



# The American Hosta Society

Oct 2025

*eNewsletter*



***H. 'Guardian Angel'***

**C. & R. Thompson 1995**

*(Photo by Mary Vertz)*

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# President's Message

Chuck Doughty , Holbrook, MA

Attending the 2025 Hosta Convention in Peoria, Illinois, Barry Ankney was awarded the Alex J. Summers Distinguished Merit. This is the highest presented by the AHS, in recognition of having given outstanding service to The American Hosta Society, and the development of the genus *Hosta*. Congratulations Barry! With that award, he has chosen *Hosta* 'Halcyon' (E. Smith & BHHS, 1988) a hosta of distinguished merit.

Roberta and Dave Chopko were presented with the Shirley and Van Wade Convention Contributor Award. "This award established in 1986, recognizes the largest contributor to the auction at the AHS National Convention, based on the total amount obtained for the contributor's donated items."

Dave remarked, "I have never sold a hosta, I just give them away" - in a fashion of continuing the legacy of Van Wade.

They are making connections through hostas. No wonder we call it "The Friendship Plant".

The Benedict Medal was awarded for *H. 'Guacamole'* (Bob Solberg-1994).

In the beginning of the creation of our display gardens on the grounds of Cochato Nursery, the word was out that we were building a garden featuring hostas.

- Mildred Seaver came to inspect, large hat and all.
- Bill Burto came and gifted *H. 'Halo'*, *H. 'Carl'* as well as *H. 'Louisa'*.
- Indiana Bob gifted us *H. 'Silvermist'* and *H. 'Master of Ceremonies'*.

Many friendships have blossomed using hostas as the catalyst. We met Scott Dowd, a freshwater biologist. He came to check out our hosta offerings; was inspired and created a special garden featuring all the Hosta of the Year winners. I ended up going with him to the Amazon Rain Forest several times where he leads a research group.

The 2025 New England Hosta Society Picnic was a great success. Visiting a magazine-worthy garden, with entertainment and sharing the day with some wonderful hosta enthusiasts while supporting your local society is a great way to spend a summer day.

*Chuck Doughty*





# Hostas and Associates

Glenn Herold, Cedarburg, WI

## Leaves in the Garden: Friend or Foe

Photos by Glenn Herold

For many, autumn is a favorite time of year. After three months of air conditioner usage, you can turn it off and open the windows to let in the fresh, crisp air. Other fall favorites are fresh apple pies, pumpkin spice, Oktoberfest beer, and raking your lawn. Well, that last item may not be high on your list, but those leaves are an excellent amendment for gardens, landscape beds, compost piles, and even lawns. Leaves are one of Mother Nature's best gifts for the gardener, and they are free!

A recent article in *American Gardener* magazine emphasized the importance of leaves for overwintering butterflies and other insects. Most do not migrate south for the winter and rely on a leaf layer for winter protection. A study of butterfly populations, published in an article in *Science*, revealed a 22% drop over the last 20 years. Pesticides, climate change, and habitat loss all contribute to this decline, but the researchers found that fall yard cleanup is also a significant cause for the decline. Insects may overwinter as eggs, larvae, pupae, or adults, all of which require landscape debris. As hosta growers, we all have shaded areas in our yard that could be left as a winter sanctuary for the pollinators.

There are many ways in which I use the leaves that fall in my yard, and not one of them is to rake them into the street for city public works employees to pick up. One is to collect leaves with my battery powered leaf vacuum or bagging attachment on my mower to put into one of my compost bins. These shredded leaves partially decompose through the winter and are then used in my vegetable garden between rows of spring produce.





In summer, I spread the remainder around my tomato plants, under my zucchini vines when the seeds germinate, and among my raspberry canes. They help to keep moisture in the ground and provide a good surface on which to walk through the garden. By fall, they are almost completely broken down. After I remove the tomatoes and zucchini vines, I till the remaining leaves into the soil using a hand cultivator that I inherited from my grandfather. As I get older, though, I am gravitating more toward a no-till garden!

Leaves that fall into my perennial planting beds are broken down in place by using my leaf vacuum without the bagging attachment. This usage greatly reduces the amount of wood mulch that I need and also provides a winter home for pollinators. As the leaves break down, they provide nutrients to the plants, especially carbon, nitrogen, phosphorus, and potassium, but also 12 other micro-nutrients, and help to reduce weed germination the next year. Most weed seeds need sunlight to germinate and the mulch hinders the sun's rays in reaching the soil. Decomposed leaves, called leaf mold, are taken down into the soil by earthworms. The increased organic matter in the soil not only improves soil fertility, but structure as well, making it easier for plant roots to penetrate the soil. Clayey and sandy soils are greatly improved over time by yearly adding leaves to the surface. Soils high in organic matter hold more moisture and make it easier for plants to take up and utilize that moisture.



Another way that I use leaves in my yard is to mow them in place on my lawn. Intact leaves can make a barrier for light penetration, but shredded leaves drop between the leaf blades and get to the soil line. Like grass blades, they break down and improve soil structure and fertility. Mulching mowers work best for this task by cutting the leaves into finer pieces. With a normal rotary mower, you may have to go over the leaves a few times for best results. Avoid thick layers of leaves, especially wet leaves, which create a barrier.

A common belief is that oak leaves cause the soil to become more acidic and should not be used in the garden or compost bin. Oak leaves are high in tannins, which are acidic, but the acidity quickly breaks down as the leaves decompose. The only leaves that should not be used as mulch are leaves from poison ivy, which can cause skin irritation, and those of black walnut, which contain a substance called juglone. Many plants, especially vegetables, but also some shrubs and perennials, are inhibited by juglone.

Over half of the nutrients that a tree takes out of the soil through the roots are stored in the leaves. All of that is returned to the soil, and plants growing in that soil, if they are used as mulch or composted with other garden debris. This fall, make your garden eco-friendlier and put your leaves to good use.

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*Additional articles on plants and gardening can be found on my blog:*

<https://TheCottageGardener53012.Wordpress.com>



# Book Notice

Clyde Crockett, Carmel, IN

## GOT SHADE?

### *“Take It Easy” Approach For Today’s Gardener*

Written by Carolyn Harstad

Published by Indiana University Press (2003) : 2003

The focus of *Got Shade?* is low maintenance which is defined as choosing the right plant for the right place. This is characterized as a “simplistic premise but it works.” I am perhaps the wrong gardener to review this book. In my heyday, I tried to get as much time in my garden as possible, always looking for something to fertilize, weed, trim, plant and of course, admire, you name it. I am sure however that those affected by the constraints of time will get much useful advice on how to minimize garden time in this tightly organized work. I was able to visit Carolyn’s Garden on a number of occasions. One only needed to observe the massive use of ground cover to immediately think “low maintenance.” It was, in a way, a work of art.

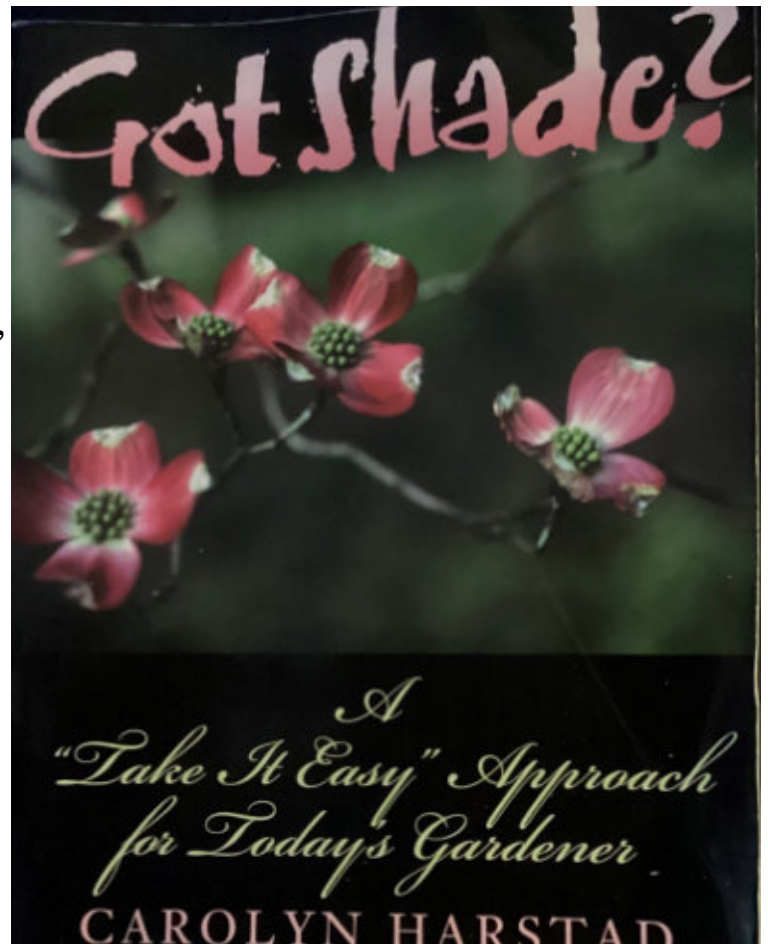
The book is organized along planting material, commentary on them covered in rather short passages. I will give the rather fanciful titles of each section followed by revealing what I’m talking about. Just to remind you, such titles seem to be in vogue today—I’m not making them up.

Garden Jewels SMALL TREES

Best Friends SHURBS

Good Things in Small Packages DWARF CONIFERS

Onward and Upward VINES





Ground Cover Nature's Carpet GROUND COVER  
Softly Elegant FERNS  
Upstanding Citizens GRASSES  
Indefensible Allies PERENNIALS  
Natural Beautiful WOODLAND WILDFLOWERS  
Incredible Packaging BUKBS  
....And The Last Shall Be First ANNUALS

My own experience has been to include most of those with my hostas, particularly perennials and ferns, much seen in shade gardens. So let me concentrate on what I now wish I had incorporated—dwarf conifers and annuals. I can only guess what my failure was. I admired very much what I saw in gardens but all I had was one pitiful little pine and a flat of impatiens or coleus. Luckily two of what I consider the best part of *Got Shade?* are the sections devoted to the two I now yearn for.

DWARF CONIFERS provides an excellent introduction to growing them in shade. This includes the all-important notes on size and growing rates. The miniature appeals to me but you have a great deal of material to work with for whatever size appeals. The principal varieties of the “shady Ts” *Taxus*, *Thuja* and *Thuga* are described with size and hardiness information.

ANNUALS occupies a whopping 33 pages. Each entry is accompanied by a description, balusters, height and location of the “home” of each. Many are from Asia but available from specialty nurseries in the States, which you can find in Harstad's handy Resources chapter.

I like this book very much. It is written in a very gentle style. I can see her in that Hunter Green den with her book and a cup of tea.







# Hostas Happenin's

Don Rawson, Grand Rapids, MI



## The Do's and Don'ts of Fall Hosta Care

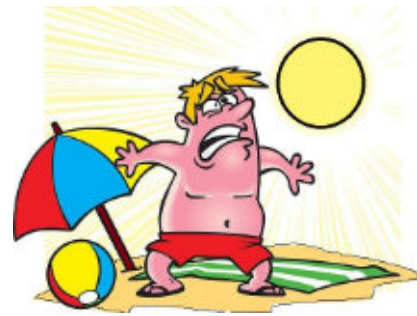
Fall is a great time to be in the garden. After the busy summer days, you can finally slow down and reflect on the gardening season. However, there are always tasks that await the loyal and hardworking gardener. And, while hostas are durable, low-maintenance plants, there are several things to keep in mind during autumn to be sure your lovelies are healthy and looking their best come spring. Here are the **Do's** and **Don'ts** of fall hosta care.

### The Do's of Fall Hosta Care



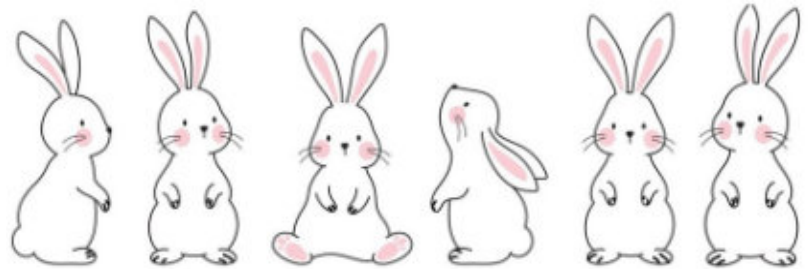
#### 1. Fighting the Crowd.

Late summer and fall is the best time to just stand back and scrutinize your garden. Things have probably gone gangbusters all summer long and now you likely have plants crowding each other out. Large hostas are towering over smaller ones. Two different cultivars may be intermixing, which is particularly distressing for plants that are similar in appearance. Now that the growing season is coming to an end, the devoted gardener should do an overall assessment, making a list of plants that are crowded. Some will need more space and should be transplanted next spring.



## 2. Summer Sun – Too Much of a Good Thing?

Now, closely examine each of your hostas to determine those that look unattractive, or those that are doing poorly. Some may have been scorched by the hot summer sun. Blues sited in afternoon sun have probably turned green. There may be yellows that are bleached out and faded to white. Or, conversely, are some struggling in too much shade? Many cultivars do best in bright sunlight. Besides sun scorch, others could be deprived of water and nutrients due to root competition. A conscientious gardener takes note of any plants that are doing poorly in an effort to relocate those gems next spring. Write it down; if you don't, you won't remember!



## 3. Be Fruitful and Multiply.

Many gardeners divide their hostas to enlarge their garden or to trade with friends. Fall is the time to evaluate each clump to determine its maturity. Even if you choose not to divide your hostas at this point, you should record the number of eyes so you will know what's available when your hostas pop up in spring. Make a list of those which are mature enough to divide.



## 4. Divide and Conquer.

Early fall is a great time to divide hostas. The weather is cooler and the increased rains help new roots to grow and establish themselves before winter. Hostas can be divided several weeks before the first frost. Once you have divided the hostas, simply replant them in a partially shaded area and keep them well watered until frost.



## 5. Slug It Out.

What about those slugs, are you feeding them well? They go for the thin, tender leaves. Don't worry about the others. Slugs possess an astonishing number of teeth, with some sources saying they have around 27,000 that they use to consume food. They have quite an appetite to boot, consuming several times their own weight during prime feeding times like moist nights in the spring and fall. When they come around next summer, these slimy creatures head straight for those hosta cultivars that are full of holes this fall. What can you do? Well, you can record the thin-leaved varieties that were damaged by slugs this season and concentrate your control methods on those specific plants next summer.



## 6. Planting Seeds of Happiness.

Now it's time to get moving. If you want to create some of your own hosta originations, you will need to save a few seeds to grow before removing those dead flower stalks. Most people do not find the dead scapes attractive during winter anyways, and the seeds that fall to the ground during fall create a weeding chore next summer...just what you want to avoid! Select seeds from those that are streaked because they are most likely to produce variegated seedlings. Collect the seed pods when they begin to turn yellow and let them dry in a paper bag. When they start to split open, shake out the seeds and throw out the debris. Plug in the grow lights and you're ready to go!



## 7. Thank You Very Mulch!

Mulching the garden has many benefits and fall is a delightful time to take on this dreaded task. Hosta crowns can be sensitive to extreme cold. Adding one to two inches of mulch helps to protect your hostas and prevent them from frost damage. It also helps to keep them in winter dormancy during the occasional spring warm up. Spread the mulch over the crown of the hosta. Then next spring, when new shoots emerge, remove the mulch from the base of the plant to prevent crown rot from excessive moisture.



## 8. You are Here to Enrich the World.



A fall application of well-composted manure or leaf mold around the perimeter of the plant will enrich the soil for next spring's growth. And your juvenile plants, along with those recently transplanted, will benefit from protection against the cold weather. A coarse material, such as evergreen boughs, bracken fronds, straw, or pine needles, can help prevent heaving during the early spring thaws. Apply an enrichment mulch, and for young hostas, a protective mulch.



## 9. It's Time to Tidy Up.

When cold temperatures arrive, hostas begin to turn yellow and start looking pretty rough. After the first hard frost, the leaves die back for the season. Your hostas, once green and happy, become a sad-looking glob of wilted leaves.

Gardeners are split on whether it is best to leave hostas in place or to cut them back in fall. While there's probably no right or wrong answer here, those who prefer a neatly groomed landscape year 'round are apt to cut them back and remove all the unsightly foliage. It makes the garden look tidier, there's less chance of pests and diseases hanging out in the soil, and it's one more way to begin the next gardening season with a clean slate. With this said, it is best to wait until first frost. Prior to frost, the plant is busy storing energy up for winter. A week or two after a hard frost allows you to simply lift the dead foliage off with no hand pruners involved.

Hosta foliage can harbor slugs and insect eggs, which can cause significant problems in the spring. They can lay their eggs in the decaying foliage, and you want to get this out of the garden before they hatch in spring. A good fall cleanup will go a long way to prevent future problems with such pests.



## 10. Dream Big.

Last of all, prepare a new site if you're a real hostaholic. Fall is a great time to obtain organic matter — grass clippings, leaves, vegetable garden leftovers, wood chips, watermelon rinds and corncobs...all to be tilled into a new spot and composted during the fall, winter, and spring. The soil is moist and workable. The temperature is agreeable. And you have all those months to dream about where each new hosta will go. Soon, you will be getting the mail order catalogs. You will be placing hosta orders. Meanwhile, get ready to grow!

# The Dont's of Fall Hosta Care



## 1. Don't Feed.

Hostas should not be fed in the fall. Fertilizer encourages leaf growth, and leaf growth should not be encouraged at a time when leaves are dying back. In fall, hostas are focusing their energy on storing nutrients in their root system to survive the winter. Fertilizer is not needed for this process. The best time to apply fertilizer is in early spring



## 2. Don't Hurry.

There is no need to hurry when it comes to cutting back the foliage. That's right! While some individuals procrastinate, others tend to be overly hasty. Resist the urge to get a jump start on fall cleanup. In the fall, most hostas turn lovely shades of yellow and gold. So, wait to prune back hostas until they turn completely brown. Hostas are actively growing if their foliage is alive. Cutting back plants before the foliage is killed by a freeze limits valuable root growth that sustains the plant throughout the winter and prepares it for next spring.



## 3. Don't Compost.

Generally, removal and disposal of old, decaying foliage is well suited for the compost pile, but with one caveat: diseased or pest-ridden leaves should not be thrown into your compost pile as this can spread problems to your garden next year. Foliar nematodes, which cause brown streaks to appear on hosta leaves in mid to late summer, should be controlled from spreading to other areas of the garden. Using nematode-infected compost could potentially magnify the problem the following year. As a side note, consider pruning

off the leaves of nematode-infested hostas before first frost. By cutting off the live foliage, you may be able to control those nematodes that are inside the leaves at this time of year. Dispose of the foliage in the garbage container, not the compost bin.



#### 4. Don't Be Mean.

After a hard frost, grab a cluster of the collapsed stems and give them a quick wiggle and tug. The leaves and stems should pull away easily. While this is true for an established plant, the treatment should be much more kind for a newly planted, young hosta. Wait for the foliage to fully die back. Then, use pruners to cut the stems 2 to 3 inches above the soil line. This method prevents pulling young roots out of the ground. Furthermore, newly planted hostas benefit from a layer of shredded bark or pine needles, which helps prevent damage from freeze-thaw cycles. Be sure to pull the mulch off the plant in early spring before new growth appears.



#### 5. Don't Save a Virused Hosta.

Any hosta that is infected with a virus such as Hosta Virus X (HVX) should be carefully removed from the garden and discarded (not thrown on the compost pile). Simply removing an infected leaf or cutting out the portion of the hosta that shows symptoms of HVX will not help cure the plant. The virus has spread throughout the plant by the time any symptoms become apparent. There is no cure for plants infected with HVX and it won't eventually go away on its own. Even if you don't see the symptoms in the following season, the virus is still present in the plant and still able to infect other plants. Dig and remove the entire plant and discard it, or spray with Round Up.



