



***Hosta* 'Time Traveler'**  
**T. Avent 2010**  
**Plant Delights Nursery Introduction**



## ***Message from the President***

**Andy Marlow, Hopkins, MN**

Time for a little biography; mine and a new member of our leadership team.

Some of you know me as Photo Editor of *The Hosta Journal*, a position I have held since 2003. But there's more to my life and my hosta life than that. Indulge me for a bit.

I am a Minnesota born and bred, although I am neither of Scandinavian nor German heritage, German being Minnesota single largest ethnic group. I am a bit Irish, French, English and a large dash of Dutch. But most importantly I am an enrolled member of the Sisseton Wahpeton Oyate or Dakota. Water skiing and I were both born in Lake City, Minnesota, although water skiing pre-dated me by 24 years. I have lived in the North Star State ever since.

I grew up in the Twin Cities. In the process of getting my BA from St. Cloud State College (now University) I helped build the college radio station, which led to a career of more than 40 years in public radio. The last 37 years was spent producing programming and then managing the University of Minnesota's radio station KUOM. I often joked that I was so unsettled—having been married to the same women for now 44 years, living in the same house for 40 years and working for the same station for almost four decades.

My involvement with hostas came as we abandoned our home in Minneapolis and moved to the suburbs because we had run out of gardening space in the city. When we first settled in, I developed a five-year plan for the gardens. Now, 40 years later, I'm about half done!

When we arrived, there were several clumps of hostas, both the green and the green and white ones. I didn't pay them much attention until I met my personal hosta guru, Dr. Bob Olson. He and I were members of the Men's Garden Club of Minneapolis along with Bob Savory. Savory was a reserved kind of guy, but Olson was very energetic about getting people involved with hostas. He got me going. Hostas are the ideal plant for my very shady yard. I still have a modest collection by many standards – only about 115 cultivars – but they are the centerpieces of my gardens

We have a phrase that describes one of Olson's unique abilities. It's called being "Bobbed". I have been "Bobbed" several times. He talked me into becoming photo editor of *The Hosta Journal*. He recruited me to become the recording secretary of the Minnesota Hosta Society, and then persuaded me to succeed him as treasurer of MHS, which led to my becoming president of MHS. And I suppose that led, at least indirectly, to becoming president of AHS.

One of the AHS president's jobs is to appoint people to some key non-elected positions in the organization and I proud to announce that I have appointed Sarah DaPra to be the new Classification Chair. This is a key position for hosta show competitions. Kim Larson has been the chair for a number of years and held other significant

positions in AHS. She was more than ready to retire from this job if a qualified replacement could be found. Kim agrees that Sarah is that qualified person, as does VP of Judging and Exhibitions Mike Greanya.

Sarah has a wealth of hosta show experience. She became a Master Judge in 2017 and has judged at least one show every year since becoming a judge in 2008. She has entered leaves and troughs at the local level since the late 1990s and at the national convention since 2000, winning the Grand Award for her troughs in 2000, 2001, 2003, and 2005 and winning Best of Show for Hosta "Stirfry" in 2001. She has chaired many Hosta shows for The Michigan Hosta Society including the AHS National Convention in Lansing. She served as Schedule Chair, Registration Chair and Tabulation Chair for The Michigan Hosta Society. She has been a member of AHS since the early 1980s and was one of the first 20 members of the Michigan Hosta Society. She served on a committee with Harold McDonnell and International Hosta Registrar Gayle Hartley Alley that reviewed the existing classification data for errors and possible updates. She spent the winter going through the entire classification list and came up with a huge number of changes that were endorsed by judges at the Green Bay convention.

I hope you will join me in thanking Sarah for stepping up to take on this important job, and also thanking Kim Larson for her long and faithful service to AHS.

Sincerely,

Andy Marlow  
President, American Hosta Society



# *Hostas and Associates*

Glenn Herold, Cedarburg, WI

## The Japanese Hostas, Part 8

### *Hosta tibae* (Nagasaki Giboshi)

by Glenn Herold

Though hostas are native to Japan, China, and Korea, the majority of species come from Japan. This article is the eighth in a series which will talk about those species. Previous *eNewsletter* articles have covered *Hosta alismifolia*, *H. nakaiana*, *H. pycnophylla*, *H. longipes*, *H. longissima*, *H. montana*, and *H. kikutii*. If you missed any of the past articles, you can find them on my blog site: <https://thecottagegardener53012.wordpress.com>.

Today we will discuss *H. tibae*, Nagasaki Giboshi, which is translated from the Japanese as "Hosta from Nagasaki."

*Hosta tibae* was likely one of the first Japanese hostas documented and seen by Westerners. In 1823 Philipp von Siebold (1796-1866), a German physician and botanist, was sent by the Dutch East India Company to the man-made island of Deshima in Nagasaki harbor as the resident physician and botanist. He refurbished a small botanical garden on the island, established earlier by Engelbert Kaempfer, and sent dried botanical specimens of Japanese plants back to Europe. One of these was the native hosta, *H. tibae*. In 1830 he was expelled from the country for having a map of the coastline, but managed to smuggle several hostas out of Japan with him. Among these are 'Crispula,' 'Undulata,' and 'Tokudama.' There is a good chance that he also took *H. tibae* with him, since it was abundant in the Nagasaki area, but that the plant died on the lengthy journey to Europe.

