experience, there is a lot of “incorrect”—at least very dubious—information that’s been disseminated in Hostadom on this subject. For this assignment, I’ll also be seeking input from readers.

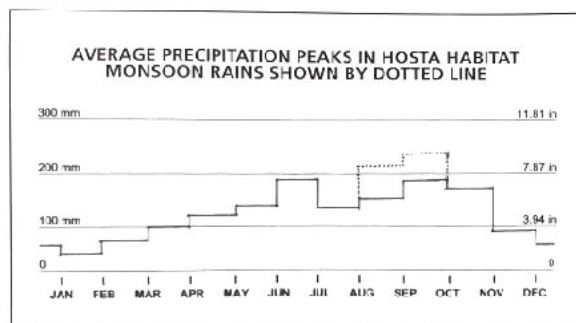


Figure 1. Hostas in their native habitat in Japan receive additional rainfall in the autumn, due to monsoon rains.

GO HOSTAS!





Book Notice

Clyde Crockett, Carmel, IN

An Encyclopedia of Shade Perennials

(Timber Press 2002)

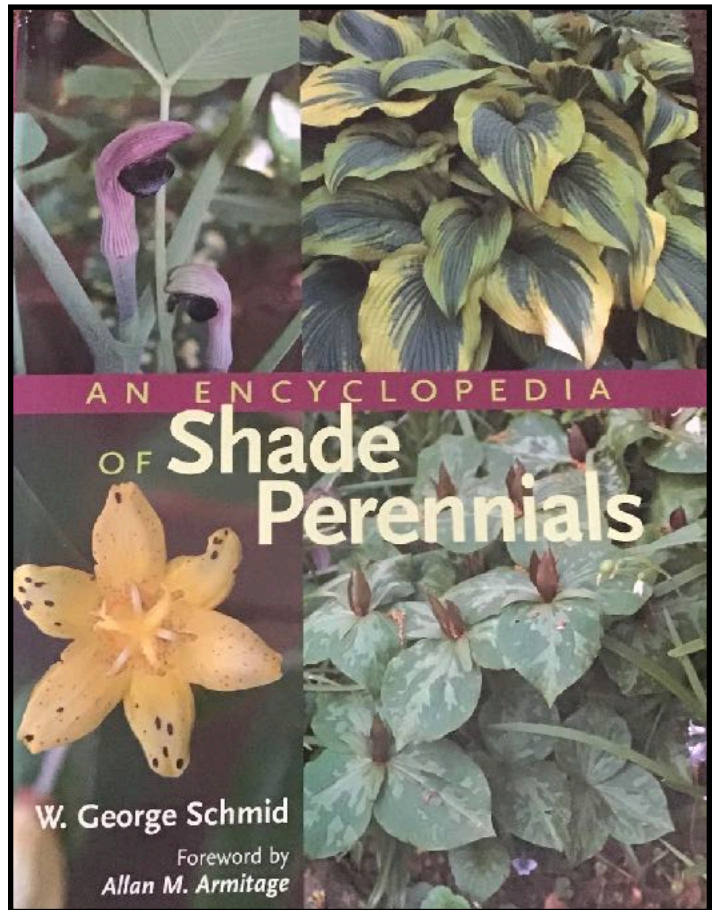
Written by W. George Schmid

Foreword by Allan Armitage

George Schmid, the author of the monumental “The Genus Hosta,” certainly does not need the proverbial introduction, but he gives us a charming one of himself in this truly encyclopedic work. He recounts how he, as a child, became enchanted with shade—constructing gardens, houses and fences for his toy soldiers while savoring the cool comfort of pine needles which abounded in the world of his grandfather’s Bavarian woods. Shade became and remained for his life , his friend. This friendship culminated in his gardening masterpiece, Hosta Hill, in Tucker, Georgia, discussed lovingly as “My Garden’s Embrace” a section of Chapter 1., appropriately titled “A Personal Touch.”

Chapter 2 is an excellent exposition on shade: what is its essence and why it is important to know about shade, particularly in planning your garden. Chapter 3, “Practical Thoughts,” discusses organic matter, knowing your soil, watering, fertilizing, and, importantly, how to make good soil. I found the section on the use of containers particularly interesting and helpful.

When I arrived at Chapter 4-I found a saying that Schmid is famous for. I quote in full: “Many plants are described as shade-loving. This is utter nonsense.” Those of you who read **The Hosta Journal** have probably seen this a number of times in articles by Schmid and by Dr. Warren I. Pollock. As they point out, all the types of plants you want to plant in your basically hosta garden, including your beloved hostas, need light. He stresses that this is necessary for photosynthesis and to produce chlorophyll. Schmid prefers the term “shade-tolerant” to describe plants that can be grown in shade. This includes hostas but interestingly he notes that the progenitors of all those thousands of hybrids we have today, originated in meadows in full sun.