#### 6. Don't Neglect to Sterilize.



Pruners and other garden tools should be sterilized between plants. If any hostas show signs of disease, such as mottled foliage or abnormal, distorted leaf surface, disinfect the pruners by wiping them down with rubbing alcohol or dipping them in a 10% bleach solution between each plant. Discard any infected foliage; don't add it to the compost pile.



## **7. Don't Overlook Potted Hostas.**

Have you considered proper care for hostas in pots over the winter? To store potted hostas for winter, allow them to go dormant. Then the pots can be stacked on their side against the wall of a building. Other gardeners seek to provide protection from extreme cold, drying winds, and rodents by burying the pots in the ground, placing them in an unheated garage or shed, or by leaving them in the garden where they are placed side by side with a protective layer of mulch or a frost blanket. Made from materials like spun polypropylene or polyester, a frost blanket is a lightweight, reusable fabric cover that protects plants from frost and cold temperatures by trapping heat from the soil and creating a warmer microclimate around them. Water potted hostas sparingly, only when the soil appears dry. Avoid overwatering, which can lead to root rot in the cold.



## **8. Don't Ignore the Rodents.**

Voles are active in fall and winter. They are looking for food and your hostas are high on the menu. In winter, they are searching for this food source underground and your hosta crown is quite tasty to them. To avoid vole damage, you can repel these furry pests with castor oil. If potted hostas are going to be covered and stored outdoors, it is a good idea to use bait stations to control potential damage by mice and voles. Failing to prevent vole damage during winter can lead to a very unhappy surprise come spring.



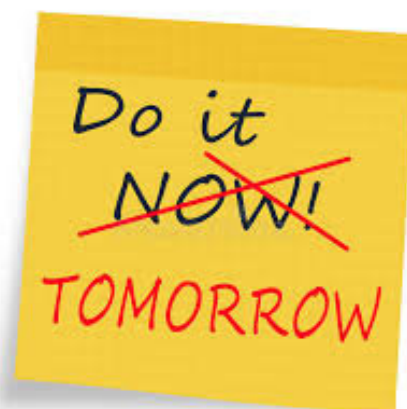
## **9. Stay With the Bare Essentials.**

Don't pile leaves over the crown. Soggy, fallen leaves laying on top of hostas all winter can cause the plants to rot and mold. It is better to rake leaves away from the stems and add them to your compost pile. A coarse, loose material such as pine needles and boughs or straw is a better choice for mulching hostas during the winter.



## 10. Free Weeds — Pick Your Own.

Don't overlook weed control. Fall is a fine time to rid the garden of noxious weeds, especially those that are about to drop seed. Cutting your hostas down makes weeding around them easier in the fall. Follow your weeding with the application of mulch, but do not put it directly on top of the crown of the plant. And yes, you can and should use Preen in the fall, as it's an effective way to prevent winter annual weeds like chickweed from sprouting and becoming a problem in spring. A fall application, along with a spring application, provides year-round protection by stopping weed seeds from germinating.



## Final Tip: Don't Procrastinate.

Get er done! Don't delay garden care and cleanup until spring. Some perennials are best left standing all winter long and then cut back in early spring, but that isn't the case with hostas. Their decaying foliage is an invitation for pests and diseases to take up residence in the crown of the plant. Some rodents, such as voles, are attracted to the leaf mass that makes a fine winter shelter. Slugs frequently overwinter in hosta foliage, only to devour the plant in spring. Fall cleanup makes a big impact when controlling pests and diseases that affect hostas. Following these Do's and Don'ts of fall hosta care will make life easier...and life much more enjoyable. Happy gardening!



# *Hybridizer Corner . . .*

Don Rawson, Grand Rapids, MI

**In the Hybridizer's Corner, we are learning about breeding hostas in order to create exciting, new varieties. It is not too difficult and you will have a lot of fun doing so. Jump on board as we learn about collecting and cleaning hosta seed in this issue.**

## **Review**

We previously examined some of the obstacles faced by the hybridizer. There are many challenges encountered in any hybridizing program. One problem is that occasionally a cross just will not take. The pod parent may abort after a seedpod begins to form, or on the other hand, no evidence of pod formation may be apparent at all. There are some tricks to try that may lead to success.

It is not uncommon for some cultivars to be pod or pollen sterile, or in rare cases, both. Checking the list of Sterile Hostas posted at <https://www.hostalists.org/> can save the hybridizer wasted time and effort.

Another issue is the absence of scapes. Obviously, if there are no scapes, there are no flowers or pollen to work with. The best insurance is to keep your hostas healthy and adequately watered, and to make sure they receive plenty of bright sunlight and a little fertilizer.

Of course, there are plenty of other dilemmas ranging from slug and insect damage to deer consumption of your cherished breeding plants. Sadly, sometimes mice and chipmunks eat the flowers or seedpods right off. The persistent hybridizer strives to find ways around these obstacles so that a desired cross can be made, the seed is sown, and a new hosta cultivar is developed.

## **Collecting Hosta Seed**

Autumn is a wonderful time of the year. The gardener's schedule begins to slow down a bit and the weather is more conducive to working outdoors. For the hybridizer, it means it is time to collect hosta seed — both from open-pollinated plants as well as from those pod parents that have been used in your breeding program.

The first consideration is which seedpods to save and grow. If you did not do your own pollinating, then you must resort to collecting seed from what the bees did for you. Begin with the streakers that you may be growing, as they generally produce a percentage of variegated offspring. Another approach is to save seed from a hosta you already like and try to diversify it. For example, if you like hostas that are extremely cupped and corrugated, then harvest the seeds from those in your garden and grow it in an effort to produce new cupped, corrugated varieties.

## **Harvesting Hosta Seed**

Collecting seed from the crosses you made during the summer is always exciting in anticipation of the what may develop from growing them. This is the reward for the time and effort you have devoted to making crosses during the weeks and months beforehand. It is essential to give the seed time to mature before harvesting it, and conversely, to collect



the seed before the pods split open. The point is that you should not neglect to harvest the seed in a timely manner.

Hosta seed generally requires 6 to 8 weeks to mature, depending on the variety and environment. Ideally, it is best to leave the pods on the plant until they begin to turn yellow, which is a sign that the seeds are mature. At this point the seeds are ripe and should be collected. If left until the pods have split open, the seed will fall to the ground and be lost.



Photo by Joy Witte. Used by permission.

**Hosta seed should be collected in a timely manner. If left until the pods have split open, the seed will fall to the ground and be lost — a disappointing predicament for the hybridizer.**

Those early bloomers that you worked with in June and July will likely have yellowing pods with ripe seed in late summer or early fall, whereas those that flower in August and September will not have fully mature seed until late fall. It is quite helpful, therefore, to maintain a record of when your hostas bloom so you will know when to harvest the seed.

The avid hybridizer sometimes is faced with a perplexing problem, finding that some cultivars bloom so late that the seeds may not have time to mature before first frost. In this case, the scapes should be left undisturbed as the seed continues to mature. However, a protective covering can be placed over those late bloomers to prevent frost damage during the night time lows and then removed the next day. Potted hostas can be brought indoors in the evening and placed back outdoors in the morning. Another option for late bloomers is to bring them indoors and place them under grow lights for a few weeks until the seed is ready to harvest. Just keep in mind that once the seedpods begin turning yellow, they can split open in just a few days and then your prized seeds will be lost, so keep a close eye on those plants that still bear seed to harvest.

Once the seedpods are picked, they can be placed in paper envelopes or lunch bags. Or, the pods can be placed in uncovered, plastic cups. Any information, including the pod and pollen parent, should be written on the outside. The pod parent is always first, followed by the pollen parent. For example, ‘Dorothy Benedict’ × ‘Big Daddy’.

Store the seed in a cool, dry place. The pods will eventually turn brown and many will split open on their own to release the seed inside.

## Cleaning Hosta Seed

Once the seeds are harvested, let them dry for a while before cleaning them. Removing the seeds from the pods is much easier if the pods are thoroughly dry, which may require several weeks. You can leave the seedpods in an unheated area of the house or garage, as long as the mice cannot get to them. Placing them indoors, however, allows them to dry a little quicker. Or, you can place them near the water heater if you wish to accelerate the process, in which case they will be ready within two or three weeks. During this time, many pods will split open on their own, allowing the seeds to fall out. Dumping the seedpods into a box or covered bowl and shaking with some enthusiasm will result in many of the seeds falling out of the pods. Then it’s just a matter of picking out the last few seeds.



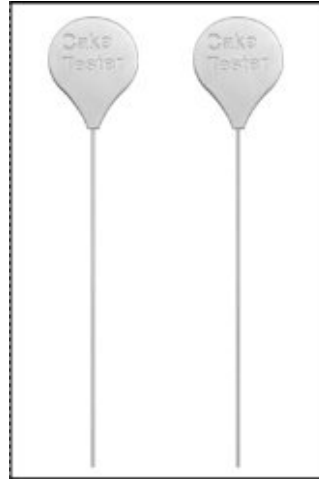
Photo by Patrick Looney. Used by permission.

**Hosta seed, ready for cleaning. Many of the seedpods have already split open. Those that have not will need to be pried open. Rolling the pods between your fingers or against the table may make them open a bit easier.**

The seedpods that do not split open on their own will have to be opened by hand. This is not a hard job if you only have a few pods but is quite time consuming on a larger scale. Rolling the pods between your fingers or against the table may make them open a bit easier. When it comes down to picking the remaining seeds out of the pod, hybridizers use a variety of tools ranging from a dental pick to a cake tester. Any small, pointed instrument will work.



**Dental Tools**



**Cake Testers**

The seedpods that do not split open on their own will have to be opened by hand. This is not a hard job if you only have a few pods but is quite time consuming on a larger scale. Rolling the pods between your fingers or against the table may make them open a bit easier. When it comes down to picking the remaining seeds out of the pod, hybridizers use a variety of tools ranging from a dental pick to a cake tester. Any small, pointed instrument will work.

## De-winging the Seed

There are pros and cons to removing the wings on hosta seeds. It is a task that requires time and it is not required in order for the seed to germinate. Furthermore, a few seeds could potentially be damaged in the process. Many hybridizers just go ahead and plant them, wings and all, and have good success.

On the other hand, some indicate they have less issue with fungus when the wings are removed and faster germination compared to seeds that are not de-winged. Some even claim to have higher germination rates with de-winged seeds. One thing is certain: if hosta seed is to be sold, then the kernel should be removed from the wing or the seed should be closely inspected to ensure it has a defined bulge from the plump kernel inside. While a de-winged seed or defined bump does not guarantee viability, it is the least a seller should do.



Photo by Randy Triplett. Used by permission.

**Mature, potentially viable seeds are dark brown or black. At one end of the papery wing is a small, swollen embryo (kernel). The wing is just there to help the wind disperse the seed. With hostas, any white seeds failed to mature for whatever reason and should be discarded.**



Appropriately sized sieves can make quick work of cleaning large amounts of seed. A colander or coarse strainer can be used to separate the seeds from the pods. To remove the wings and chaff, the seeds can be gently rubbed in a fine, mesh sieve. The wings come off and fall through the sieve while the perfectly cleaned kernels remain.

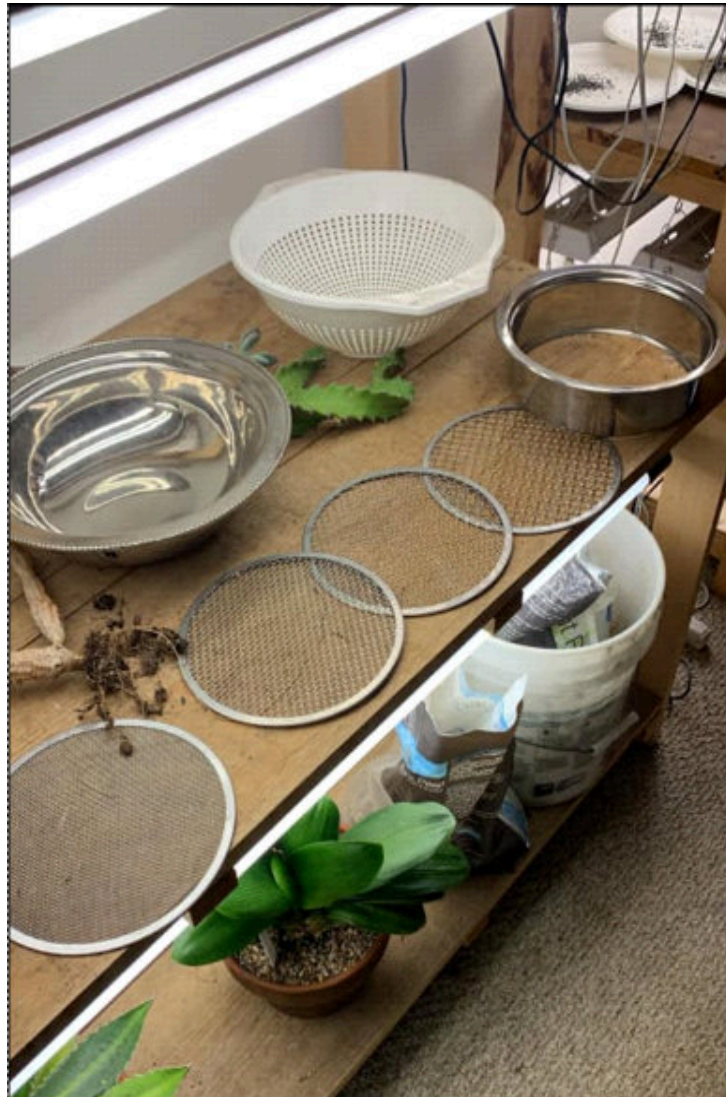


Photo by Patrick Looney. Used by permission.

**Appropriately sized sieves can make quick work of cleaning large amounts of seed. A coarse one can be used to separate the seeds from the pods, while a fine one will remove the wings and chaff, leaving the perfectly cleaned kernels inside.**

## Storing Hosta Seed

If you plan to start your seed within two or three months, nothing special needs to be done. For short-term storage, the cleaned seeds should be placed in coin envelopes with the cross recorded on the outside and stored in a cool, dry place until planting time. Placing the envelopes in an airtight container and then stored in the refrigerator is ideal, but leaving the seeds in a cool room is sufficient, too. Some reports say that hosta seeds left out at room temperature retain viability for six to eight months, but when the coin envelopes

with seed are refrigerated at 35 to 40 °F in sealed plastic bags, viability can be sustained for more than three years. For even longer storage, hosta seed can be frozen. When dried and frozen properly, seeds can remain viable for ten years or longer. We will discuss the procedure for long-term storage in a future issue of the *Hybridizer's Corner*.



Photo by Jeff White. Used by permission.

**Hosta seed should be thoroughly dried and stored in paper envelopes. Putting the envelopes in an airtight container and then placed in the refrigerator is ideal. Long-term storage requires placing the seed in the freezer. The seed shown here was stored for 10 years and should still be viable.**

## Summary

With due diligence, the passionate hybridizer must harvest the hosta seed when it is ripe. Removing the seedpods ahead of time risks the chance that the seed may not be mature enough to germinate. Conversely, neglecting to collect the seedpods once they turn yellow on the bottom may result in the pods splitting open and having the seed fall to the ground.

Once the seedpods are harvested, they should be thoroughly dried. Many of the pods will split open on their own, but those that do not will have to be pried or broken open to remove the seeds inside. Viable seeds are dark brown or black, with a plump kernel inside.

The seeds should be placed in paper envelopes and stored in a cool, dry place. If not planted in two or three months, they should be placed in an airtight container and stored in the refrigerator.

In the next issue, we will cover the procedure for long-term storage, should you choose to plant the seeds years later.





# Welcome to My Garden

Gail Russo, Cedarville, New Jersey



Gail Russo

**Please meet Christina Brinkmann from Gütersloh, Germany.**



The American Hosta Society has nearly 3,000 members! The society was founded by Alex J. Summers and Eunice V. (Mrs. Glen) Fisher after they conceived the idea of a dedicated plant society. The American Hosta Society (AHS) is a nonprofit organization established in 1968 to foster and promote knowledge of and interest in the genus *Hosta*, and to encourage introduction of the genus into cultivation. The American Hosta Society is also the International Cultivar Registration Authority for the genus *Hosta*.

There is a British Hosta and Hemerocallis Society, a Dutch Hosta Society and an Irish Hosta Society in Europe. Besides these four, there aren't any other organized hosta societies. Is this because no other countries grow hostas? Of course not! In the middle of Germany, there is a town named Gütersloh where a brilliant "hostimist" creates wonderful new varieties of hostas. I'd like to introduce you to Christina Brinkmann. Her hostas are as beautiful as her smile, and they glow like she does!

As a young girl, Christina helped in her parents' garden, but it wasn't until she and her husband built their home in 2000 that she began cultivating a garden of her own. As a child growing up in Gütersloh, she had loved flowers and had always dreamed of having a large garden of her own. Now she had that chance to build her dream and she dove right in. She started experimenting with different varieties of plants to find which thrived in their gardens and eventually decided that hostas were a favorite. She loved the variety of foliage with such a wide range of leaf colors, shapes and sizes. She loved that they are shade



tolerant and brighten up every area, besides being long-living hardy perennials that grow in almost every kind of soil. They can be grown in pots and in this way, can always be arranged to decorate any area of the garden.

Christina gardens on 2680 square meters of land, which converts to approximately a half-acre. She grows approximately 3300 varieties of named hostas and thousands of hosta seedlings. In addition, she grows rare shrubs and trees and many roses, hydrangeas, daylilies, phlox and succulents. She also maintains a small fruit tree meadow with 40 varieties of fruit trees! How does she pack all of these plants into such a small space? The answer is simple- the majority of her hostas are grown in pots! They did manage to purchase a small lot adjoining their property in 2011, and she has realized her dream. The property now boasts a swimming pond with a small waterfall, a sunken garden, a small orchard and amazing gardens, all designed and planted by Christina.



Above, an aerial photo of Christina's gardens, with the swimming pond on the far left, and the orchard on the far right. The potted hosta displays are located beside the house, hidden from view in the foreground of this photo,

After graduating high school, Christina attended a University of Sciences to study administration. She now holds a part-time job as a civil servant, with the position of administrator. She wishes she did not have to work, but bills must be paid and it is necessary. She will be able to retire in four and a half years, at which time she plans to start a small business selling hostas. She just doesn't have enough time right now to start this venture. Since it is a one-woman show, she has little time for rest! She has two children: a son and a daughter who are grown and on their own, but they have little interest in gardening. They help her when they can, especially with technical issues, but we all know this is a hobby you must love to do it correctly. Her father used to help tend the gardens before he passed and her mother helps potting up seedlings, but Christina handles the rest herself. Some of her hostas are planted at her mother's home, which is a short drive away. Her mother loves hostas too and keeps a lovely perennial garden. She also has many potted hostas at her daughter Anna's home, which is three doors down the road.





Christina's mother poses with *Hosta* 'Oh Cindy'.



Christina with her children in her garden.



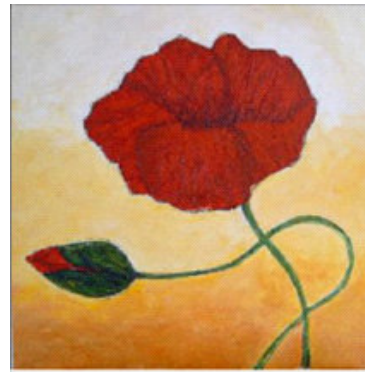
The covered "hostaport" where many of the potted hostas are displayed.