*Hosta tibae* is found in the Nagasaki area on Kyushu Island, though native populations are now endangered because of human population pressure. It is a medium sized hosta, attaining a height of about 16 inches in the landscape. Leaves are 8 inches long and 5 inches wide and of average substance. They are medium green, slightly shiny on top and very shiny below. The tip of the leaf is long and curved and the base is slightly puckered. Margins are somewhat rippled and purple-red dots are found at the base of the petiole. Some variation of these characteristics exists in the wild.

Flowers of *H. tibae* are purple and bloom in September. Sometimes there are white stripes in the bud and on the opened flowers. The morphological characteristic most used by hybridizers is the 19 to 23 inch long branched scapes, the feature that best identifies the species.

Few sports and hybrids of *H. tibae* exist in the trade. 'Breathless' (Lydell/AHS/Walek 09) is a seedling with blue-green leaves and the most flower scape branching of any offspring. 'Carolina Sunshine' (Avent 99) is a cross between 'Swoosh' and *H. tibae*. It is medium sized with glossy green leaves enhanced by a golden yellow edge. 'Gold Piece' (Vaughn 83) is a cross between two seedlings containing DNA from *H. ventricosa*, *H. tibae*, *H. plantaginea*, and *H. nigrescens*. It is a large double-flowered plant with yellow leaves and a dark green edge. 'Iceberg' (Avent 00) is another cross between 'Swoosh' and *H. tibae*. This large plant has leaves with a creamy

edge. 'Imp' (Hansen 06) is a mini hosta with a creamy white edge. Its parentage is (('Yellow Splash' x *H. tibae*) x *H. venusta*) x (*H. venusta* x 'Shining Tot')

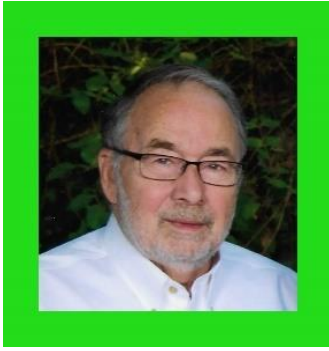
*Hosta tibae* makes a great garden plant and breeder. Few species can match its prolific flower display. Perhaps as flowers become more important to the hybridizer and hosta collector, it will be found in your garden too.



*Hosta tibae* (Nagasaki Giboshi)  
(Photo by Glenn Herold)



*Hosta tibae* (Nagasaki Giboshi)  
(Photo by Plant Delights Nursery)



# Go Hostas!

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## UPDATE: FM ABATEMENT USING NEMA STOP®

In the last AHS *eNewsletter*, the July 2019 issue, the first item is titled “If You Have A Foliar Nematode (FN) Abatement Program Using Nema Stop®, This is Friendly Request to Share Your Findings.” It asked for feedback to PureGro USA, Nema Stop’s marketer. This information will help establish a more detailed FN application process, in addition to PureGro providing a FAQ section for customers to reference. Ways to do this were detailed. Nema Stop has a customer-support line with phone number and email address.

Nema Stop (previous name was Nemakill) is a mixture of natural oils (cinnamon, clove and thyme) found to kill foliar nematodes in a large research program by Drs. Grewal and An at The Ohio State University, published in the Fall 2016 issue of *The Hosta Journal* (Volume 47, No. 1, pp. 8-12). Boiling water and Pylon®, which is restricted to greenhouse use, were also found to kill FNs.

**At the end of August, PureGro informed me *no one* contacted it concerning this request.** Nonetheless, sales of Nema Stop, I was told, were “reasonable” this year, (I suspect last year’s sales were greater due to Nema Stop being vended at the 2018 AHS National Convention along with a full-page advertisement in the Spring 2018 *THJ*.)

Since the 2018 convention, the customer-support line was only used in November 2018. Two people queried about Nema Stop as a soil drench in winter when the hostas are dormant. Information was given, with the request for feedback in summer 2019. There has been no feedback.

What might be concluded from this? Could it be: **Here are no foliar nematode problems this year with hostas in AHS members’ gardens. ABSOLUTELY NOT!**

Last month (August 2019), I conducted a small investigation. I contacted 10 AHS members and asked: ***Do you have a FN problem this year. All said yes.*** (One screamed yes so loudly on the phone I had to move the receiver away from my ear.) The extent of FN damage varied considerably, from “one possible plant” to “a dozen and more problem hostas” to “maybe my total garden.”

Half said they have no FN abatement program this year. They implied they are accepting what FN leaf damage occurs. One said that before FNs do their disfigurement starting in late July in his garden, the hosta leaves are gorgeous and he’s “gotten enough enjoyment from them by then!” He said he just turns his eyes away from those leaves that are infected. Sometimes he cuts off the infected leaves “if there are a lot of them.” Once he cut off all the leaves in a clump.