The end of the book is also its heart: “Perennials for the Shady Garden A-Z.” One should note that the plants are in alphabetical order, by genus: Acanthus to Woodwardia. This part occupies 280 pages of very detailed descriptions of each plant and how they can successfully be cultivated. Indeed, everything you need to know about each plant is found here.

When I first took a very cursory look at the contents, I thought there were no photographs. I was terribly mistaken. There are over 50 pages, most of which contain multiple shots , of some of the most beautiful plant pictures I have seen. And they are in alphabetical order for easy reference. Hostaphiles, take note: there are many enticing hosta pix as well!

This book is on a par with Schmid’s “The Genus Hosta.” It’s a must!

Happy Gardening,

Clyde

NB: As was reported in the September issue, George Schmid passed away recently. He will be sorely missed by all who knew him personally or only acquainted with him through his writings. He was indeed a master in all he did and of all of his many varied endeavors. Be sure to note the excellent foreword by Allan Armitage.

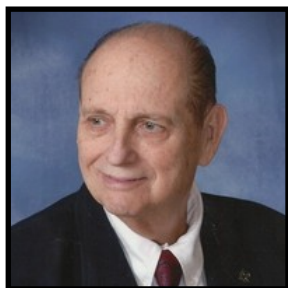


W. George Schmid
(*Photographer unknown*)



And In Other Hosta News . . .

Obituary



Alexander Graham Malloy, 81, of Summit Point, WV passed away Monday, December 30, 2019 at Willow Tree Center in Charles Town, WV.

Alexander Malloy registered many hostas through the years. Click here: <http://www.hostaregistrar.org/search.php> for the listing of them in The Hosta Treasury, you'll recognize many of the names. His favorite question was "Which one is your favorite?"

future AHS Conventions

2021 - Kalamazoo, Michigan

2022 - Minneapolis, Minnesota

2023 - Ames, Iowa

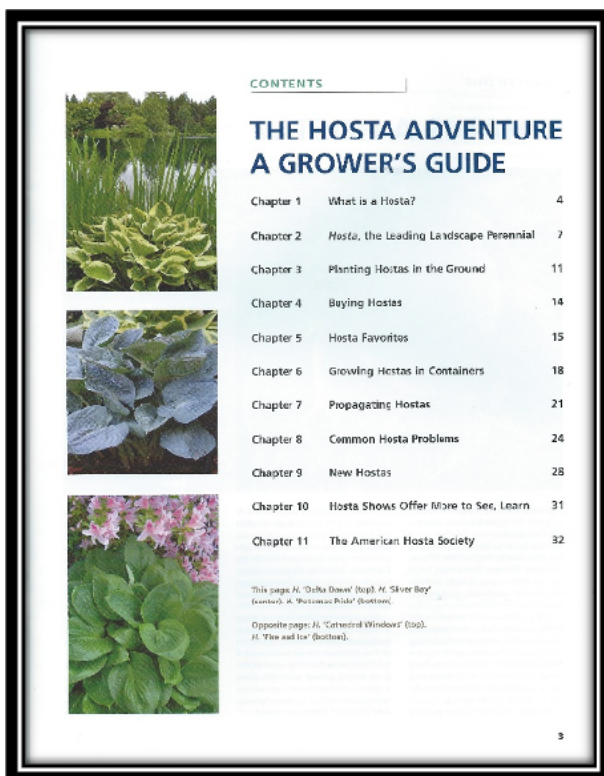
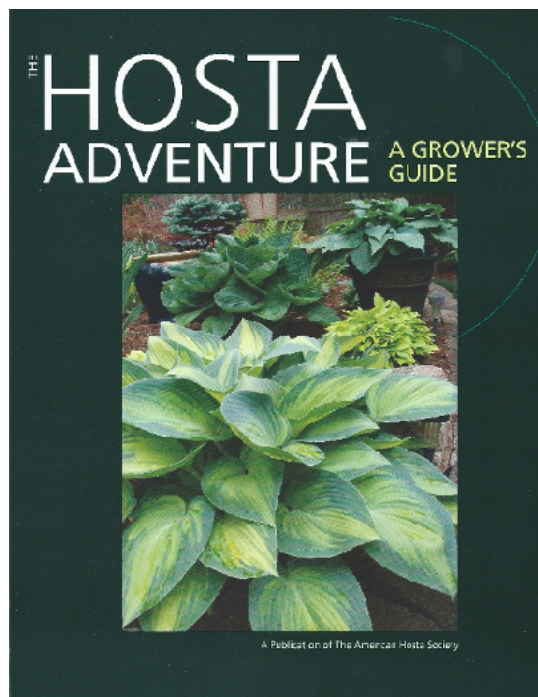
2024 - TBD