Gütersloh, Germany is located in planting hardiness zone 7a. The region is comprised of a variety of soil types, from the loamy farmlands to the forest where soil can be hard pan and nutrient poor acidic heather soil, called podzolic. In the area where Christina resides, the soil is sandy, which is not ideal for hostas. She has two wells that deliver iron- rich water and supply the automatic sprinklers installed in the gardens. The water sometimes leaves brown spots on the leaves if rain is not plentiful and she must rely on sprinklers alone. Christina must also hand-water many of the potted hostas, since they require more water than if planted in the ground. She fertilizes her hostas with Osmocote and liquid fertilizer, which is especially important for potted hostas that rely on the limited soil in their container for their nutrients. She battles slugs, snails and weevils with pelletized bait, and can often be found outside in the evening with a flashlight, hand-picking them off her hostas. She finds it effective to use microorganisms to strengthen the hostas and neem oil to deter the pests. She labels her hostas with sticks bearing the names on labels, and she maintains an Excel spreadsheet recording the names of her hostas, origin and year of purchase. She admits that it is often difficult to locate a particular hosta variety since they are not permanently located in the ground. Pots get moved and shuffled often and the records become inaccurate, requiring an inventory. Inventories take time to record, and it's just not possible while she's working and trying to hybridize. Christina finds her biggest challenge is finding the time she needs to water, cross, grow and divide her collection of hostas and her garden. She doesn't like mowing the lawn or cutting the hedges and shrubs, as it takes precious time away from her hostas. Another annoyance is those pesky late spring frosts that we also suffer here in the States. It seems wherever we live in this small world, we share common gardening problems! Her future plans include reducing the number of perennials she has planted and filling that space with shelves to display her potted hostas.

The winters in Gütersloh can be challenging, very similar to our weather here in the Northeast. Because the majority of her hostas are potted, Christina does not have the space in an unheated enclosure to protect them all. To prepare for winter, she simply removes any saucers and places the pots directly on the ground, whether it be pavement or soil, stacked closely together. This simple task is no easy feat, with thousands of individual pots to move. If they have a turbulent winter, where temperatures and precipitation fluctuate, some of the potted hostas may not survive the winter freeze and thaw cycles, even though many of them are underneath the covered "hostaport", which used to be a carport. Christina admits she has lost quite a few potted hostas to this

weather pattern but believes that if they died then they were not very hardy and therefore not garden worthy in her opinion. She also noted that she has not had any issues with voles infiltrating the pots directly on the ground over the winter. She finds this seasonal practice quite effective, proclaiming, “Survival of the fittest!”

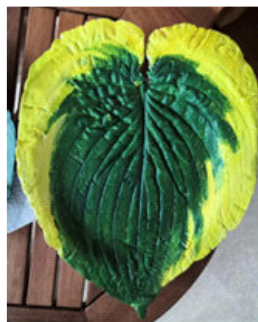
For camaraderie and to share the love of hostas, Christina has joined the Dutch Hosta Society and a local group called Gesellschaft der Staufenf Freunde (translated: Society of Perennial Plant Friends), in which she is not active. She also meets with fellow “hostimists” that she met on Facebook in the Hostafreunde group. She enjoys hosting gatherings in her gardens and visiting other gardens, when time permits. Her favorite public garden is the Kirstenbosch National Botanical Gardens located in Cape Town, South Africa. She enjoys playing table tennis with her athletic club DJK Avenwedde, acrylic painting and painting the hosta leaves that she casts in concrete from her own collection. During the winter months when the gardens are dormant, which is generally around November, Christina vacations and sows hosta seeds. Thousands of them! She has visited the States before, and would love to attend an AHS Convention, but they are held during the growing season, and she does not have anyone able to care for her potted hostas while she would be away. Christina enjoys visitors and invites any of her friends, whether local or Facebook friends from overseas, to contact her if they would like to visit.



lippy 80x80



rose 40x80



Examples of the hosta leaves that Christina casts in concrete and then hand-paints to resemble the model.

Above, acrylic paintings created by Christina.

More photos of Christina’s paintings can be found on this webpage link.

[http://www.brinkmann-acrylmalerei.de/html/blumen\\_2.html](http://www.brinkmann-acrylmalerei.de/html/blumen_2.html)

In 2012, when social media was just getting started, Christina joined an online hosta forum. She became friendly with many hosta enthusiasts near her, including Jan van den Top from the Netherlands. One discussion on the forum addressed the idea that their group should hold a competition aimed at growing the best hosta seedling and Jan donated streaked hosta seeds for the event. Streaked hostas were a rarity at this time, and seeds from them were even rarer. Christina had experience growing perennials from seed in her garden and decided to give sowing hosta seeds a try. When she saw the seedlings that she had grown, she quickly became addicted and began purchasing hosta seeds from many successful hybridizers all around the world. It wasn’t long before she was hand-pollinating and crossing special varieties to create her own hybrids. She loves streaked hostas but quickly learned she also prefers varieties with long leaves, and she set out to create some of her own. As she successfully hybridized new hosta varieties, she longed to create varieties that were also hardier. Tetraploid hostas are varieties that have four sets of chromosomes, unlike the more common diploid hostas with just two sets, which makes them hardier. Flow cytometry, a DNA analysis technique, is the most accurate method for



testing a hosta. This technique measures the amount of DNA in a cell sample and can determine if a plant is diploid, tetraploid, or a ploidy chimera, and it is performed in a lab. She knew from discussions with other hosta hybridizers that tetraploid hostas have thicker leaves, making them more resistant to sun exposure and frost, a more compact form with shorter roots, making them sturdier and less prone to damage, stronger color and larger flowers making them more beautiful and they seem to have greater resistance to pests such as slugs. She decided then that her new goal was to create streaked tetraploid hostas with long leaves. In 2015, she discovered that her *Hosta* 'Twilight', which is a tetraploid, had sported a streaked division. She immediately began cross-pollinating its flowers, and she considers this the beginning of her own assumed tetraploid line of hostas, as this genetic trait is passed on in its seeds. Her new goal is to introduce red shades into her streaked tetraploid line. When asked if there was any subject she would like to see discussed in future publications, she said she would like to see the topic of hybridizing hostas and genetics discussed using easily understandable terminology and language.

In 2015, the social media world had expanded, and Facebook opened doors across the world for its users. Christina created a profile and began meeting new hosta enthusiasts and learning all she could about hostas. Her Belgian friend Rik Desmedt introduced her to Danny van Eechaute who expressed an interest in seeing some of her seedlings introduced through tissue culture. Christina was very excited about this venture and decided to adopt the moniker "German" for naming her tetraploid hosta introductions and "Chris" for the others. She currently has approximately 100 varieties introduced through worldwide hosta vendors and has become one of the premiere hosta hybridizers of these days, with new varieties introduced each year. She holds one hosta sale online each year (she calls it Nachtagesschau) on her Facebook hosta groups Hostafreunde and Chris' Samlinge, Streaker und Sorten. She will also sell to friends who contact her directly, but only those in Europe. It is very difficult to ship plants overseas and she cannot. We will have to settle for purchasing her introductions through the various hosta vendors that offer them for sale. A few of her worldwide introductions include *Hosta* 'German Yellow Dragon', 'German Sundown', 'Chris' Darkest Purple', 'Chris' A lalalala long' and 'German Jackpot', which is Christina's favorite of her own creations. She likes this one the best because it is a streaked tetraploid with red petioles that bleeds up into the leaf. She finally created her goal, and this is it. Now she is trying to hybridize with it to create longer leaves, and perhaps some misting! Her favorite hosta that is not her own is the streaked sport of *H. 'Skywriter'*. Christina's best advice to new hosta gardeners is that you shouldn't buy too many hostas with a lot of white in them because they can be difficult to grow and, if you choose to buy them anyway, to select ones that are tetraploids because they are hardier.



Above, *H. 'German Yellow Dragon'*.



Above, *H. 'Chris' A lalalala long'*.



Above, *Hosta 'German Sundown'*.

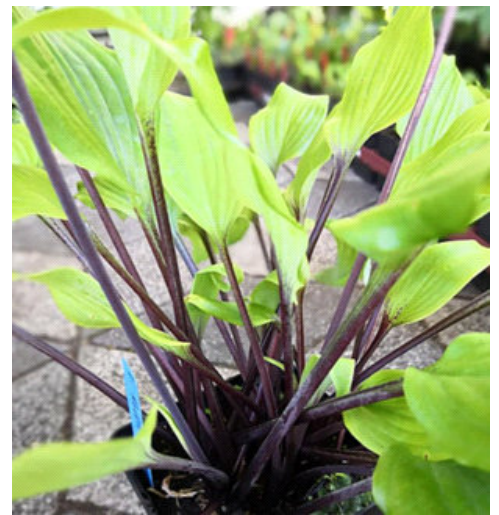




Above, *H.* 'Chris' Fire in My Soul'.



Above, *H.* 'Twilight' (streaked sport). This is the streaked tetraploid that Christina used to begin her "German" line of hostas. She no longer uses it because its seedlings are better than it now.



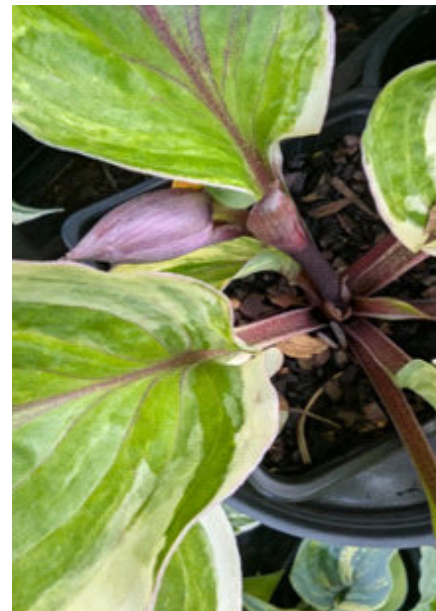
Above, *H.* 'Chris' Darkest Purple', with its blossoms pictured below.3.08



Above Christina's favorite hosta that is not her own is the streaked sport of *H.* 'Skywriter'. It was a gift from a dear friend.



Above, *H.* 'Chris' Bleeding Heart'.



Above, *H.* 'German Jackpot' is Christina's favorite of her own creations.



Above, *H.* 'Chris' Really Phat'.

Christina moderates two pages on Facebook including a group dedicated to her introductions. Even though she lives in Germany and her primary language is German, Christina also speaks fluent English, Latin and a bit of French. Much of what she posts is in English, so many more than her countrymen can understand her posts. There is also a neat feature on Facebook that allows you to immediately translate what has been written to English. Despite the miles between our countries, our common interests bring us together. Once again, the phrase "Hostas are the friendship plant" has been proven true, because there is no other reason that we would have met each other. Besides speaking different languages at home, and the fact that while we are enjoying dinner it is nearing midnight in her home, we lead very similar lives and share the same gardening climate, issues and goals. There is also the fact that many of us grow Christina's hosta originations in our own gardens! So, if you're not already connected on Facebook, consider sending



that friend request. She has created a website ([www.hostaholic.de](http://www.hostaholic.de)) but there is no content on it yet and it will not go live before next winter. When completed, the purpose of the site will be to display pictures of her hosta originations and to teach visitors about tetraploid hostas, and the benefits of growing and breeding with them. When she has retired from civil service, she might add a web shop.

The links to her Facebook pages are here:

Christina Brinkmann

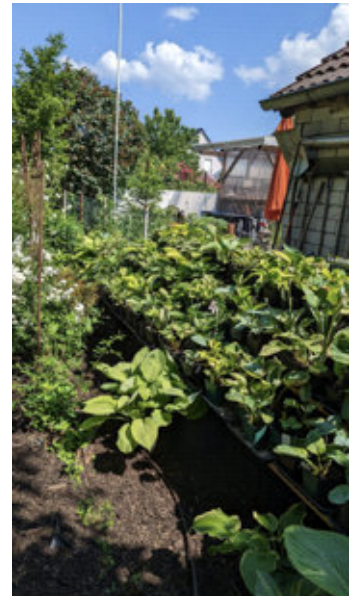
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Chris' Sämlinge, Streaker und Sorten

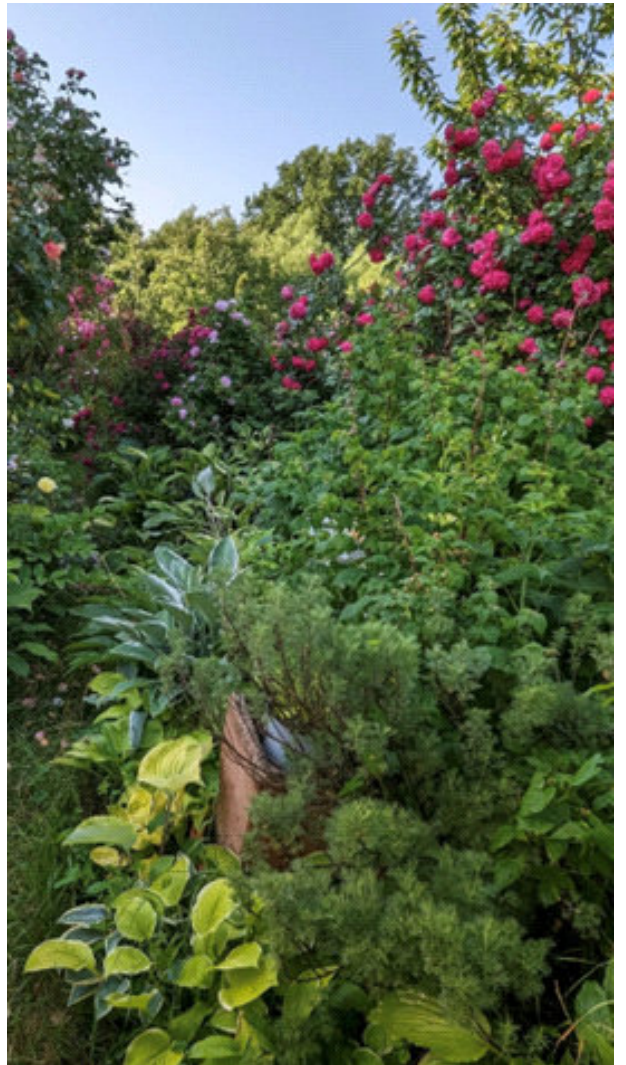
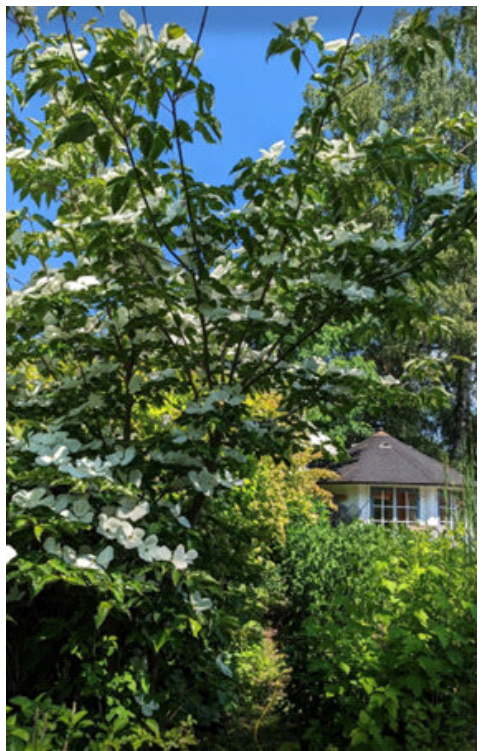
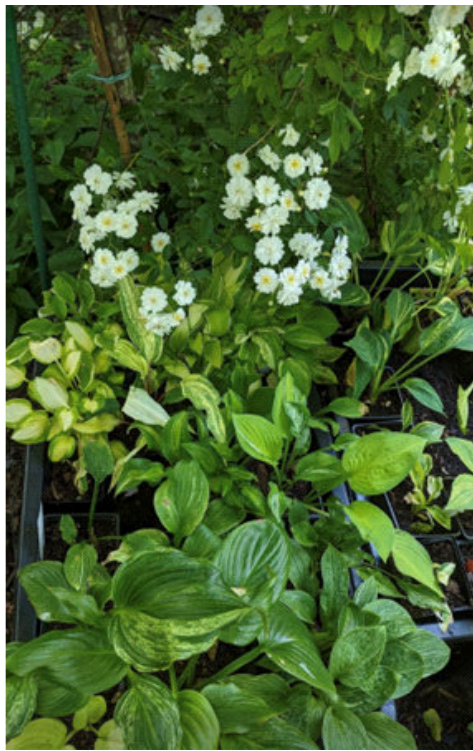
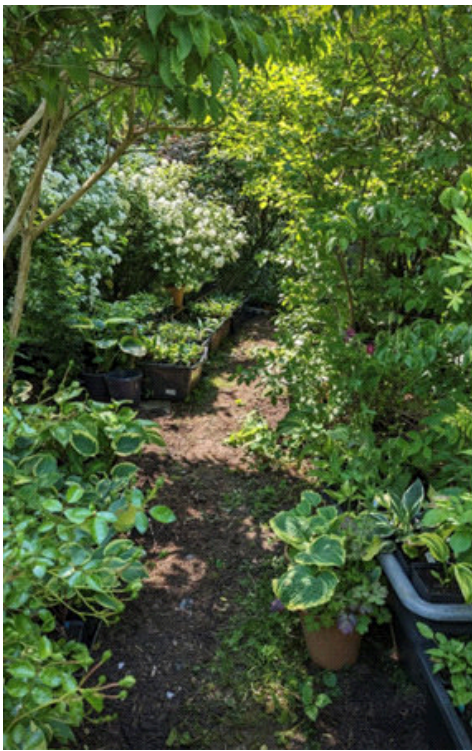
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Most of us will never have the opportunity to visit Christina and her gardens, so she is sharing a photographic journey through her garden with us. Enjoy the scroll!

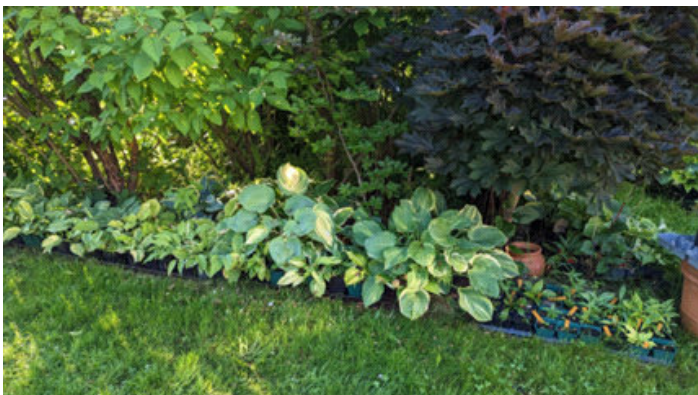
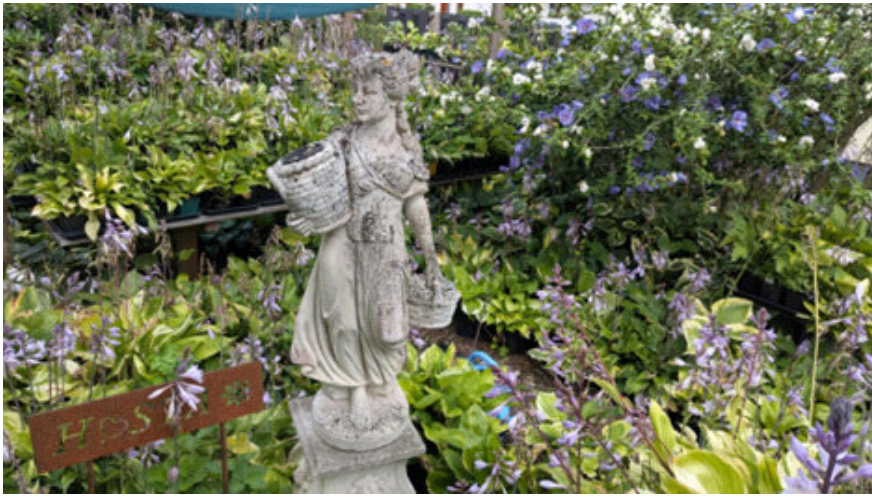
(Please note: Names of individual hostas shown are usually printed with the photos in this column. Because most of her hostas are potted and moved often, it is difficult to identify those in a photo and names will not be provided. If you MUST know a name, please contact Christina.)