I asked these five gardeners if they had a FN abatement program in previous years. Three said yes, remarking that it was not effective in preventing FN damage the following year. One said her program used NemaKill—but quickly added she may not have applied it properly. The FN abatement program of the other two were boiling water drench of the soil or spraying leaves with imidacloprid, an insecticide. (Imidacloprid was not in the Grewal-An study.)

The other five said they had applied Nema Stop this year but had not contacted PureGro about their procedures or findings. When asked if they were planning to do so, their responses indicated they had not intended to.

PureGro said that customers of their other products, of which there are many, “reach out” to it for assistance, relating their experiences and seeking assistance. So, why not Nema Stop? Some history can be helpful.

That Nema Stop will kill foliar nematodes is documented. The research program cost \$100,000, of which \$50,000 was funded by The American Hosta Society from contributions by its members and local hosta groups. A procedure for applying NemaKill was designed by a local hosta society and distributed to other local hosta societies. Concentrated NemaKill was sold by ExcelAg Corp USA, mostly in a 128-ounce container. PureGro sells Nema Stop as a concentrate in a 16-ounce container and ready to use in a 24-oz spray bottle.

The Grewal-An research studies were overseen by the then AHS Vice Presidents Genus *Hosta*. They published a progress report in the Spring 2016 *THJ* with information on NemaKill. Since publication of the final report, there has been no official AHS “FN information overseer” or “FN contact person.”

I started discoursing on the subject in 2016 as I had FN infestations in my previous garden in Wilmington, Delaware, many years ago. My abatement program *then* was application of NemaCur® 15% granules, a well-known effective, systemic nematicide, now EPA restricted in its applications and not available to home gardens. My experience with NemaCur was: *After a thorough two-year application, I saw no FN leaf damage the following year.*

I’ve examined what is known about Nema Stop / foliar nematodes. At this time, ***there is no documentation of how successful Nema Stop is in decreasing FN infestations in hosta gardens?*** Is there an accredited example where application of Nema Stop to a hosta with a FN problem *that is growing in a garden, reduced the FN problem to the applicant’s satisfaction?*

Note I did not say *eliminated the FN infestation*. I question whether foliar nematodes can ever be eliminated in a garden once established there. That is why the criterion for my FN abatement program was: *No FN leaf damage to the unaided eyes the following year.*

Yes, possibly microscope examination of my treated hostas might have revealed a foliar nematode worm or two wiggling about. And thus, possibly there may be some noticeable FN damage in later years. Regrettably, I was not able to examine the NemaCur-treated hostas years later to determine if there was noticeable FN leaf damage.

PureGro’s remark that there were Nema Stop purchases this year implies there continues to be FN problems with hostas. Very conservatively, I estimate at least 15% of AHS’s membership have FN infestations in their gardens. Current AHS membership is nearly 1840. That calculates to about 275 members. And very conservatively also, perhaps 10% of them have applied Nema Stop. That calculates to only 25-30 gardeners. In

other words, likely there are at least 25-30 AHS members out there who have Nema Stop experiences and probably application questions, too.

Thus the invitation in the July *Go Hostas!* column asking Nema Stop users to reach out to PureGro and share their procedures and especially findings. They still are out there! **So I'm asking again in this column.** Furthermore, I'm reprinting the pertinent information below:

Nema Stop's website is at [www.puregrousa.com](http://www.puregrousa.com). Select "Products" and "Pest and Disease Control." For Nema Stop information, select "Learn More," "Details," "Benefits" and "Directions" on the product pages. For the concentration of Nema Stop that's needed to be applied, see information in "Directions." It includes *when* and *where* to spray the leaves and petioles.

There are two ways to provide feedback to PureGro if you have an active Nema Stop foliar nematode program:

**Customer Review** – You can find this on PureGro's product page, once you select "Learn More." At the bottom of the description, there is a section highlighted "Customer Reviews." You can select "Write a Review" to proceed. The intent of this section is to guide other potential users on users' experiences. This includes a starred rating option 1-5.

**Customer Feedback to PureGro** – There are several ways to do this. You can select "Contact" at the top of the navigation page on PureGro's website, which enables users to send a message to PureGro, or email to [info@puregrousa.com](mailto:info@puregrousa.com).

Information in the following format is recommended:

- o Your name and location? – Do not provide if you prefer anonymous feedback.
- o How did you apply Nema Stop? How much was used? How much was sprayed and where? How much did you soak soil if soil drenching? How often did you apply Nema Stop and when?
- o What were your findings? How did you observe the hosta's health? Did you see existing lesions cease to expand? Did new leaves appear free of lesions?
- o Provide other observations
- o **PROVIDE PICTURES.**

***PureGro USA will gather information and display an aggregation on its website—either via FAQ section or through a blog post that will be shared with The American Hosta Society.*** Names of people furnishing input will be kept confidential.