From AHS Publications

The Hosta Adventure, Third Edition, contains a wealth of information about growing hostas. First published in 2001, the *Hosta Adventure* was intended as a guide for novices, but it appealed to all levels of hosta gardeners. The first two editions were popular additions to the libraries of new and seasoned gardeners. Now a new *Adventure* beckons.

This new edition of *The Hosta Adventure* is updated with the latest information including buying, planting, and growing hostas.



There is a chapter on growing hostas in containers. Common problems encountered in hosta culture with solutions to these common problems is included. For those interested in propagation, information on division of plants, bud cutting, and the Ross method is included.

If you are new to hostas, a chapter on hosta favorites gives you an idea of hostas to acquire that are viewed as good plants by other hosta growers. A chapter on new hostas, including sports and seedlings is informative.

A list of popular hosta books that you may want to add to your library is given, as is information on hosta shows, and information on how to link up with fellow hosta growers by joining The American Hosta Society.

This publication should be part of every hosta grower's library.

Order *The Hosta Adventure—A Grower's Guide - 3rd Edition*

\$4.00 + \$2.50 postage for members or \$5.50 + \$2.50 postage for non-members



Front cover: *H. 'June'* takes center stage in a set garden (photo by Larry Tucker).
 The page: *H. 'Rival'* and *H. 'Sailing Lady'* (top left) are complementary with subtle and subtle variegation. *H. 'Autumn'* (top right) is a model of color texture and substance. *H. 'Circus'* (bottom right) commands attention. *H. 'Mantara'* (bottom left), with early emergence and staying power, is a potential favorite.



Stately *H. 'Cocoa Royal'* (top right) has been a classic for decades. *H. 'Kakato'* (bottom right) creates a thick, bright border around larger plants. *H. 'Reverend'* (bottom left) is harder than most look-alike because its speckled center holds more chlorophyll. *H. 'Robert Frost'* is a worthy namesake of the American poet laureate.

The *Hosta Adventure* is filled with stunning photos of hostas and hosta gardens.

Here is a great way to reward new members of your local club. Give them a copy of this American Hosta Society publication.

For local societies and nurseries, the best price per copy is in bulk:

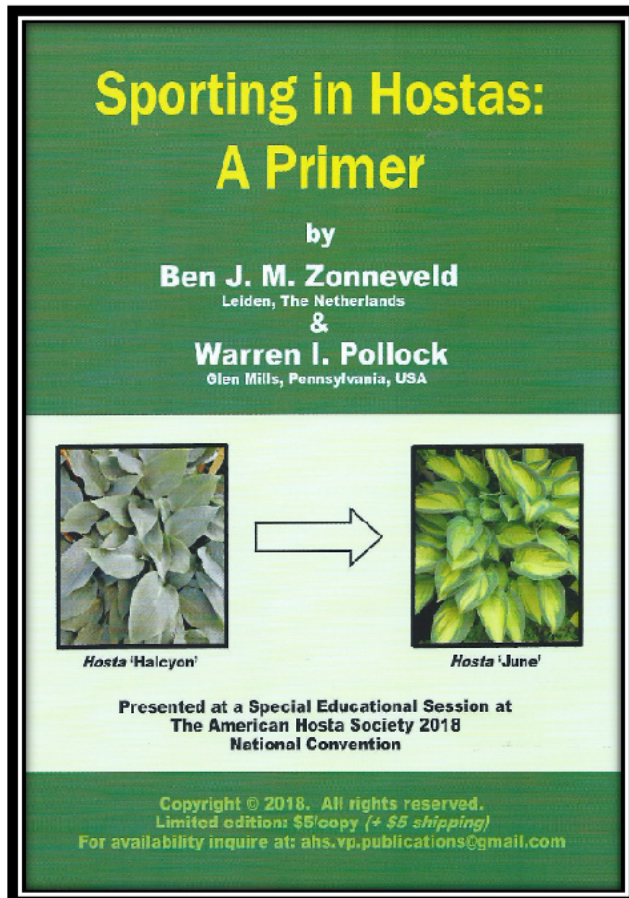
- 2-6 books, \$4.00 each + \$8.00 postage
- 7-30 books, \$4.00 each + \$15.00 postage
- 31-99 books, \$3.75 each + \$21.00 postage
- 100-499 books, \$3.25 each + \$27.00 postage

(All prices postpaid in the U.S.) Orders from foreign countries will pay any additional shipping charges.