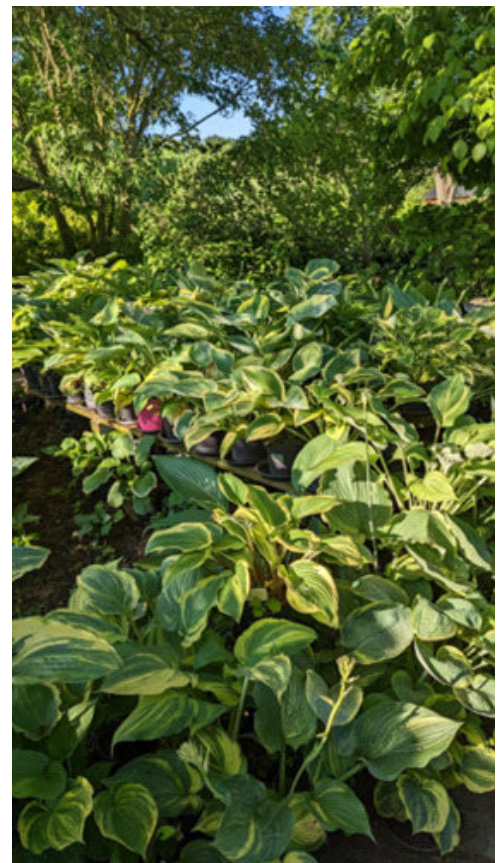
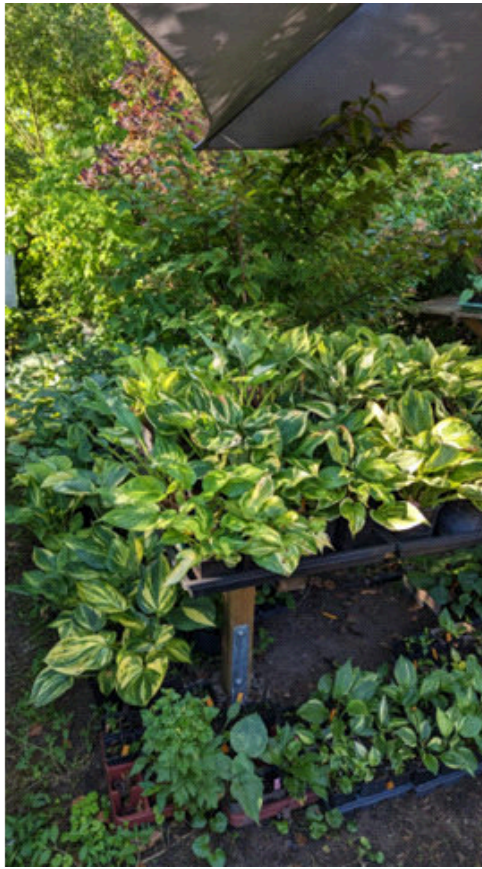
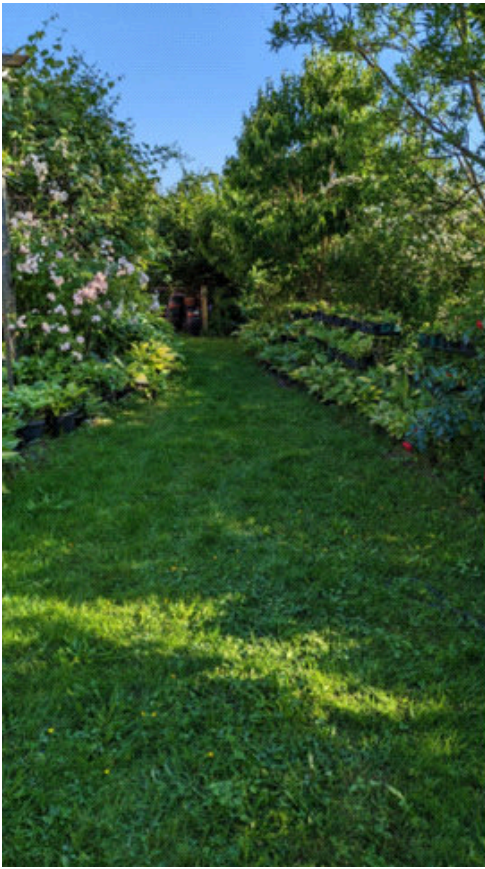




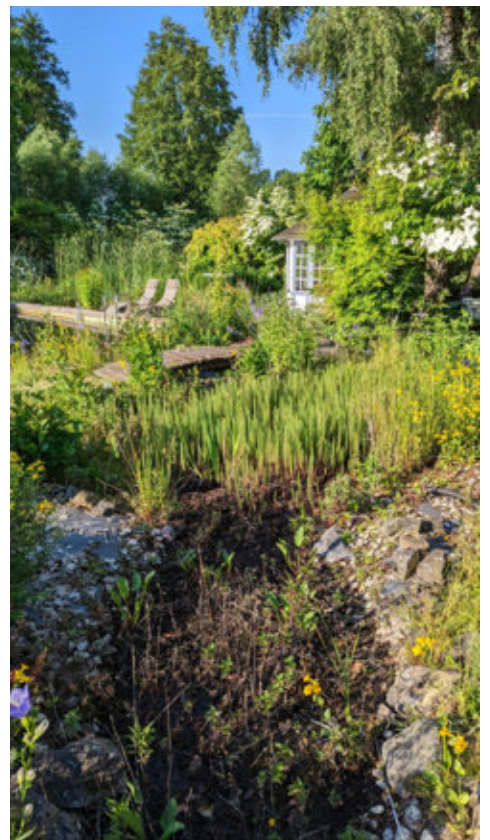
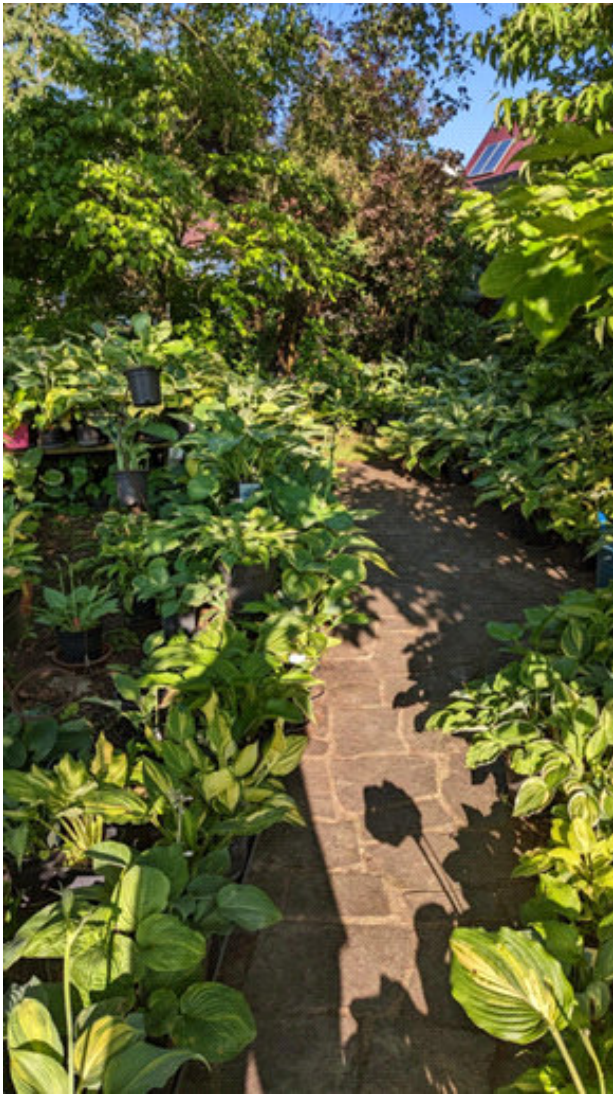




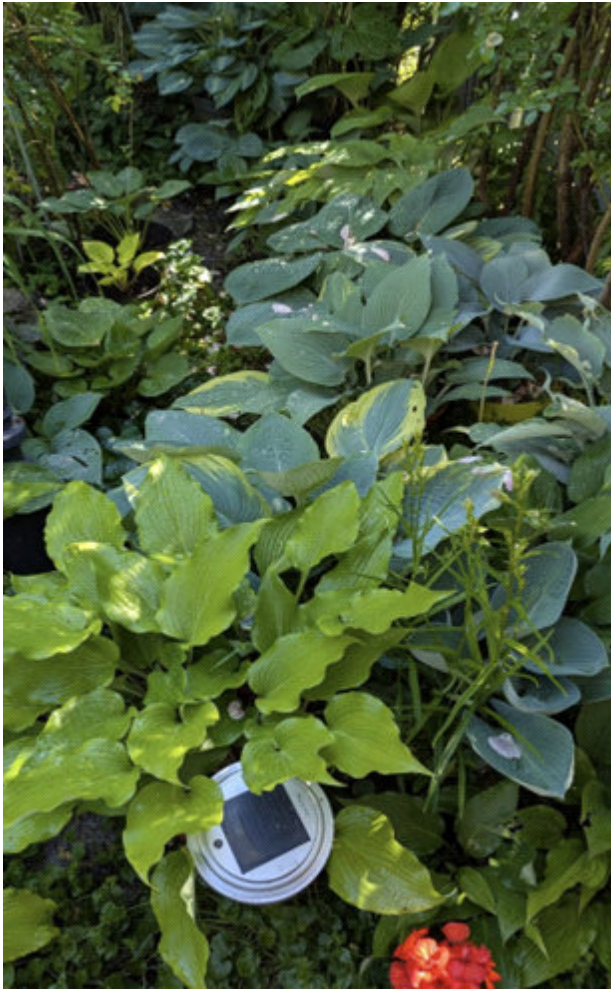




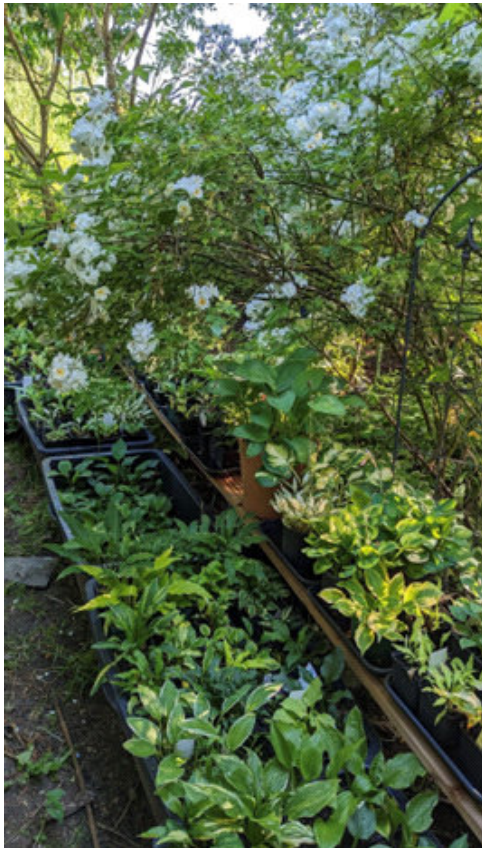




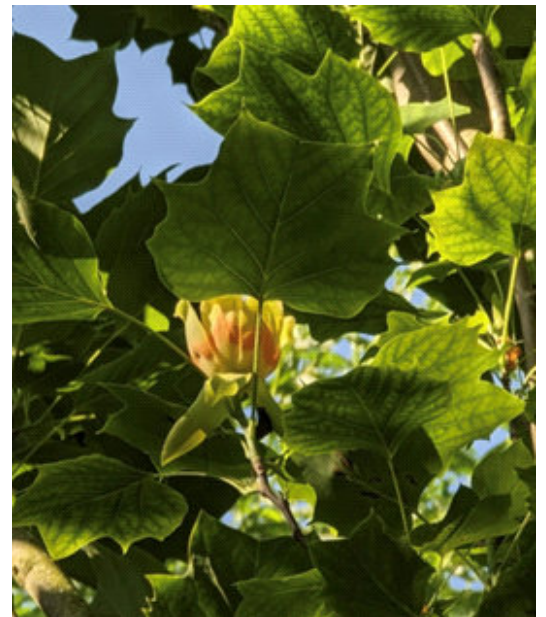




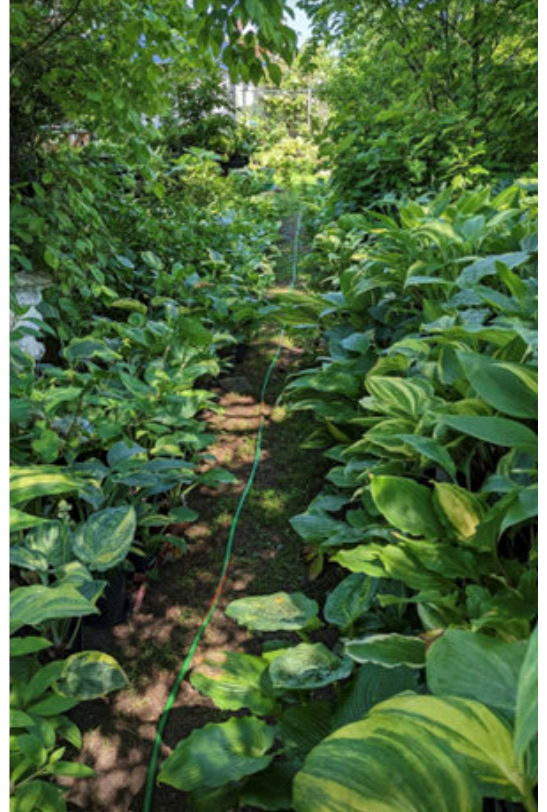




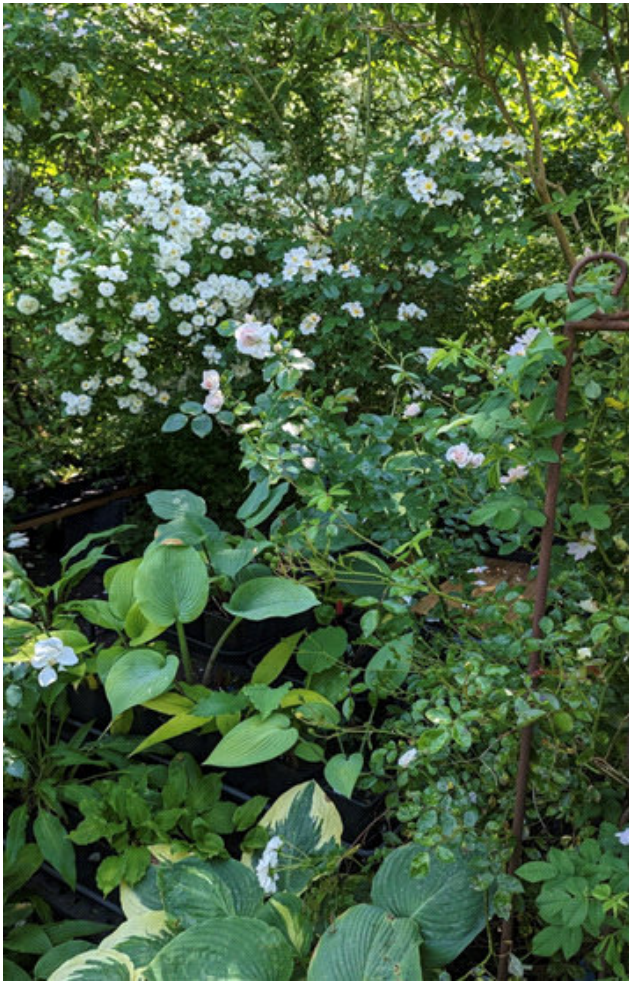
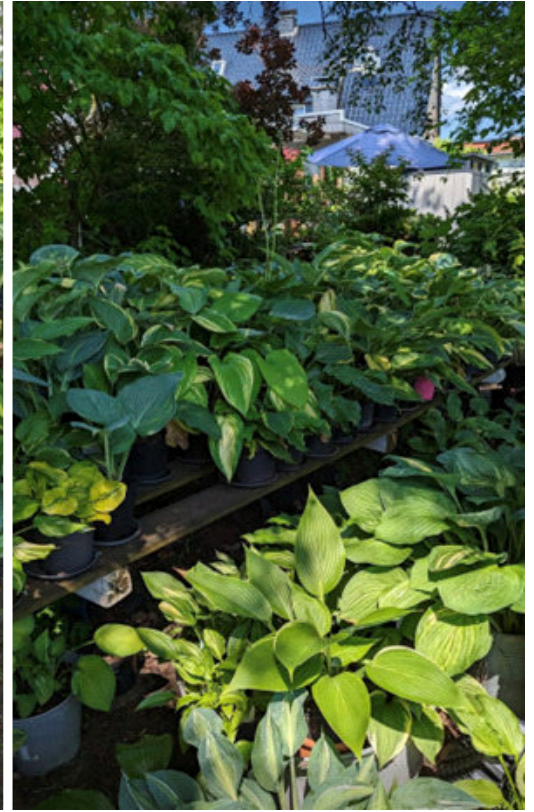




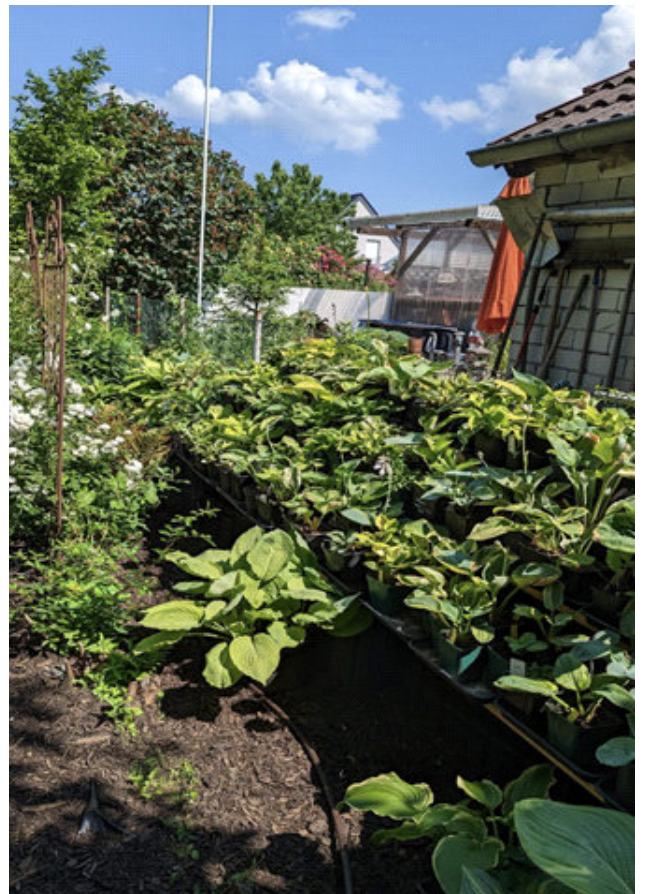
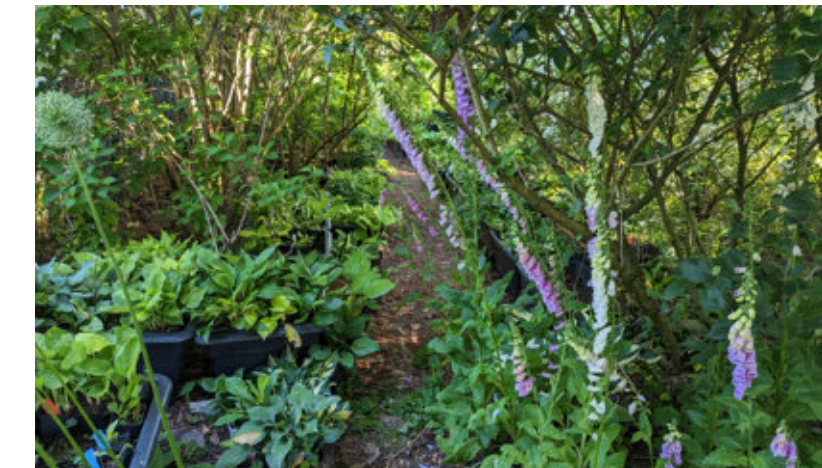