**PLEASE SUPPLY FEEDBACK. THIS IS ESSENTIAL TO MOVE FORWARD IN OUR KNOWLEDGE OF FN ABATEMENT.**

Should you have questions and need to contact PureGro, the customer support line is 469.432.0712. Danny Cepeda, PureGro VP Market and Business Development, is the primary contact; he can be reached at [dcepeda@puregrousa.com](mailto:dcepeda@puregrousa.com). He is whom I've talked to.



## WHAT IS SIZE OF 'EMPRESS WU'<sup>PP</sup> IN YOUR GARDEN?

This also was a request in the *Go Hostas!* column in the last *AHS eNewsletter*.

Those with 'Empress Wu'<sup>PP</sup> in their gardens were asked to measure the clumps and report their height and widths in inches. Use a metal tape to measure dimensions. A photo of the clump was requested. Also, relate how old the clump is.

Also requested was to measure the size of the largest leaf in the clump. What is its length and width in inches? What's the dimension from where the petiole meets the leaf blade to the tip of the leaf? It's the width at the leaf blade's widest location.

I asked that the information be submitted before September 2 to [giboshiwip@aol.com](mailto:giboshiwip@aol.com). Only a few folks responded. I thank them very much. BUT there were not enough replies for satisfactory representation of the clump and leaf sizes of 'Empress Wu' in gardens.

**So, I'm extending when the information is needed** with the anticipation that other folks will respond. I would like a total of at least 50 replies. That's less than 3% of The American Hosta Society's membership, which at this writing is nearly 1840. I strongly suspect that at least 25% of AHS members have 'Empress Wu' in their gardens. That's 460 gardeners!

**Please reply by October 31.** *H.* 'Empress Wu' clumps and leaves should still be O.K. for measurements in September and also well into October.

*Postscript:* The number of 'Empress Wu' plants in AHS members' garden—whether it's 460 or nearly 1840!—is "tiny" compared to the total 'Empress Wu' plants that have been wholesaled by Walters Gardens, Inc., Zeeland, Michigan, since the hosta was introduced some ten years ago. I strongly suspect there may be more than 200,000 'EW' plants in gardens worldwide. To date this year alone, I suspect Walters Gardens sold more than 10,000. 'EW' is available everywhere: my local Home Depot sold it last and this spring, pretty inexpensively, too.

Most interesting, the responses I received were from folks I did not know. Also most interesting, no responder's name was ever in *The Hosta Journal* on any page! (Think about the significance of this.)

I suspect that if I had asked for 'EW' dimensions on social media, I would have been overwhelmed with responses—and they would be from non-AHS members. The number of AHS Facebook subscribers is some 6 times AHS's membership. Many, I suspect, would like to be involved with what's happening in hostadom. "Active interaction" is the worldwide trend these days.

If Facebook folks knew there are interactive activities in AHS that they can participate via their iPhones, laptops and computers, AHS membership might be attractive to them.

What responses I received with the new extended due date will have significant bearing on the contents of future *Go Hostas!* At the least, I—and The American Hosta Society—will have learned something about what AHS members' want.

## REPRIMAND ON 'BAYER ALL-IN-ONE ROSE AND FLOWER CARE' FOR STEM BLIGHT TREATMENT

The item titled "Stem Blight" in the last *Go Hostas!* column reads:

"Many gardens have had a lot of rain this year resulting in serious STEM BLIGHT problem. The problem is also called Southern Stem Blight, petiole rot and mustard seed fungus. It is caused by the fungus *Sclerotium rolfsii*. MOST IMPORTANT, IT IS NOT LIMITED TO SOUTHERN STATES OR WARMER REGIONS.

The problem is often noticed as 1/32-inch -diameter brown, tan or whitish spheres near the ground. in late June and July.

"An excellent description with treatment is in The American Hosta Society's booklet "Hosta Adventure: A Grower's Guide," Third Edition, published in 2017. After removal and discarding the top layer of soil, including the tiny spheres, the recommendation is to drench the remaining soil with fungicide that contains tebuconazole. "Bayer All-In-One Rose and Flower Care," available in most nurseries, contains tebuconazole. It also contains a fertilizer and insecticide."

On July 9<sup>th</sup> I received this email from a Minnesota AHS member:

"I am normally very happy to get the AHS News, but this issue contained a shocker. I am not a chemist, but as a gardener I am pretty careful about what products I inflict upon my little piece of the environment. So when I saw a recommendation to use Bayer Advanced All-in-One Rose and Flower Care for Stem Blight since it contains Tebuconazole I was concerned. Unfortunately, it also contains Imidacloprid, which is a neonicotinoid that kills pollinators.

"We must all be vigilant about checking labels and not using products that contain one good thing, only to wreak havoc on our pollinators with another ingredient that is not a good thing. I hope you will inform members that this product is a neonicotinoid and it would be better to seek out a fungicide product that only does what is needed without bringing along other hostile ingredients."

She makes an excellent point. I immediately thanked her for this information and checked some resources.