Make checks payable to *The American Hosta Society* and send to:

Barry Ankney, AHS VP Publications
Hosta Adventure
1104 Oxford Court
Oakbrook Terrace, IL 60181

From AHS Publications



Ben J. M. Zonneveld and Warren I. Pollock have researched and written a booklet about sporting in hostas. Based on nearly ten years of research, this 28-page booklet describes the process of sporting.

Sporting in Hostas: A Primer, was compiled by Dr. Pollock. He gave a presentation at the American Hosta Society (AHS) National Convention held in Philadelphia in 2018, highlighting the major points contained in this publication.

Hosta enthusiasts interested in how and why hostas mutate, or sport, have found this source book of great value. Dr. Pollock, along with the late Gregg Peterson, Past President of the American Hosta Society, and one other donor funded the printing of this booklet and

generously donated these booklets to the AHS. All proceeds from the sale of *Sporting in Hostas* go to the general fund of the AHS, to further its educational goals.

This booklet outlines the basic principles of sporting, explaining the three layers of cells that are contained in the meristem or apical dome in the shoot of the hosta plant. He explains the chromosomal makeup of hostas, and the concept of ploidy, or the number of sets of chromosomes in the cell nucleus. The difference between sports and hybrids is covered.

The eleven (11) sporting rules in hostas are presented, including examples of each. Also, examples of unusual sporting with photos of many of the examples are presented. An appendix contains selective slides from Warren's presentation at the National Convention.

A second appendix provides some hosta sporting statistics compiled by Hugo Phillips, founder and custodian of the “MyHostas” website. For those inclined to study this process further, a final appendix lists resources for additional reading.

CONTENTS

Page 1	Basic Principles
Page 3	Sporting rules in hostas #1 - #11
Page 9	Examples of unusual sporting
Page 22	Appendix A: PowerPoint™ slides
Page 27	Appendix B: Hosta sporting statistics
Page 28	Appendix C Further reading

While some elements are rather technical, Warren walks the reader through this fascinating process of change in hostas with plenty of photos and practical examples. The reader will come away with new knowledge of how hostas change to produce new and interesting plants.

This valuable resource is available only from the American Hosta Society.

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

Barry Ankney, AHS VP Publications
Sporting in Hostas
1104 Oxford Court
Oakbrook Terrace, IL 60181

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 numerous benefits for the members that result from these efforts, both social and in nursery trade. All AHS members receive several publications a year, including two colorful issues of *The Hosta Journal* (mailed), six *eNewsletters* (emailed), along with *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 hostas 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 Membership Application form on the next page, or to join online, go to: <http://www.americanhostasociety.org/Membership/Membership.htm>

AHS Membership Application

Name:			
Street:			
City:		State:	Zip:
Country:		Phone Number:	
Email Address:			

Please Circle	Membership Type	1 Year	3 Years	5 Years	Life
USA	<i>Individual</i>	\$30	\$80	\$129	\$900
	<i>Family</i>	\$34	\$90	\$146	
Canada	<i>Individual</i>	\$39	\$107	\$168	\$1,170
	<i>Family</i>	\$43	\$117	\$185	
Europe	<i>Individual</i>	\$51	\$142	\$219	\$1,530
	<i>Family</i>	\$55	\$152	\$236	
Pacific Rim	<i>Individual</i>	\$59	\$165	\$254	\$1,770
	<i>Family</i>	\$62	\$175	\$267	
E-membership	<i>receive everything electronically</i>	\$20			

All memberships payable in U.S. funds drawn on a U.S. bank.

Make check payable to:
The American Hosta Society

Mail application and payment to:

Sandie Markland
AHS Membership Secretary
PO Box 7539
Kill Devil Hills NC 27948
Email: AHSmembershipSecretary@charter.net

Or pay by credit card or PayPal at:
<http://www.americanhostasociety.org/ZenCart/>

Membership Year:
January 1 to December 31

Type of membership:
New or Renewal *(please circle one)*

How did you find out about the AHS?
(please circle one)

Friend/Word of mouth

Web site search

Web banner ad

Event/Presentation

Plant Tag (which nursery?)

Facebook

Instagram

e-Newsletter