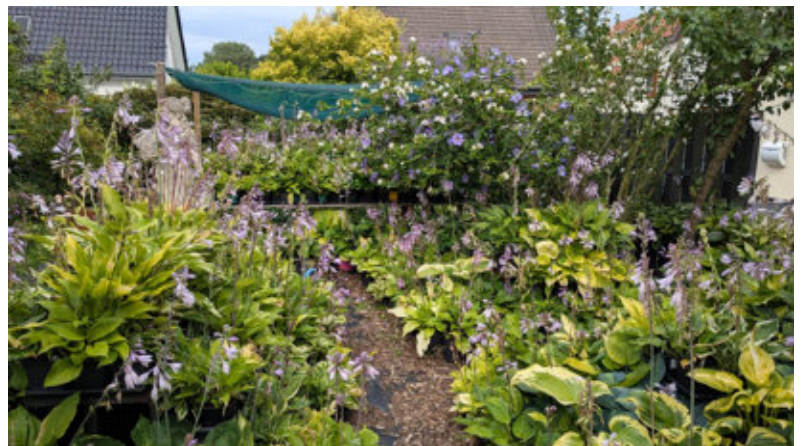
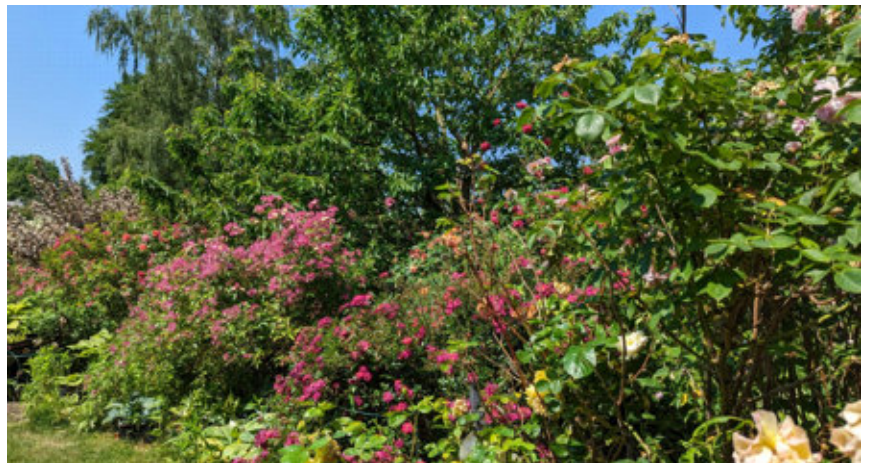
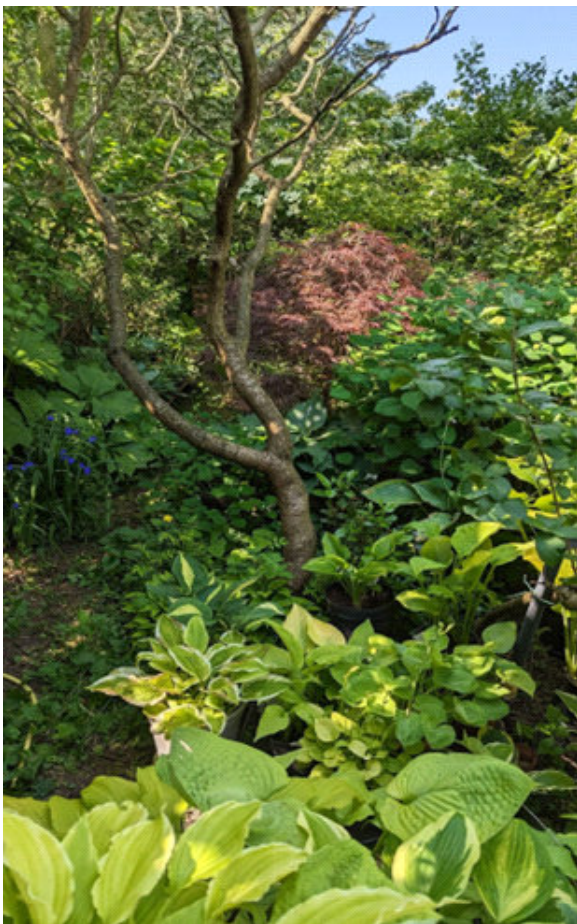
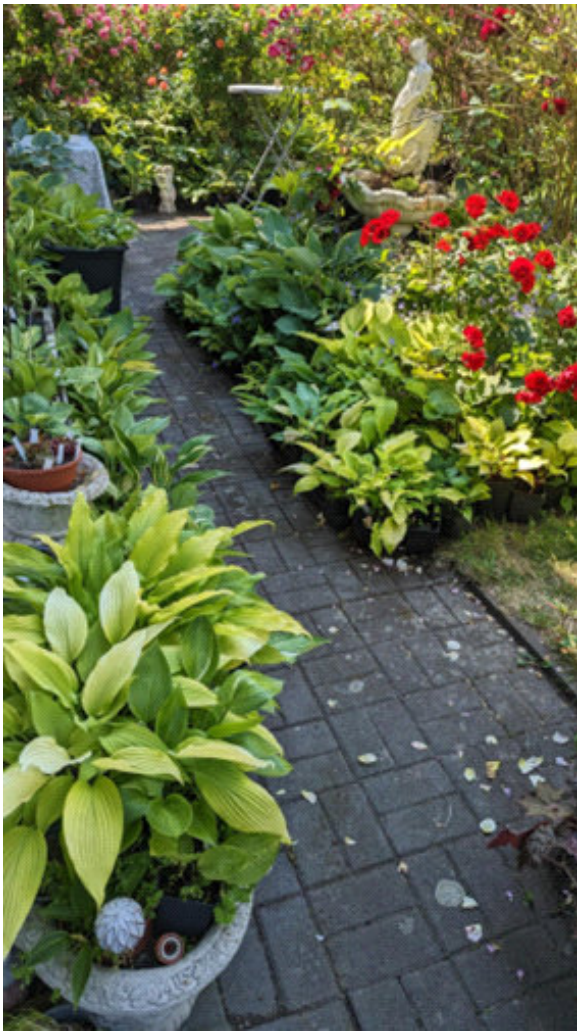




















Christina sows each variety of hosta seeds in a separate tray. Each tray is covered in plastic under lights that stay on 24/7. When the seedlings are big enough, the plastic is removed, and the first cull is completed. A cull is when seedlings that do not display the traits you desire are discarded. Seedlings that survive the final cull are planted into individual pots and are moved outside to grow in true light once threat of frost has passed.



Christina sows thousands of seeds each November. The first cull generally occurs in January. Since space is a major factor, she must stay focused on her goal and cull any seedling that doesn't meet the criteria. Only a few hundred seedlings survive the final cull to be granted precious space outside.



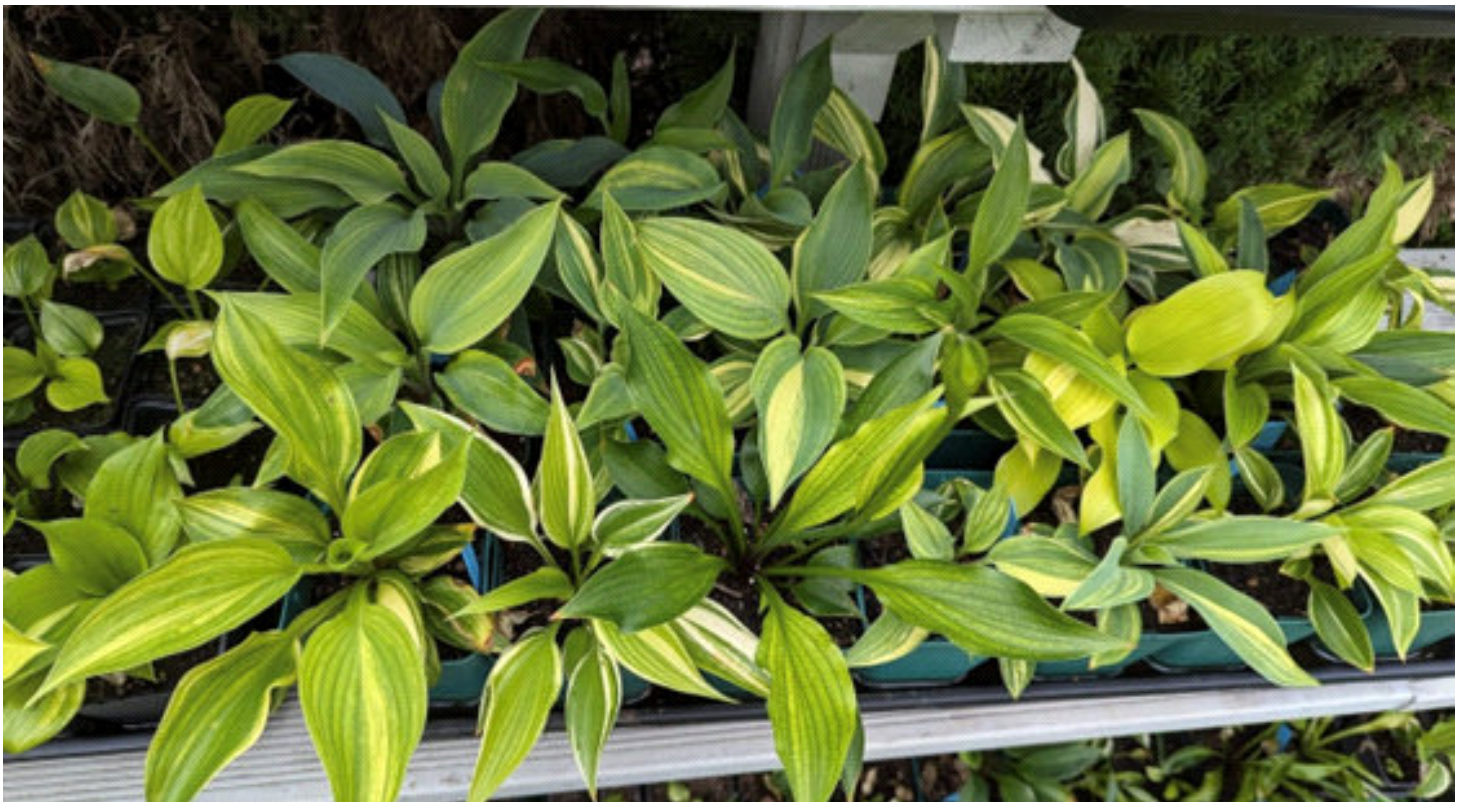




Threat of frost has passed in May in hardiness zone 7a. New seedlings that have survived the final cull are moved to the shelves underneath the shade cloth in the growing area. Here, they are further evaluated and may still be culled. Sometimes these culs are shared with members of her group or are planted in the gardens of family and friends because they have merit, just don't meet the goal. Only perhaps 100 seedlings are over-wintered to emerge naturally the following spring. Some will be used for breeding purposes and others are named and after years of garden evaluation, often sent into the tissue culture lab, for mass reproduction. These are the origination's we eventually purchase from a vendor to plant in our own gardens.











Above, there couldn't be a better place to meet with hosta friends than at a table in the garden!



Below, Christina with her late friend. Rik Desmedt (on the right), who introduced her to Danny van Eechaute (middle), a fellow hybridizer and collector of hostas, from Belgium. He convinced Christina to place some of her introductions into tissue culture production.



Christina is one of the bright stars in the hosta world. Above, she interacts with Marco Fransen, owner of Fransen Hostas and left with Sue and Chuck Andersen, owner of Mason Hollow Nursery in New Hampshire, to complete the circuit that brings her introductions into the marketplace and imported into the USA for distribution to vendors for gardeners to purchase.

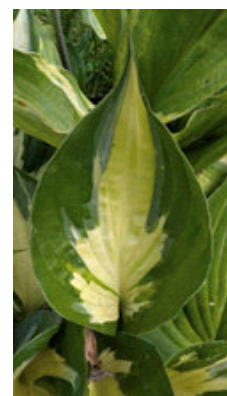
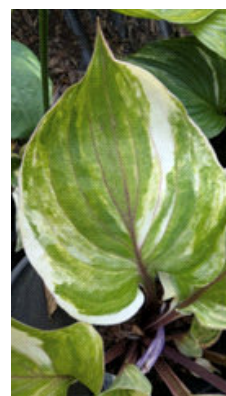
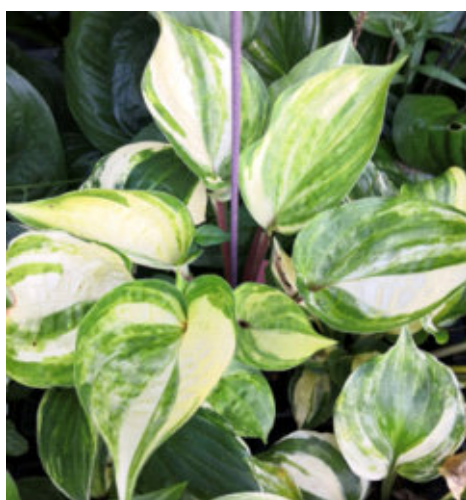
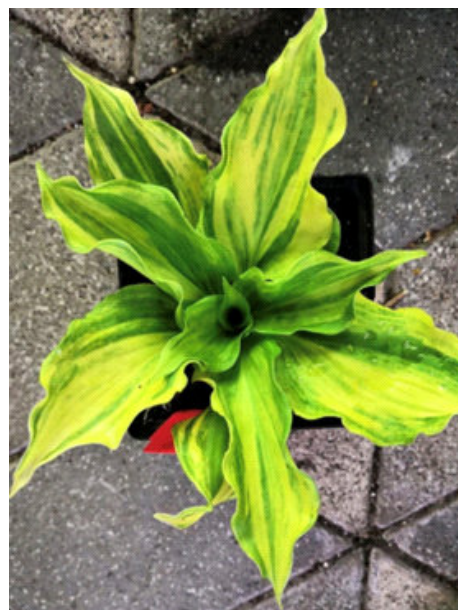
Right, Christina meets often during summer with her group of hosta friends, shown here on the bank of Christina's swimming pond. She learned that we consider the hosta to be "the friendship plant" and she began naming seedlings for gifts to her friends. She is proud to have adapted the term friendship hosta (translated to "Freundschaftshosta") for common use in Germany. If there are meetings, hosta friends often bring their own seedlings as gifts for others in friendship



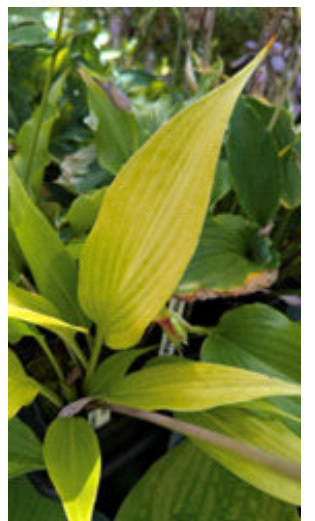
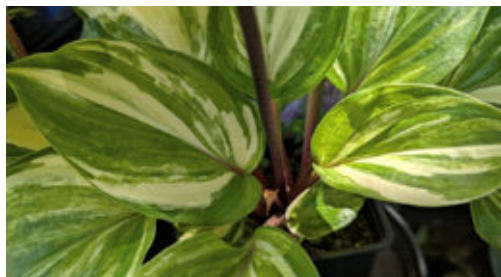
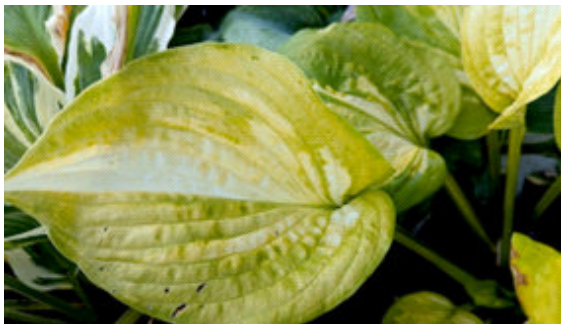
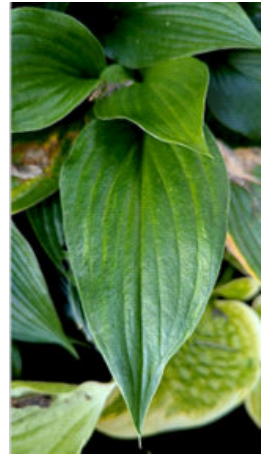
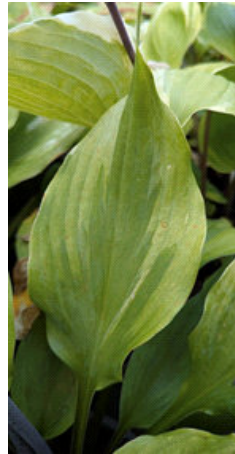
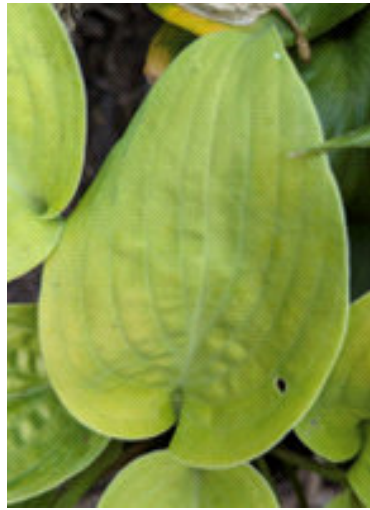


And now, to tease and excite you, a gallery of hosta leaves, all created by Christina Brinkmann!

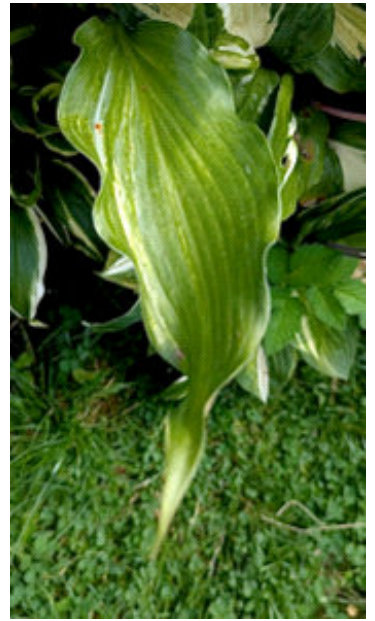
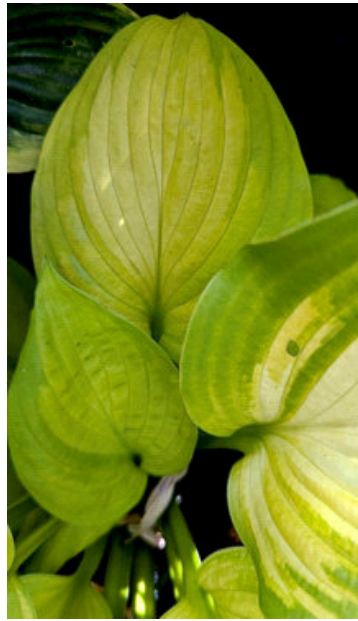
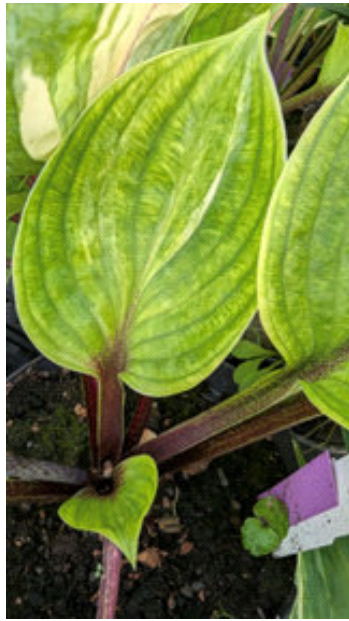
Most of these are descendants and members of the assumed tetraploid family that began with a streaked sport of *Hosta* 'Twilight', but there are a few other special ones too. Though many of them are not named yet, they will be named soon, and before long, you'll see them offered for sale and recall learning about the woman behind them.