Yes, the insecticide in "Bayer Advanced (now designated BioAdvanced) Rose and Flower Care" is imidacloprid. The concentration is 0.15%. And yes, imidacloprid is a neonicotinoid. Neonicotinoids have been widely associated with killing pollinators. Last year the European Union banned imidacloprid and two other neonicotinoids for all crops grown outdoors. E.U. concluded "these insecticides posed a high risk to wild bees and honeybees."

The concentration of tebuconazole in Bayer's "BioAdvanced Rose and Flower Care" is only 0.80%. (The product contains mostly water!) Bayer also markets a product labeled "BioAdvanced Disease Control for Roses, Flowers & Shrubs." It contains 2.9% tebuconazole and no insecticide or fertilizer.

For stem blight treatment, Bayer's Disease Control is recommended. It's available in a 32-oz. blue container on the internet.

*Addendum:* According to the stem blight information in July 26, 2019 U. of Maryland Extension Report, *Sclerotium rolfsii* is now called *Athelia rolfsii*.

## HALLSON GARDENS CLOSES

Chris Wilson, co-proprietor with Brian Hall of Hallson Gardens, Cement City, Michigan, announced that this nursery will be shuttered in October or soon afterward. It has been up for sale for some time, but no buyer was found. Cement City is located in Southwest Michigan, south of Jackson.

Hallson Gardens featured hostas, perennials, ornamental grasses and flowers shrubs. It grew some 200 different hostas. I never visited the site but a horticulture-trained friend did a couple of months ago and was highly complementary of the stock, growing fields and nursery's management.



Hallson Gardens  
(Photo by Chris Wilson)

Probably online mail orders were Hallson Garden's major business. The nursery was especially noted for freshly digging the plants for each order, shipping them bare root. The plants usually were 3 years old or 2<sup>nd</sup>-year divisions with 1 to 3 eyes.

Chris introduced several hostas. The two I am most familiar with are *H.* 'Flamenco Mouse' and *H.* 'Field Rat'. *H.* 'Flamenco Mouse', registered in 2012, is an unusual sport of popular *H.* 'Blue Mouse Ears'. *H.* 'Field Rat', not registered, sported from 'Flamenco Mouse'. What is so special about these cultivars is they exhibit characteristics of *H.* 'Blue Cadet', from which 'Blue Mouse Ears' sported (mutated)!

For the *2015 Online Hosta Journal*, Chris wrote an article on 'Flamenco Mouse' and 'Field Rat' but it was never published in the issue—a GREAT loss to hostadom. His interesting observations should be in the open literature.



*H.* 'Flamenco Mouse' sport of *H.* 'Blue Mouse Ears'  
(Photo by Chris Wilson)



*H. 'Field Rat' sport of H. 'Flamenco Mouse'*  
(Photo by Chris Wilson)

Chris thought 'Field Rat' was unattractive (his actual descriptor was much less kind) compared to 'Blue Mouse Ears', 'Flamenco Mouse' and many sports of BME that were being found and introduced. He thought "Rat" was a more fitting epithet than "Mouse," so he labeled the sport 'Field Rat'. He told me he was surprised so many gardeners wanted a hosta named 'Field Rat' since rats are formidable pests.

*H. 'Field Rat'* is another example of a perhaps uncomplimentary hosta name not hampering the plant's marketability—and, on the other hand, maybe boosting it. Planned for a future issue of *The Hosta Journal* is a discussion by a half dozen noted hybridizers and introducers on "Does the cultivar name boost or hamper the hosta's marketability?"

I'm also familiar with Chris's *H. 'Wings of a Prayer'*, an improved sport of the popular *H. 'Praying Hands'* registered in 2009. Leaves are very upright with a pure white margin that is very noticeable compared to the parent. It's an apt name, possibly also related to the World War II song "Comin' In On a Wing and a Prayer."

Chris had a keen scientific bent. He and Bill Meyer, Woodbury, New Jersey, HostaLibrary co-“librarian,” carried out studies of hosta diseases. Some of the findings were written up by Bill for the HostaLibrary “Reading Room.”

Chris was a keen advocate informing people about Hosta Virus X. Hallson Gardens had a great reputation for selling virus-free hostas. He made a DVD that detailed images of *HVX*-infected plants, discussed ways to prevent the spread and gave advice about keeping *HVX* out of your garden. He plans to put it on YouTube.

Further, Chris moderated a popular online Hostas Forum that he founded in 2001. He also moderated a Perennials, an *HVX* and a Specialty Plants Forum. Questions with photos were submitted; Chris answered. He was very knowable and often his comments were extensive. There is some great “stuff” on them which should be mined, organized and made available in a readily available, easy format.