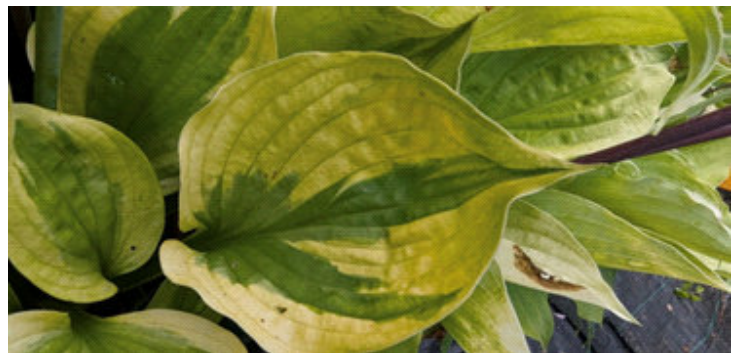




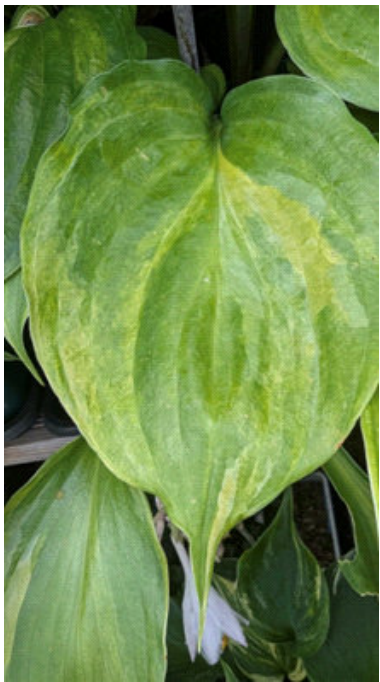




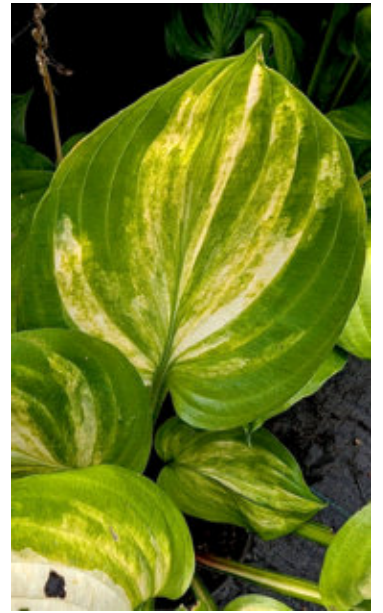
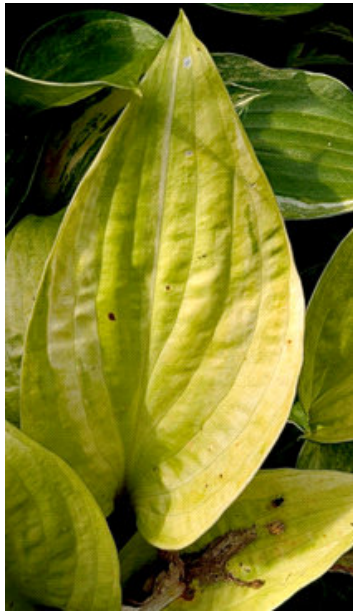




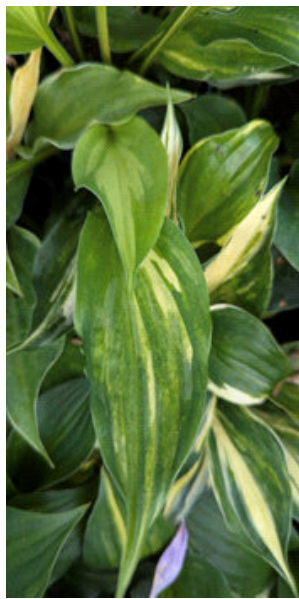
















This interview was conducted and compiled by Gail J Russo, Cedarville, NJ.

If you would like to see your garden or the garden of a friend featured in this publication, please contact Gail Russo at [Russo4@comcast.net](mailto:Russo4@comcast.net) for the application questionnaire.

All of the photos printed in this column have been provided by the featured gardener with their permission, unless otherwise noted, and are the property of the featured gardener, so contact them if you'd like permission to use a photo.

We are trying to bring lovely, remote gardens to the readers who would not be able to see them otherwise and get to know the person behind them.

International hosta gardeners are encouraged to join us. We would love to meet you and enjoy your gardens, but you must communicate in English.





# Vendor Spotlight

Gail Russo, Cedarville, New Jersey

## VENDOR SPOTLIGHT

**Bentley Gardens**  
1900 Peeksville Road  
Locust Grove, GA 30248

Business contact: Ed Thaubald  
Email: [Bentleygardens@gmail.com](mailto:Bentleygardens@gmail.com)  
Business phone: 678-779-9709



Atlanta, Georgia. “The City in the Forest” is its nickname, though modern-day Atlanta is nothing like that with congested roadways, overpopulation, and urban crime. But if you travel 30 miles to the south, you will find a suburb named Locust Grove with small town charm and a fabulous nursery named Bentley Gardens. Locust Grove is in planting hardiness zone 8a, which is likely the warmest climate that the majority of hostas can survive in, but Bentley Gardens is in fact a hosta nursery that has been in operation at the same location for the past 23 years! It is owned and operated by Ed Thaubald, who always has an interesting story to tell.





Young Ed Thaubald had absolutely no interest in plants or gardening. Rather, he was your typical varsity-letter jock in the sports of football, tennis, and soccer. In 1986, Ed enlisted in the United States Marine Corps and reported to boot camp at Parris Island, SC before shipping out to Japan. He was enlisted for four years, but six months after he returned home, he was recalled to active duty in the summer of 1990, to serve in Operation Desert Storm. He returned in 1991 and took a job in a pawn shop and then with UPS. He worked in a sorting facility at night and spent his days mowing lawns.

After a while, he moved to Florida where he found a job as a landscape coordinator. Florida's climate supports landscaping year-round, so there were always jobs available for hard-working individuals. He later took a job fertilizing lawns for Centex homes, a conglomerate construction firm that specialized in affordable home complexes in Florida. All that arduous work resulted in a case of sciatica, which prompted a move to Atlanta to seek care at a VA hospital. He decided after that to settle there, where he met Pamela Bentley Puckett.

In 2002, Pam hired Ed to design and build a nursery that they named Bentley Gardens. Pam introduced Ed to a local nurseryman in Conyers, GA named Bill Silvers. In his free time, Ed volunteered at Bill's nursery named Silvers-Elbert Nursery, which specialized in hostas and wholesale hosta liners. Ed learned all about growing hostas and the tissue culture process during his time with Bill. He had kept a portion of the nursery he built, to grow his own plants. Four years later, in 2006, Ed bought Pam out and moved the entire operation 30 miles south to Locust Grove, with permission to retain the business name. He formed a partnership with Bill Silvers. He started out offering six-packs of tissue cultured hosta liners that he sourced from Bill and eventually moved into full sized potted hostas. Because the climate is at the highest limit for most hostas, growing daylilies was a profitable decision to move towards, as they are much better suited to the climate and easier to grow.



Hosta liners in their infancy stage.



A daylily field at Bentley Gardens.



The internet was gaining popularity by this time, and more gardeners were purchasing plants online. Ed began listing plants for sale on eBay and the once popular Hosta Library auction site. Eventually, he opened a business website which now primarily offers hosta liners for sale, along with recently divided hostas and daylilies. He has a Facebook page and has created several Facebook groups, all aimed at selling his nursery stock. He has maintained his business successfully for the past 23 years by adapting to industry demand.



Above, tissue cultured hostas, also called hosta liners, are ready for sale.



Bentley Gardens also offers other perennials for sale such as the Heucheras pictured above.

To combat the excessively hot climate, Bentley Gardens is comprised of many shade structures that Ed built himself for the hostas. He keeps most of his hosta stock in nursery pots and divides them often. Most of his daylilies are planted in the ground across his four acres of land. He also offers cannas, elephant ears, tradescantia, succulents, and various perennials for sale at his nursery. To care for his nursery stock, Ed fertilizes with Osmocote and Miracle Grow (liquid) and he uses Round-Up to control the difficult weeds around the daylily fields. Bentley Gardens has had one additional employee for the past four years named Allison Goodman who is the primary weed-puller and she helps with digging, dividing, and preparing plants for auction and shipment. Ed spends approximately four to five hours per day in the nursery, and Allison works part-time 3 days a week in between caring for her family and home-schooling her children.



To prevent the spread of HVX, Ed conducts random testing and only purchases his stock from reputable sources. Since the majority of his hostas remain potted, there is little chance of ground cross contamination, and tools are regularly sanitized. Plant-lets



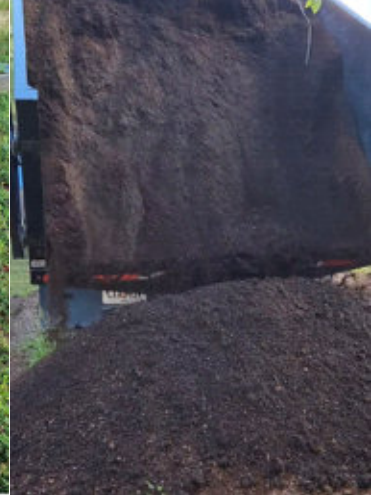
grown from seed are sourced in their first year from experienced seed growers and are grown to maturity in raised beds dedicated to this purpose. When all of them have been harvested and potted for sale, the raised bed is removed, relocated and filled with new grow mix for the next batch. The used soil is recycled to the daylily beds to prevent contamination of the next batch of seedlings. Ed purchased a bulk lot of utility knives so they would never need to use the same knife on different plants on dividing days, which saves time during daylight hours.



Inexpensive knives purchased in bulk serve as an added layer of HVX protection when dividing multiple clumps of hostas. No need to worry about sanitizing in between, since they only get used once before sanitizing them all.



Inexpensive frames form planting beds for hosta seedlings when filled with new soil. This method ensures seedlings have the best chance at being free from nematodes and viruses, while enjoying the full nutrition of fresh soil without any root competition.



The planting media delivered is comprised of aged pine bark and sand.





Right, young seedlings are grown in the raised beds in the shade house until mature enough to be sold, when they are transplanted into pots, as shown on the above.



Left, when all of the hosta seedlings are transplanted into pots, the soil in the raised bed is moved to the daylily growing field. New soil is loaded into the frames before the next crop of hosta seedlings are planted.

Allison also maintains a farm of her own named Gracious Goodness Homestead that includes plants and farm animals for personal use, so her time must be utilized as effectively as possible. When Ed decides to retire from the nursery business, Allison will be ready and able to take over with little disruption. Immediate future plans include acquiring more hosta varieties to sell, installing more shade coverings, and constructing raised beds to grow out the rare varieties. Ed is planning to make Bentley Gardens one of the premiere nurseries to purchase streaked hostas from.



There is one other product that Ed utilizes on hostas and offers for sale on his website. BAP-10 is a plant hormone, N-6-benzylaminopurine, used in hosta propagation to stimulate the development of new offsets (baby plants). It's applied to the crown of the hosta during the growing season so the plant can be divided and the roots grown out in individual pots for sale. It speeds up the propagation process by years. Ed has found that BAP is not effective on the daylilies, but when he introduced the process to his hosta stock, his profits skyrocketed because he had more plants to sell at no additional cost in a very short time. For hostas that have not or cannot be tissue cultured for mass production, it's a game changer, allowing a single plant to be divided into three to five divisions in a single year. This practice tosses the popular hosta saying "first year it sleeps, second year it creeps, third year it leaps" right out the window. In addition, the product is not overly expensive or difficult to apply, making it practical for the everyday gardener if they choose to propagate their plants quickly. If tissue culture production dwindles, BAP may be the answer for quicker mass reproduction.



Left, after BAP is applied to the leaves and crown of a hosta, new pips begin emerging approximately 6-8 weeks later. It should be applied before July in most climates to be effective.



Above, these are the 2 oz. bottles of BAP that you can purchase on the website, packaged to be received as shown with instructions and chemical data sheet.

Below, BAP was applied to the first hosta pictured. The second picture is the same plant 12 days later, with several new pips emerging. The third photo is 38 days after application where the pips have already become new divisions, leafing out and developing roots. These new plants can be divided off this season, quickly multiplying a variety for sales.





Bentley Gardens grows a small number of hostas from seed. However, for the past ten years they have been planting hundreds of daylily seeds and introducing daylily seedlings for Mike Halloran, from Ohio. There are a few varieties listed on the website for sale, but the majority of the daylilies must be selected and purchased on site while they are in bloom. Ed noted that he gives away more hosta seeds than he grows because he doesn't have the time to raise hosta seedlings germination to planting stage. The hostas and hosta liners that are listed for sale are shipped both bare-root and potted, depending upon the size, within the continental states for a \$10 shipping fee. They offer approximately 75 of their 100 varieties of hostas for sale. Bentley Gardens is inspected by the state of Georgia, and they hold a live plant license. Ed is also an active member of the Georgia Hosta Society.



Above, daylily seeds are sown in pots to germinate. Once the seedlings reach a viable size, they are transplanted in the growing field to reach maturity. Hundreds of daylilies are grown and evaluated annually, and Ed allows customers to select and purchase daylilies directly from the field.

Right, blossoms on unnamed daylily seedlings, hybridized by Mike Halloran and grown at Bentley Gardens. These will be named and registered this year and offered for sale next year.







Left, Allison is transplanting *Hosta* ‘Blue Mouse Ears’ liners into pots. These hostas are listed for sale on Etsy, Amazon, Ebay and on Bentley Gardens’ website.



Ed is packaging hosta liners to be shipped to a customer’s doorstep. They arrive in perfect condition to be planted in pots or in a garden.



Ed shows how a hosta will look when you receive it bare root through the mail.



Right, Ed is proudly displaying the healthy potted hostas offered for sale at Bentley Gardens. The majority of them will be shipped bareroot, with the rest being purchased while vending at events.



When asked if he had any interesting hosta stories to share, Ed fondly recalled his idea to start the “Streakin” series of hostas. He had a great number of streaked hosta seedlings that needed names to be marketable. He also had seedlings that were sent to him from growers in many different states. His first of the series is named *Hosta* ‘Streakin in Ohio’. Ed realized that this could be quite an opportunity for hobbyist seedling growers. He decided that anyone hoping their seedling could be the one that represents the state or area they live in should send the seedling to Bentley Gardens. Ed would grow the seedling to maturity, observing any characteristics that could make it worthy of representing a state



or area in the series. Of course, it must be a streaked variety, but it should also be a good grower, able to withstand demanding conditions to thrive in many planting zones and should be notably unique. If Ed decides it is worthy, it will receive the originator's state name with credit for origination going to the sender. Ed has named hostas in this series so far for Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Maine, Michigan, New Jersey and Ohio, as well as key areas such as Savannah. He invites anyone who resides in a state other than those to send him a candidate seedling. Once selected, Ed applies BAP to quickly multiply divisions for sale, maintaining its Originator's Stock (OS) status.



*H. 'Streakin in Florida'*



*H. 'Streakin in Ohio'*



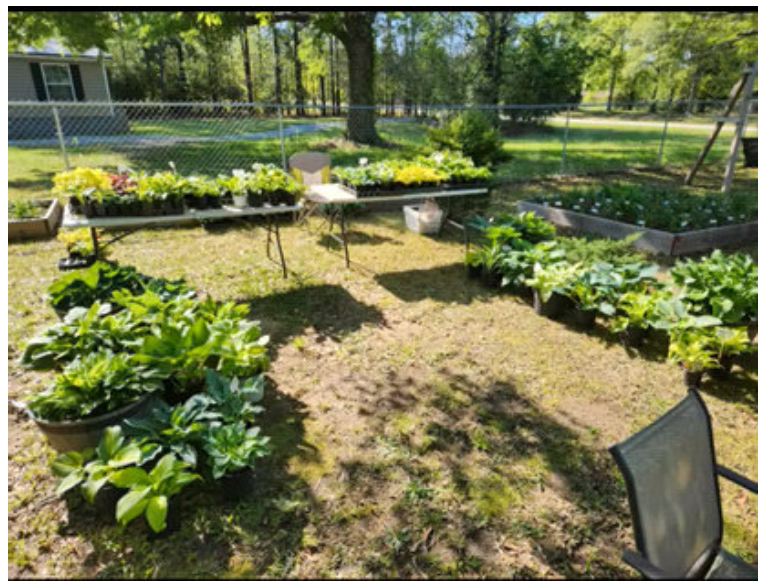
*H. 'Streakin in Alabama'*



*H. 'Streakin in Maine'*

*H. 'Streakin in Ohio'* was the first of the series, with other states and several key locations following. Ed has many new candidates for the series growing under evaluation in the raised beds. Contact him for details if you'd like to represent your state!





Above, Bentley Gardens set up for vending at local events.

Bentley Gardens does not have a display garden because most of the plants offered for sale remain potted. Most sales are conducted online through offers on one of the platforms. However, if you wish to visit Bentley Gardens to purchase plants, you can contact Ed for an appointment. Locals can find Bentley Gardens offering their nursery stock for sale at many venues in Georgia, such as local craft fairs or The Country Estate.

Since hostas and daylilies are seasonal crops that require a period of dormancy, Ed has a side hustle that pays the bills for most of the year. In his own words, Ed is a professional re-seller, primarily for Walmart. He routinely visits the local stores to purchase items to list for sale. He lists these items for sale on eBay, Etsy, Amazon and the Walmart online page. He is constantly packing, labeling and shipping goods, so he has become an expert at shipping orders and keeping records. He is busiest around the holidays, though there is a constant stream of business throughout the year. It's enough income to pay the bills and allows him to continue operating the nursery. Ed also is the administrator of several Facebook groups, where he shares his years of expertise and photos. You can find Ed's listings of plants, t-shirts and other assorted items across all of the links posted below.

### **Bentley Gardens website:**

[Bentley Gardens – Hostaliners & More! – Nationwide Shipping or Local Pickup](#)



## Bentley Gardens Facebook page:

<https://www.facebook.com/share/16m83VZ7zm/?mibextid=wwXIfr>

## eBay Store:

[https://www.ebay.com/str/bentleygardens?trksid=p2334524.m4084.l113337&fbclid=IwQ0xDSwLdb1pleHRuA2FlbQIxMQABHv6FIEEoBuoJ1Reo5w9\\_y1F9\\_AQswETHSXEvPc9CTmuyw8u2X7cpPHqFPguR\\_aem\\_NnjB-A\\_rD5EMVE6lwTLwtQ](https://www.ebay.com/str/bentleygardens?trksid=p2334524.m4084.l113337&fbclid=IwQ0xDSwLdb1pleHRuA2FlbQIxMQABHv6FIEEoBuoJ1Reo5w9_y1F9_AQswETHSXEvPc9CTmuyw8u2X7cpPHqFPguR_aem_NnjB-A_rD5EMVE6lwTLwtQ)

## Etsy Store:

<https://www.etsy.com/shop/HostaLiner>

## Walmart reselling list:

[https://www.walmart.com/global/seller/101177092?facet=brand%3AReebok&fbclid=IwQ0xDSwLdePxlHRuA2FlbQIxMQABHrF82zeU7wS83bF-OFTl-s7cKtezHLT-rJyL7k-eZey3t324ZXKNixO2rbeU\\_aem\\_acA7jaLYDO2G6d4t383q8g](https://www.walmart.com/global/seller/101177092?facet=brand%3AReebok&fbclid=IwQ0xDSwLdePxlHRuA2FlbQIxMQABHrF82zeU7wS83bF-OFTl-s7cKtezHLT-rJyL7k-eZey3t324ZXKNixO2rbeU_aem_acA7jaLYDO2G6d4t383q8g)

## Amazon Store:

[https://www.amazon.com/s?rh=n%3A7141123011%2Cp\\_4%3ABentley%2BG&ref=mh\\_bl\\_sl\\_s\\_ap\\_mw\\_7141123011&fbclid=IwQ0xDSwLei1JleHRuA2FlbQIxMQABHqWdiw8LCEsMgVLJ7kwUhgoay5Hq2RM6ORiVWCouzbmgCPxNmiJrdOrsdlc9\\_aem\\_alozBIuatVKMnWpC8eLhkQ](https://www.amazon.com/s?rh=n%3A7141123011%2Cp_4%3ABentley%2BG&ref=mh_bl_sl_s_ap_mw_7141123011&fbclid=IwQ0xDSwLei1JleHRuA2FlbQIxMQABHqWdiw8LCEsMgVLJ7kwUhgoay5Hq2RM6ORiVWCouzbmgCPxNmiJrdOrsdlc9_aem_alozBIuatVKMnWpC8eLhkQ)

Links to the groups and other pages on **Facebook** that Ed Thaubald administers:

## Ed Thaubald

<https://www.facebook.com/share/1EvarMiDpm/?mibextid=wwXIfr>

## Hostas and Shade Plants

<https://www.facebook.com/share/g/1Q7cZeazUo/?mibextid=wwXIfr>

## Fake Hostas

<https://www.facebook.com/share/g/1ChptRz6LC/?mibextid=wwXIfr>

## BAP for Hostas

<https://www.facebook.com/share/g/1C73BNadRn/?mibextid=wwXIfr>

## Daylilies, Daylilies and Daylilies

<https://www.facebook.com/share/g/15fZwrTp4v/?mibextid=wwXIfr>

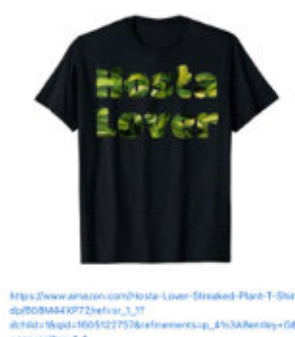
## Daylily seedlings

<https://www.facebook.com/share/1EpgE1MiHu/?mibextid=wwXIfr>

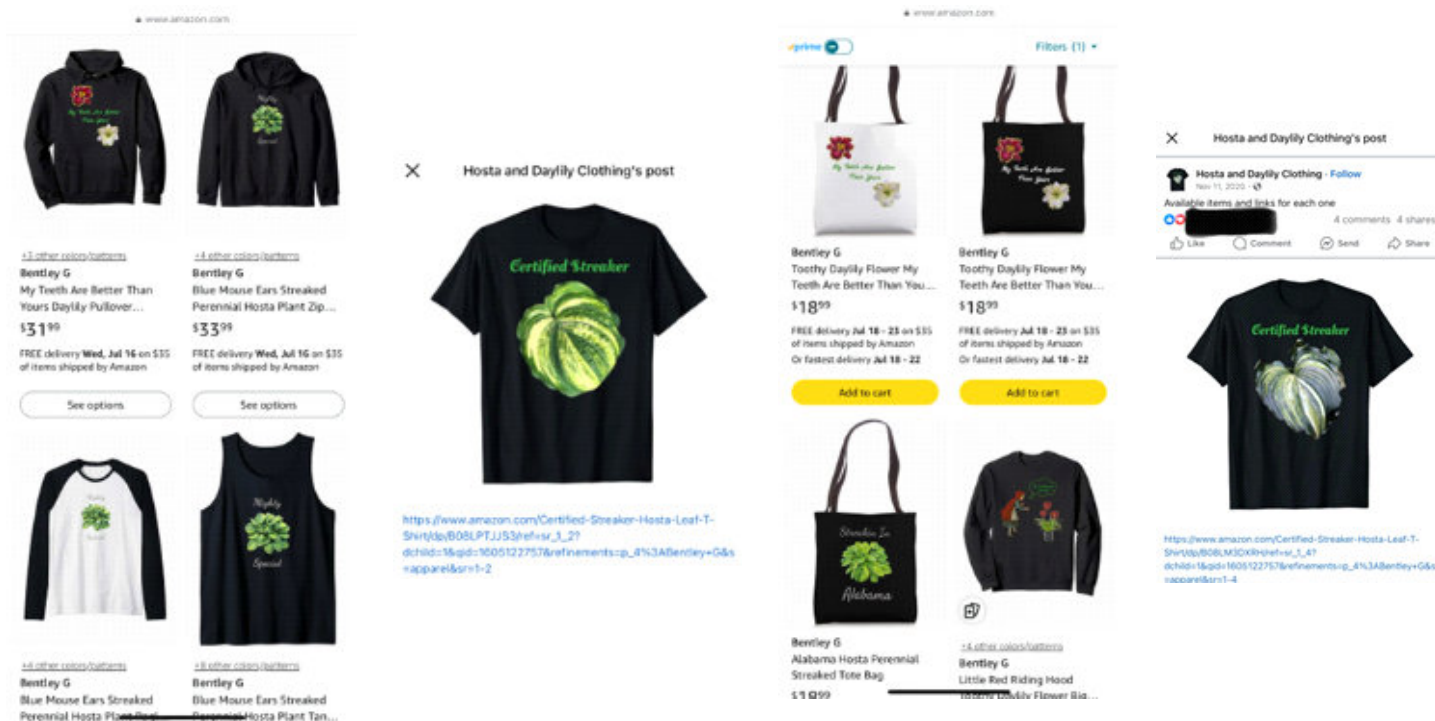
## Hosta buyers feedback

<https://www.facebook.com/share/g/1Pd9JAsVGz/?mibextid=wwXIfr>

Here are a few samples of the garden-related merchandise you can purchase from his store links.







Ed has learned from talking with hosta enthusiasts that many are afraid to try using BAP and some are afraid to purchase an expensive hosta for fear that they will kill it and lose their money. He is offering to grow your hostas for you! If you have a challenging hosta variety that you want to grow bigger, faster than normal, contact him. If you're afraid your temperamental hosta won't make it through your winter, he will keep it alive for you until spring. Forty years of hosta experience is at your fingertips! Contact him for details.



And now, Ed invites you to virtually tour the nursery to see what he has to offer for sale both online and on site.







*H.* 'Agent of Chaos'



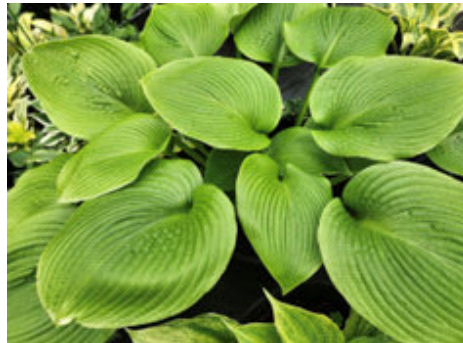
*H.* 'Jeffrey'



*H.* 'Tis the Season'



*H.* 'Newport Creamery'



*H.* 'Hollywood MadHatter'



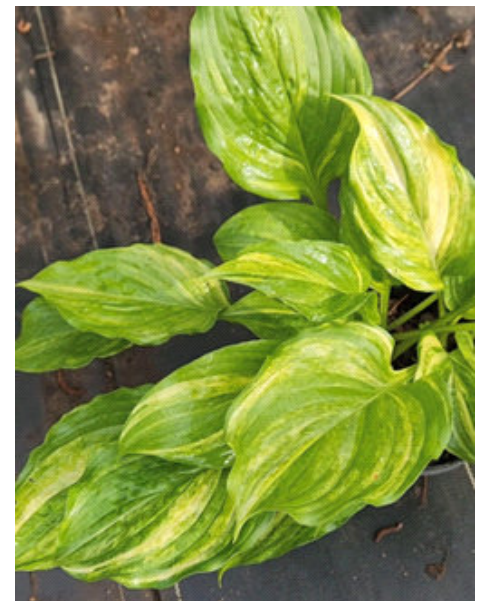
*H.* 'Hollywood Mad Hatter'



Ed is holding a tray that he sells on his website.



Hosta seedlings are grown in raised beds for evaluation, until they are mature enough to be named and sold.



This is the first streaked hosta seedling that Ed grew himself, which remains unnamed.

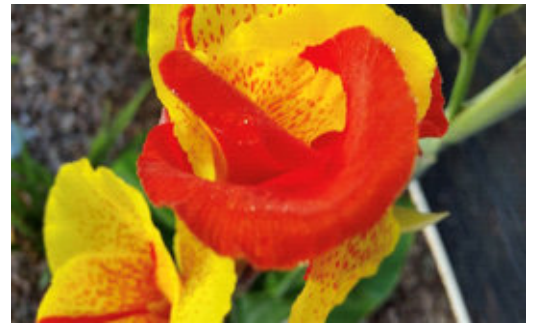




*H. 'Misty Gold'* is Ed's favorite hosta variety.



*H. 'Gunther's Prize'*



A sample of other plants offered for sale, clockwise from top left:

Confederate Jasmine (*Trachelospermum jasminoides*), native Azalea, *Canna x generalis* 'Cleopatra', *Colocasia esculenta* 'Redemption', Tiger Lilies, *Colocasia esculenta* 'Pharaoh's Mask', Canna leaves, *Coleus* 'Vern's Vulcan', and *Colocasia esculenta* 'Black Coral'.



Tiger Lilies are gigantic, 18" round, they still grow to 5 1/2ft





*H. 'Claude's Impression'*



*H. 'Jungle Cascade'*



*H. 'Artist Tapestry'*



*H. 'Foxfire Bamm Bamm'*



*H. 'Confused Angel'*



*H. 'Fickle Blue Genes'*



*H. 'Totally Awe Sum'*



*H. 'Winter Lightning'*

*Polygonatum  
odoratum  
'Fireworks'*



Left, potted  
hostas and  
liners awaiting  
sales.



*Hosta 'Montana Moonshine'*. Ed was  
working for Silvers-Elbert when this  
variety was originated and remembers  
selling it in a six-pack to customers.



Blossoms on *H.*  
'Marvelous May'

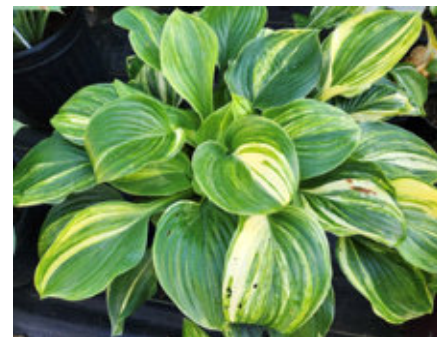




Allison transplants seedlings into a raised bed in the Georgia summer heat. She tries to keep cool with her sun hat and cold thermos!



*H. 'Puddles'*



*H. 'Rounded Corners'*



*H. 'Winnepago Cyclone'*



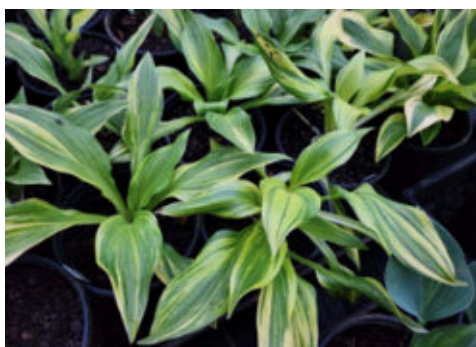
*H. 'Cassini'*, an open pollinated seedling from *H. 'Mother of Dragons'*.



*H. 'Winnepago Raptor'* will be available for sale in 2026.



*H. 'Brave Attempt'*



*H. 'Marvelous May'*



*H. 'White Feather'* showing its early spring coloring.



*H. 'Wild Angel'*





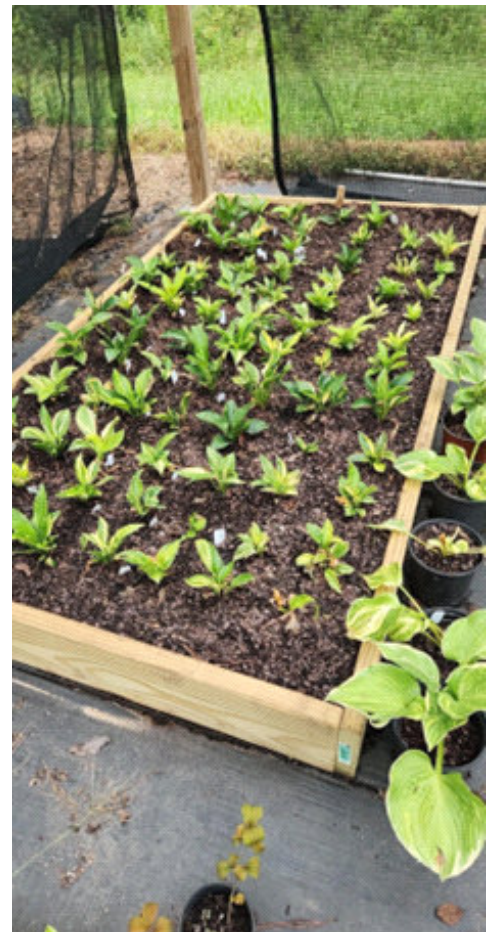
An empty field in the hot Georgia sun becomes shaded for hostas with the construction of shade covers.



Lumber is anchored in the ground in cement and attached overhead to form a frame for the lightweight shade cloth. Ed uses 50% shade cloth.



The shade house in spring looks desolate, but soon is very colorful with pips and fresh growth emerging. Located in planting hardiness zone 8a, they do not experience frequent thaw and freeze cycles and potted hostas can remain in place for the winter.







*H.* 'Don Quixote'



*H.* 'Ice Age Trail'



*H.* 'Blue Suede Shoes'



*H.* 'Kiwi Highlights'



*H.* 'Garden Gate'



*H.* 'Hollywood Silly Wabbit'



*H.* 'Polychrome'



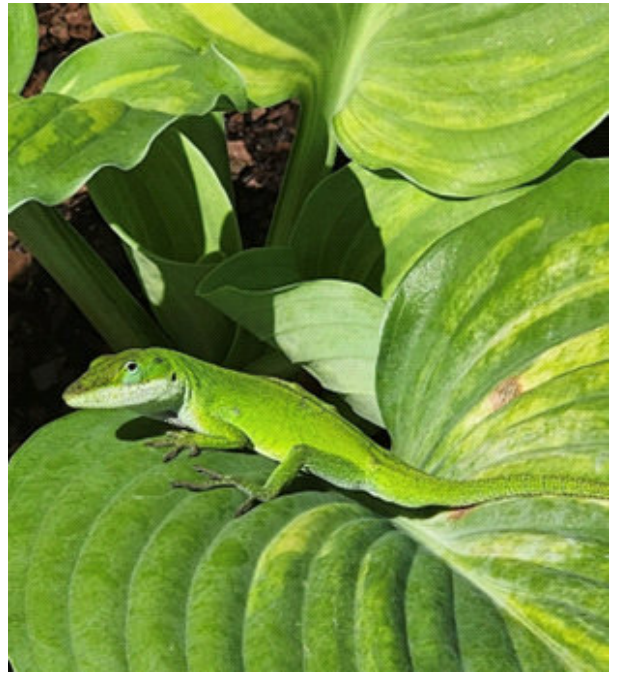
*H.* 'How About That'



*H.* 'Winnebago Camper'



Sport of *H.* 'Maui Surf'.



Native to the area, the green anole (*Anolis carolinensis*) is a common sight, known for its ability to change color from green to brown and control insect and slug populations. It is harmless to humans.



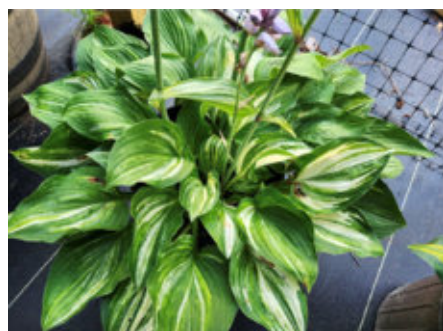




*H.* 'Hollywood The Gambler'



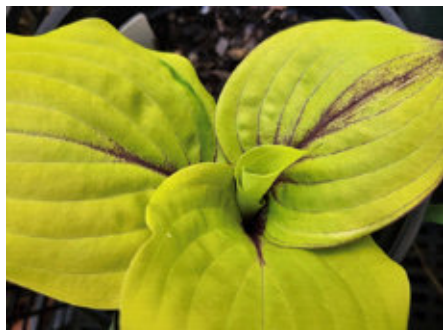
*H.* 'Maui Surf'



*H.* 'Special Forces'



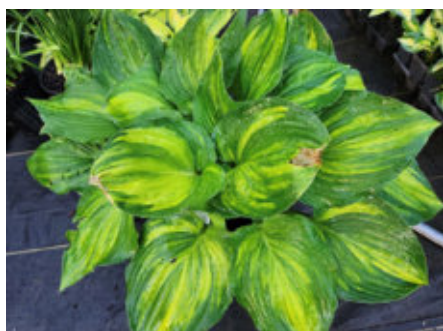
*H.* 'Winnebago Ope'



*H.* 'Peach Brandy'



*H.* 'Athena'



*H.* 'Can't Touch This'



*H.* 'Winter Thunder'



Sport of *H.* 'Lakeside Zing  
'Zang'



An open pollinated seedling from  
*H. montana* 'Chirifu Oba'.



*H.* 'Mighty Special' is Ed's favorite hosta  
that he originated. It is a sport of *H.*  
'One Iota'.

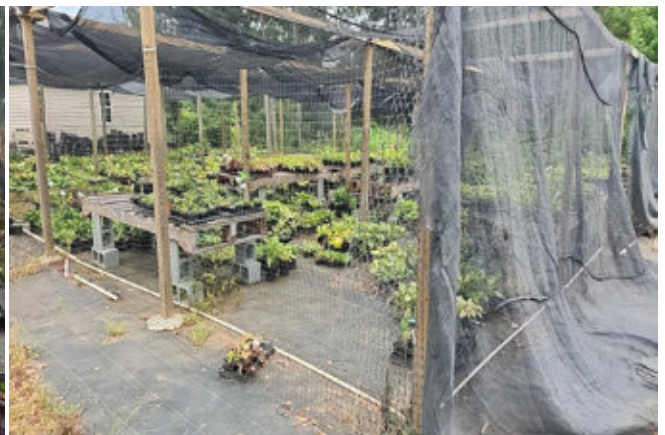




Left, streaked hostas are planted in pots and treated with BAP. When roots have developed on the new divisions, they are divided and transplanted into growing beds until they reach maturity, and the cycle begins again. Ed has increased his saleable stock by 75% utilizing this method. It is so successful that he has begun treating and multiplying hostas for other growers at his nursery.



Everyone knows that the southeastern states experience turbulent weather when cold fronts pass through, often forming tornadoes or excessive wind shear with rain. Bentley Gardens is not immune to that and they often suffer flooding and damage to the shade structures. You can see flooding and storm damage in the photos above and below. Thankfully, it is not difficult to repair or replace damaged shade cloth and this area is free from trees to fall on it.







WILLIAMSON PRESENTS:  
**HOSTA EXTRAVAGANZA**  
 A COLLABORATION PARTNERSHIP







**SATURDAY**  
**MAY 24, 2025**  
**10AM - 7PM**

447 RIVERS ROAD  
 WILLIAMSON, GA 30292



**CALDWELL FARMS FOOD TRUCK 11AM - 6PM**

Shop from one of Georgia's most premier hosta growers - Bentley Gardens. Meander the gardens. Shop custom water tumblers from The Bearded Boutique. Grab a delicious plate of local food from Caldwell Farms Food Truck. **YA'LL GET IN THE TRUCK!**

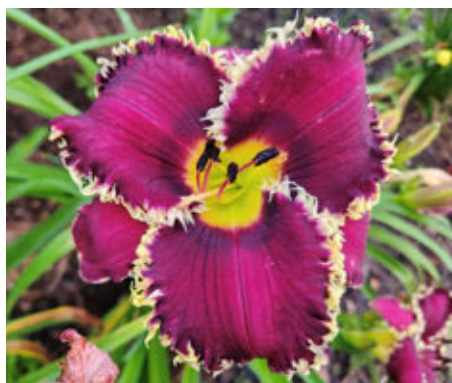




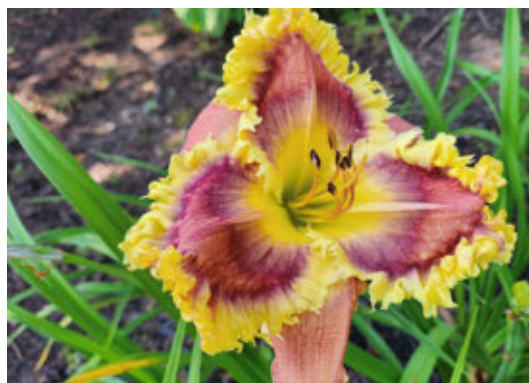
Potted hostas and perennials are ready to be sold online or transported to events for sales.