What will Chris and Brian be doing in the future. They will be moving to IRELAND. They’re off as soon as things are finished in Michigan. Are hostas in the future plans? *I hope so.*



*H. 'Wings of Prayer' sport of H. 'Praying Hands'*  
(Photo by Chris Wilson)

# ***GO HOSTAS!***

# FEATURED LOCAL SOCIETY



## **Potomac Hosta Club**

Susan Hedrick, President

Website: [www.potomachosta.org](http://www.potomachosta.org)

The *Potomac Hosta Club* was formed in 1986 by Tony Welsbacher. The club covers the entire Washington DC Metropolitan area including all of Virginia, Maryland and even West Virginia. We are a non-profit organization to promote the education and enjoyment of the number one selling perennial plant in the US, the genus *Hosta*.

Annual dues are \$10 per family, Seniors (65 and older) just \$5. We have 3 official meetings a year and meet at various locations including Garden Centers, the National Arboretum, and various Town Halls of local villages. Our newsletter is published 4 times a year with occasional "special editions" sent out.

Major fundraising activities include local garden sales, a spring plant sale, and a fall picnic and Hosta Auction, all are always a lot of fun!

We had enjoyed hosting AHS sanctioned Leaf Shows at the National Arboretum, however after a major remodel there is now no longer an area to allow for a show. We have yet to be able find an alternative/affordable location. We are pleased that member Marjie Morris had the "Best In Show" hosta leaf this year at the AHS National Convention in Green Bay, WI.

We've enjoyed great special speakers throughout the years. We've had Tom Micheletti, Bob Solberg, Wayne Guymon, and the late Bruce Banyai. Local speakers Kevin Wallek and Roger Smith along with Dr. Carl Taylor. Most recently we enjoyed hearing from Charles House who founded the company "Way Cool Tools" which designs and manufactures tools to make your gardening easier!

We were able to offer our assistance to the Smithsonian National Museum of American History in identifying hostas located in their garden adjacent to the Museum.



**"Way Cool Tools" demonstration.**  
(Photo by unknown)



Lilies and hostas co-exist in Faith & Jerry Bange's Spring Garden Open House.  
*(Photo by unknown)*



**Marjie Morris's Leaf:  
h. 'One Man's Treasure'**



Members contemplating their moves for Hosta Bingo at Somerset MD Town Hall.  
*(Photo by unknown)*

# The INCREDIBLE landscape OF HOSTA leaves

By Larry Tucker

If you've ever taken a moment to inspect the landscape of your hosta leaves, and paused to wonder why they possess such intricate design, you've fallen under the spell of creation. All things were put on earth for purpose, sometimes to live in peace and sometimes not. Those of poor design evolved or died. Humankind and hostas have taken circuitous routes of "hybridization" through the animal and plant worlds, thereby evolving, surviving and (for the most part) intersecting in harmony. As a hostaholic, I'm ecstatic about our serendipitous love affair!

So, what do I see in hostas and why am I enamored with them? Simply put, they're the 'Paradigm' of perennial perfection. Just think of hostas in terms of landscape. Not necessarily fulfilling the garden's need for structure and color, rather as a plant with leaves created to help it survive in temperate zones. That's really important as we experience climate



change. With the genius of landscape in leaves, the evolving genus *Hosta* has proven it's designed to withstand deluge, drought and extreme temperatures where we live.

Look at the leaves. Overall shapes are generally oval, round, triangular, heart or lance-like. From tip to toe, leaf surfaces are flat, cupped, undulating, cascading, sculpted or puckered. And the edges are often wavy or undulating. Leaf landscapes resemble hills and valleys bisected by rivers. Thanks to centuries of cross-pollination in the wild, parental manipulation by hybridizers and mutant surprises in tissue-culture labs, today's hostas are increasingly vigorous and durable.

The underlying construction of leaf landscape helps these plants immeasurably. Multiple cell layers and heavier substance reduce melt-out and increase endurance in hot, harsh sunlight. Better-balanced chlorophyll and plant sugars improve and sustain more than just color. And, below the leaf blades, sturdier and stronger petioles maintain the upright or cascading attitude of foliage.





Don't underestimate the importance of a leaf's midrib and vein structure. Those parts are key to keeping a hosta well-formed and well-fed. And they play an unsung role in keeping the plant well-watered. When rain or a sprinkler waters a hosta, the leaves collect and distribute much of that moisture through run-off, either toward the tip or toward the petiole, where veins converge. It's like water running off a duck's back. From my observation of most foliage, some of the precipitation flows in rivulets down the trough-like veins, cascades over the leaf tips to the ground and the outer reaches of spreading roots. More water seems to drain toward the petiole and down to the crown. Funnel-shaped petioles tend to be the most efficient.

This watershed is rapid when leaves grow upright like 'Bachelor Party' or adopt a 'Niagara Falls' mode. Deep-dish leaves like 'Cup of Grace' and puckered foliage like 'Powder Blue' may serve as little reservoirs or tiny ponds. That holding power bodes well for the plant with leaves slowly soaking up moisture or gradually parceling it out.

Next time it rains or you water the hostas, survey their incredible landscape and clink a drink in admiration.

# Book Notice

by Clyde Crockett

## Planting the DRY SHADE Garden

Written by Graham Rice

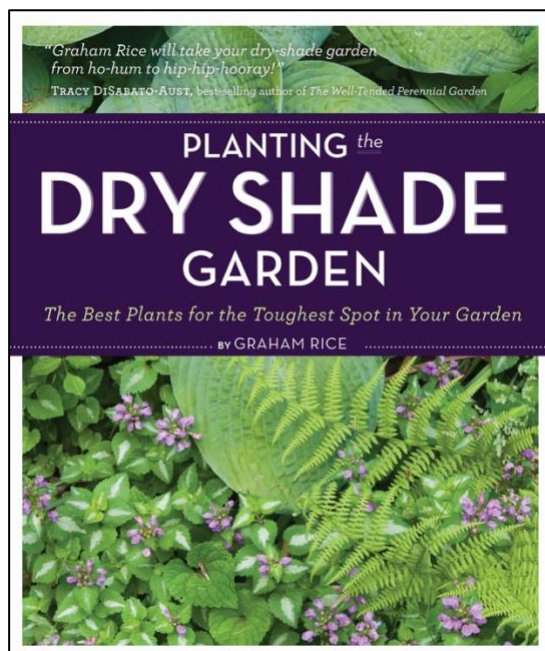
Photography by Judy White and Graham Rice (Timber Press, Portland 2011)

Mr. Rice, a well-known author of numerous works on horticulture, at the outset describes dry shade as “the most inhospitable part of any garden. “This recalls the frequent observation of the likes of Georg Schmid, Warren Pollock and other keen commentators that hostas are shade tolerant, not shade lovers. Also, it brings to mind the famous advice of the late great plantsman Van Wade: the three things hostas need most are water, water and water!

These nuggets of wisdom apply not only to the focus of our review but also to the many companion plants we desire to include in the garden. Shade and moisture are needed but in the former case there can be too much of a good thing and in the latter, a woeful lack.

First of all, the gardener, in order to explore plant selections, has to know what degrees of shade exist in the areas where plantings are contemplated. Some places seem hopeless, such as areas shrouded by permanent structures - a house, a fence, a wall and such - that never see the light of day, so to speak. Let’s not give up as we are also told that the shade cast by certain kinds of trees can be even less hospitable. First on the list are evergreen trees; however, for most of us, shade problems are created by deciduous trees and our noticed book has three categories to help us find just the right plants under their canopies. The most challenging are dense shade trees. Familiar examples provided in the list are various beeches, willows and magnolias. Less challenging are provided in a list of light shade trees, such as Amelanchier species, hackberry, dogwoods and ginkgo. The third category comprises “seasonal” shade trees. The later the canopy is formed, the better. Helpful lists are provided.

After the informative advice and information on degrees of shade, we are presented with lists of the best and the worst shade trees for underplanting. If, like me, you inherited your trees from previous owners, you will find helpful information in the section titled “Coping with dry shade” - we have the trees and we have the dry soil, what to do?



In “Reducing Shade”, besides doing nothing and planting the few types that will tolerate deep shade, perhaps better alternatives are described, such as forms of pruning, including crown thinning and crown lifting - methods that can be undertaken by the non-professional tree surgeon.

Since hostas can lose a significant percentage of their moisture content on a hot, windy day, the “Increasing Moisture” section is particularly important to those who have dry patches. The following methods are discussed with their various benefits: raising the soil level, improving the soil, installing irrigation, and regular mulching. Prominence is given to irrigation - the use of sprinklers is immediately dismissed. A helpful list of the best mulching material is provided. The section ends with a recommendation of using containers in the dry shade garden. Types of containers, plantings therein and how to position such are illustrated.

“Choosing Plants For Dry Shade” occupies the largest and, to many, the most interesting and beneficial part of the book. An impressive array of varieties, along with commentary on their relative compatibilities to dry, shady conditions, is included in the following sections: Shrubs, Climbers, Perennials, Ground Covers, Bulbs, and Annuals and Biennials. Each selection is accompanied by a beautiful



photograph. Hostas are covered as “favorite shade perennials that thrive in dry conditions;” however, it is noted that the number of such that do thrive is limited. Recommended are unvariegated types, particularly forms of *H. tokudama* and *H. sieboldiana*. Nevertheless, a number of photos illustrate that some variegated forms do quite well.

If you are the gardener with a “dark desert” that you wish to convert to a lush, lovely shade garden, this book is for you.

Happy Gardening,

Clyde



## Profiles

**Barry Ankney**  
**AHS Vice President, Publications**  
**Oakbrook Terrace, IL**



I grew up in rural southern Lancaster County Pennsylvania, where my father was an avid vegetable gardener. I became interested in gardening and by the age of ten was working at a neighboring dairy farm. I continued the farm job until I turned 16 and was able to drive, at which time I began working in a grocery store.

After a few years in the military and an all expense paid trip to Viet Nam, I returned to the states and moved to Illinois, where I received my degrees in Psychology. I worked as a clinical psychologist for a number of years, then retrained to become a school psychologist, so my summers would be free to garden.

I began growing hostas around 1970, starting out with the old standards; *Hosta lancifolia*, *H. ventricosa*, and *H. 'Albo Marginata'* that I obtained as gifts from my father-in-law. By 1977, I had discovered Hornbaker Gardens near Princeton, Illinois and rapidly expanded the number of cultivars to over one hundred. We built a home in the country north of Peoria, Illinois on six and one-half acres in 1978. From that point forward, my hosta collection grew yearly. I retired early to take care of my wife and found little time for gardening for several years. By the time I had to place my wife in a nursing home due to Alzheimer's Disease in 2013, my collection had grown to over five hundred cultivars.

With my wife gone from our home, I needed something to occupy my time, so I purchased White Oak Nursery from Bob and Brenda Keller, and moved the operation to my homestead, which had expanded to around thirteen acres. Within the next few years, and with the additional acquisition of Tom Michelletti's Hosta Patch, I was growing just over 1,600 cultivars.

Following my wife's passing in 2016, I decided that it was time to consider retiring for the second time. Eventually, after a partial liquidation sale, White Oak Nursery was sold. I was most fortunate to meet a new companion in 2017, and decided to relocate to the Chicago area, as my new spouse chose to continue to work. At that point, my active cultivation ended.

I have, however, remained very active in the hosta world. I was president of our local hosta society in Peoria, IL and continue as the webmaster for the Central Illinois Hosta Society. I was also recruited to be the webmaster for the Midwest Regional Hosta Society and was fortunate to serve as President of the organization for two

years. I also previously was the editor of the *AHS Online Hosta Journal* before being asked to serve as the Vice-President of Publications for AHS. I continue in that role, as well as the webmaster for CIHS and MRHS, and continue on the MRHS Board as the immediate past president.

I was also asked by my new local hosta society, the Northern Illinois Hosta Society to serve on the committee that is planning the 2020 Midwest Regional Hosta Society convention in Lisle, Illinois. I no longer grow hostas but remain very interested in our hosta societies.

With my freedom from the work of gardening, I am now able to pursue my other passion with more vigor, traveling. Within the past two years my wife and I have traveled to Iceland, to eight countries in Northern Europe, to China twice, to Mexico, to Taiwan and Singapore, on an around the world cruise that took us to 27 countries on five continents, and most recently to Scotland and France. Our next trip is planned for a river cruise to thirteen cities in four countries in central Europe. I enjoy visiting gardens in every country we visit.



**Castle Rock, Guadeloupe.**  
*(Photo by unknown)*



**Wat Chong Buddhist Temple Complex, Phuket, Thailand.**  
*(Photo by unknown)*

# Greetings from the Minnesota Hosta Society (MHS)!!



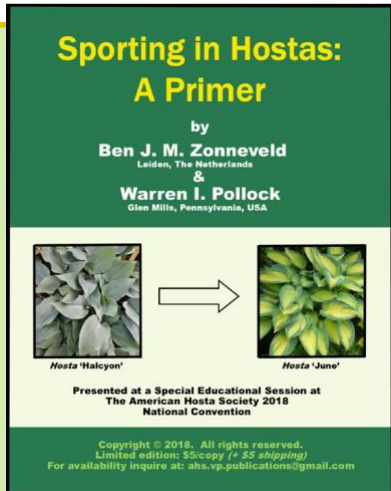
The MHS is the convention host for the American Hosta Society (AHS) 2020 National Convention. My name is Amy Peterson the 2020 Convention Chair. I am sending this email to a leadership member of all local, regional and international hosta societies of record to ask your assistance in bringing awareness to your membership about “**Hosta Vision 2020**”. The convention is being held June 10-13, 2020 at the Minneapolis Marriott NW located in Brooklyn Park, MN. If you received this and another in your local society is the better contact please forward it to them for consideration. We hope you will help us spread the word at your group meetings and by adding the convention logo and link to your society membership paper and/or electronic communications. Convention details are located [www.hostavision2020.com](http://www.hostavision2020.com) Links also

reside on the AHS [www.americanhostasociety.org](http://www.americanhostasociety.org) and MHS [www.mnhosta.org](http://www.mnhosta.org) websites. The home page of the convention website includes a convention summary, press release and logos you can easily import into any publication. Please view our website at your earliest convenience for full convention details on:



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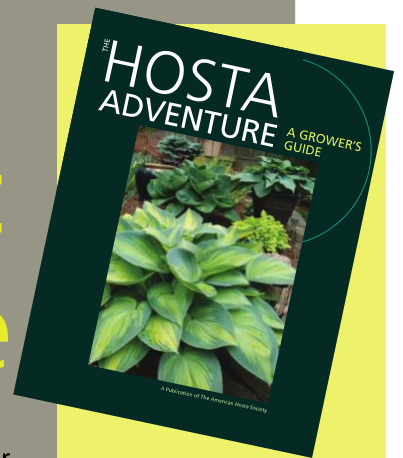
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Membership provides an opportunity to attend national meetings and conventions which offer educational and scientific presentations, garden tours, judge's clinics, and a chance to see the latest and best hosta in the hosta show.

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

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