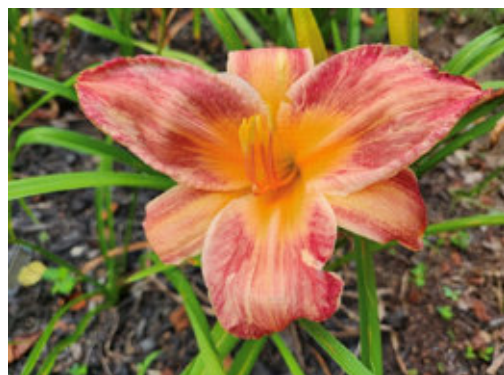




*Hemerocallis* unnamed seedling.



'Crimson Sunrise', which is Ed's all-time favorite daylily.



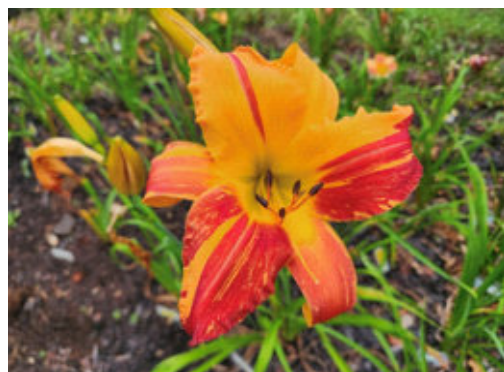
'Pink Stripes', converted to a tetraploid form.



'Shroud of Turin'



'Interview with a Vampire'



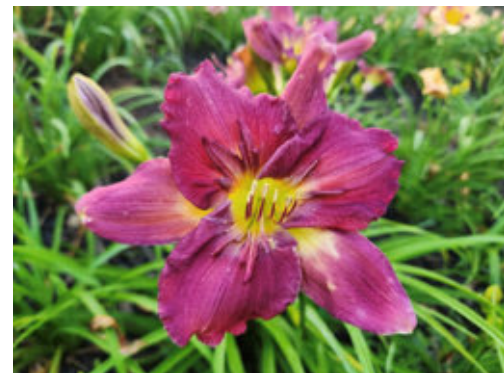
'Explosion in the Orange Grove'



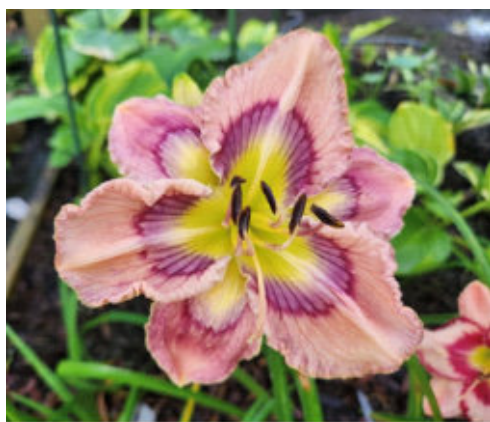
'Catch your Breath'



'Arlette'



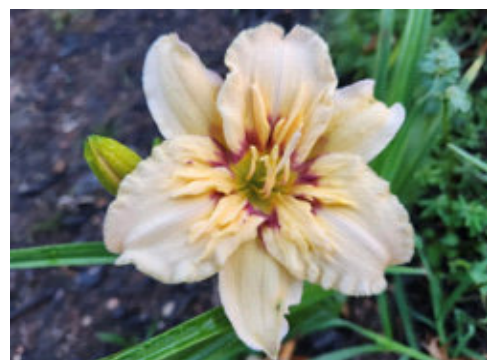
'Michael's Sword'



'Alien Abduction'



'Northwood's Bearded Wonder'



'Blondie's Lipstick'





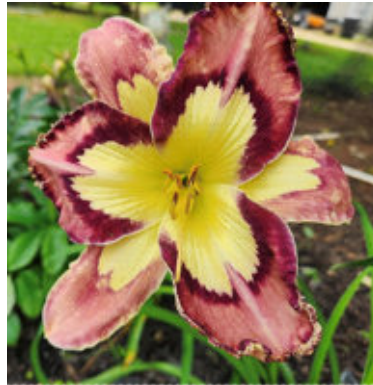
Above, daylily seedlings that are ready to be transplanted into the growing field.



‘Whole Lotta Ripples’



‘Lady Patch’



‘Outermost Applique’



‘Whiskey Glasses’



‘Unknown Soldier’, a crispate seedling.

Right, named daylilies are divided frequently and grown in rows in the growing field. Customers can schedule a visit to select daylilies while in bloom, and they are listed for sale on many online sites.



*Hemerocallis* unknown seedling.

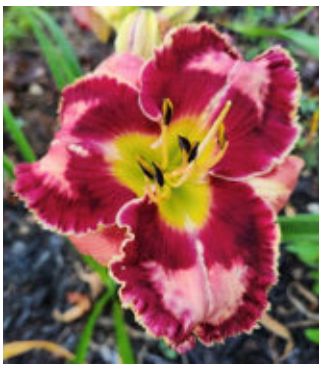


‘Spooky Tooth’



‘Lemon Edged Roses’



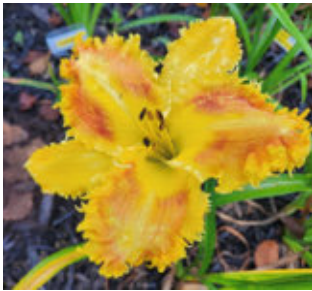


'Elite Stock'

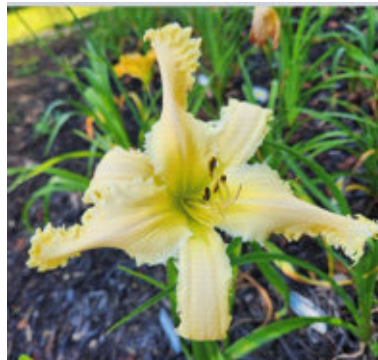


'Limitless'

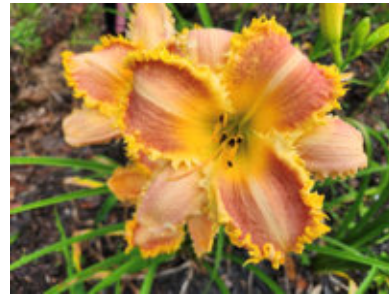
Right, recently registered, *Hemerocallis* 'Jigsaw' was offered at auction last fall and sold for a whopping \$430!



'Safety First'



'Spacecoast White Wolf'



'Piranha Apocalypse'



'Tumbleweed'



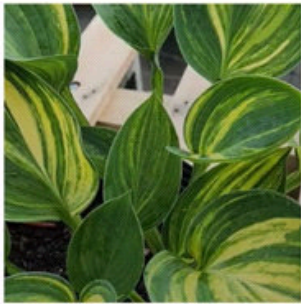
Peppa Paw, Ed's cherished cat, watches closely over the action in the nursery



Ed's favorite public garden is The Country Estate located in Williamson, Ga. Above, he is photographed in the gardens with its owners Matthew Stafford and Jonathan McDaniel, along with another local nursery owner. Bentley Gardens can often be found vending during the events they sponsor at the estate. Ed has introduced a hosta named in their honor, *Hosta* 'Country Estate Boys', shown to the left on the next page.



## NEW HOSTA INTRODUCTION



### A STREAKED HOSTA DEBUTS

Today, Bentley Gardens, one of Georgia's most premier hosta growers, announced the release of a new streaked hosta introduction named "Country Estate Boys." The hosta has a Rare Hosta Rating of RH5.

"When I saw this seedling emerge, I knew right away what name I would introduce it with. Them boys at The Country Estate - Williamson are some really great guys with maximum energy and passion for gardening," said Ed Thaubald, hosta hybridizer and owner of Bentley Gardens

### "COUNTRY ESTATE BOYS" THAUBALD, NR

#### SO HONORED

"Jonathan and I want to sincerely thank our good friends at Bentley Gardens for introducing an absolutely gorgeous hosta named after us," said Matthew Stafford, Co-owner of The Country Estate - Williamson. "Their attention to detail at creating unique, world-class hostas that break standards is beyond admirable. We are so honored!"



## 2026 GEORGIA HOSTA & DAYLILY EXTRAVAGANZA

MAY 13 - MAY 30, 2026

### Garden Tours

**THE COUNTRY ESTATE - WILLIAMSON**  
With over 1,800 registered cultivars and hundreds of seedlings, come discover this Daylily Display and - Historical Garden known locally as "Williamson's Best Kept Secret!" Host garden with events daily. A Proven Winners Certified Garden Center.

**BENTLEY GARDENS**  
A magical experience awaits as you enter the garden of Georgia's most premier streaked hosta grower. See the newest, rarest, and most over-the-top hostas available. View over 200 varieties of daylilies including a select line from the hybridizer who specializes in "teeth."

**TYAIS WHIMSICAL BOTANICAL GARDENS**  
Meander thru the 8-acre gardens to discover unique antiques, fountains, garden decor, and one-of-a-kind statues. A wonderful waterfall cascading into 3 separate pools completes this one-of-a-kind experience. Enjoy lunch at Yakola Creek Restaurant, adjacent to the gardens!

**DAUSET TRAILS NATURE CENTER**  
Dauset Trails, now totaling 1,400 acres, has a Woodland Garden Trail, 20 miles of scenic hiking and mountain biking trails, group camping areas with tent pads, fire rings and "Turkey Roast" camping platforms. Take a leisurely stroll thru the Animal Trail with Georgia's native wildlife.

### SAVE THE DATES

📍 I-75, Exit 212, 205, and 201  
📞 706-333-3563

This interview was conducted and compiled by Gail J Russo, of Cedarville, NJ.

The objective of this column is to allow the hosta gardeners of the world to learn about the existence of your business so they might plan to visit your business or place an order online, if available. All the photos printed were supplied by the business featured unless otherwise noted, so please contact them for permission to use photos or with questions about photo content.

If you would like to see your hosta business featured in this column, free of charge, please contact Gail Russo at [Russo4@comcast.net](mailto:Russo4@comcast.net) for the application questionnaire.

International vendors are welcome to be featured, but only if they ship to the USA. If you do not ship but have lovely display gardens, consider applying to be featured in the "Welcome to my Garden" column of this newsletter instead. You must communicate in English.





## *And In Other Hosta News . . .*

**Editor Note:** This past summer, many of us experienced the effects of wild fire smoke. Have you thought about whether it also affected our plants? The following article was sent out in an email newsletter to customers of Ebert's Greenhouse Village in Ixnoia, WI. Thank you to their chief horticulturist Mike Timm, for granting permission to reprint his article.



Photo credit: New York Times

### **August 4th, 2025**

The impact of wildfire smoke on plants can be quite complex. The problem lies in how it affects photosynthesis. There are basically four main factors involved, some actually good and some bad. They are exposed to reduced sunlight intensity, increased diffusion of sunlight, increased ozone levels and the presence of minute particulate matter in the air. Reduced sunlight intensity has a negative effect on plants. Reduced sunlight will, of course, have an effect on photosynthesis and other internal functions. It's really no different than being cloudy all the time.

First, we must understand that plants are mainly made of sugars, which plays an important role in all aspects of their life, especially proper photosynthesis. That's why we can get syrup from plant sap such as maple syrup, etc. What happens during long periods of shady times, including exposure to smoke, the plants will pull the sugars from their top growth (leaves and stems) and transfer them to the root system. This makes the plant go into a dormant state, therefore affecting growth and flowering. This is why some plants didn't put on much growth, and some had lopsided growth. This is the reason we saw different growth and flowering rates in plants. Not all plants are the same and therefore different plants reacted differently.



One positive thing smoke does is diffuse the sunlight that is there, making it more available to all leaf surfaces of the plants. This can be a good thing for plants as it increases their ability to use the light that is there more efficiently. But a problem arises when the lack of sunlight intensity is greater than the diffusion of the light. This creates the same issues as reduced sunlight intensity.

Although the above two are important to understand, the main concern is increased ozone and minute particular matter. There is good and bad ozone. We need ozone in the stratosphere, located 6-10 miles above earth's surface, to protect us from dangerous radiation from the sun. But when it forms in the troposphere, the air we breathe, it becomes a problem. We won't get into the chemistry of ozone; just remember it's not good for us or our plants to breathe. Ozone is a strong oxidant that can enter plant pores (Stomata) and actually burn the tissue during respiration, not allowing your plant's processes to function properly. This causes cells to die causing discoloration and dead spots on foliage. The symptoms are very similar to a fungal disease. This is where the confusion started, leading to the improper diagnosis of the problem.

Minute particular matter basically affects plants the same as ozone. Minute ash particles block the pores. This doesn't let the plant's pores open or close properly. This results in the death of that cell, and adjoining cells, and limiting proper respiration. Again, the symptoms look similar to a fungal issue.

We hope this information is helpful to you - if you have additional questions or concerns, please e-mail Mike Timm at [mtimm@ebertsgreenhouse.com](mailto:mtimm@ebertsgreenhouse.com)!

Your Friends at Ebert's Greenhouse



**Reminder to submit your Hosta Registrations. Visit [The Hosta Registry](#) website for guidelines.**

Have a question? Have a suggestion? Contact Gayle Hartley Alley by phone or email - [Click here](#) for contact information.

[Return to the American Hosta Society \(AHS\)](#)





2025

AMERICAN HOSTA SOCIETY / THE HOSTA JOURNAL

# PHOTO CONTEST

## RULES

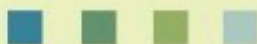
- 1** Entries must be digital photographs in JPEG format. Digital photographs must be submitted via e-mail (if you have just a few entries) or on a USB drive. If you have a large number of digital photos and are computer savvy, contact the Photo Editor to arrange to use WeTransfer for the submissions. Digitals must be a minimum file size of 1 MB.
- 2** Entries may be used for other purposes in *The Hosta Journal* or other AHS publications without further permission, but the photographer will be credited by name.
- 3** Label entries with:
  - Your name, address, phone number and email address
  - The category you are entering (see below)
  - The contents of the photo
  - The photo location (garden)
  - Any relevant information such as camera and lens used, time of day, etc., to be used in captioning the photo if it should be a winner.
- 4** Maximum of 10 entries per category.

## CATEGORIES FOR ENTRIES

- 1** **Best Hosta Close-up**  
Get up close. Focus on a single leaf or just a few at most. Give us lots of detail.
- 2** **Best Picture of an Entire Mature Hosta Clump**  
Make sure it's a well-grown clump. Give us a sense of its total impact on the senses. Make sure to identify the plant and the grower's garden for us.
- 3** **Best Landscape Picture Showing Multiple Clumps**  
Keep the focus on the hostas and identify all the hostas in the photo.
- 4** **Best Landscape Picture Involving Hostas**  
You can include other plants, garden structures or other non-plant accessories.
- 5** **Artistic Expression**  
Let your imagination run wild, but the photo must contain a hosta element. The image can include digital manipulation (using software such as Adobe Photoshop and Lightroom), montage, wildlife, etc. If there are people in the photo, they must be identified in the entry. If they are not, your entry will not be considered complete.

## THE DEADLINE FOR ENTRIES IS DECEMBER 31, 2025

Email photos:  
ajmarlow@comcast.net



Or send postal mail:  
Andy Marlow, *The Hosta Journal* Photo Editor  
10700 Minnetonka Blvd  
Hopkins MN 55305-4404

Call for Entries



# **2026 AHS Convention**

## **Hosted by the Central Ohio Hosta Society**

### **Buckeye Hosta Fever**



**Join us in the Heart of Ohio for Buckeye Hosta Fever  
In Dublin OH (a suburb of Columbus).**

Registration for the convention is limited to 350 participants. Register early to reserve your place! Download registration form at [AmericanHostaSociety.org](https://AmericanHostaSociety.org)

All the events will be there: Hosta Show, educational presentations, live auction, garden tours, convention plant, vendors, and evening hosta-tality.

Registration forms will be available at the AHS Peoria convention.  
Learn more at the Saturday evening closing banquet.



# Buckeye Hosta Fever

## 2026 AHS NATIONAL CONVENTION



June 10-13, 2026 – Dublin, Ohio  
Embassy Suites by Hilton, 5100 Upper Metro Place, Dublin, OH 43017

HOSTED BY THE CENTRAL OHIO HOSTA SOCIETY (COHS)

Make hotel reservations by using the link at the AHS convention website:

[www.Hostaconvention.org](http://www.Hostaconvention.org) beginning June 30, 2025

### REGISTRATION DETAILS (Please print clearly – ONE attendee per form)

<b>Name:</b>	<b>Preferred Name on Badge:</b>
<b>Address:</b>	<b>City, State, Zip Code:</b>
<b>Phone:</b>	<b>Email:</b>

<b>STANDARD REGISTRATION</b> if received by 5/15/26 (Thurs. BBQ dinner included)	<b>\$235</b>	
<b>LATE REGISTRATION</b> if received <b>after</b> 5/15/26 (Thurs. BBQ dinner included)	<b>\$260</b>	
<b>Friday &amp; Saturday Banquet COMPANION MEAL ONLY or Vendors Meals</b> (Registration includes your Banquet meals. This is only if you are bringing a guest with you)	<b>\$105</b>	<b>\$</b>
<b>GARDEN TOUR BUS</b> Includes bus fee and box lunches for Friday & Saturday **Bus seats limited to 160 attendees** <b>Box lunches for Tour Bus Riders ONLY – Lunch on your own for self-drive</b> Friday – <b>Choose One</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Deli Ham <input type="checkbox"/> Deli Turkey <input type="checkbox"/> Vegan Wrap Saturday – <b>Choose One</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Deli Roast Beef <input type="checkbox"/> Deli Turkey <input type="checkbox"/> Vegan Wrap	<b>\$110</b>	<b>\$</b>
<b>2026 Convention T-Shirt</b> - Unisex Sizes <input type="checkbox"/> S <input type="checkbox"/> M <input type="checkbox"/> L <input type="checkbox"/> XL <input type="checkbox"/> 2XL	<b>\$20</b>	<b>\$</b>
<b>CANCELLATION POLICY:</b> <i>Registrant must receive written request by: April 2, 2026 (100% refund); received by May 1, 2026 (50% refund); NO refund after May 1, 2026.</i>		<b>Total Due → \$</b>

<b>Friday Banquet Meal Choice:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Grilled Bone-in Pork Chop <input type="checkbox"/> Beef Tips with Gorgonzola <input type="checkbox"/> Ratatouille (vegan)	<b>Saturday Banquet Meal Choice</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Grilled Salmon <input type="checkbox"/> Chicken Marsala <input type="checkbox"/> Eggplant Parmesan (vegetarian)
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**Check Payable to:**  
**Buckeye Hosta Fever**  
**MAIL PAYMENT AND FORM TO:**

Debi Gerrick, Registrar  
1638 Doone Road,  
Upper Arlington, OH 43221

List any special dietary restrictions/allergies:

---

**Hosta Show:** Please check if you wish to

☐ Judge    ☐ Clerk

Plan # \_\_\_\_\_ entries in Hosta Leaf Show (Limit 20)

**Ed Elslager Seedling Competition:**

Plan # \_\_\_\_\_ entries in Seedling Competition (Limit 10)

\$5 per seedling entry fee paid at convention

Rules & Regulations available at  
[Hostaconvention.org](http://Hostaconvention.org)

**Friday night auction**

I plan to donate \_\_\_\_\_ items for the auction

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**I am willing to volunteer during the convention**

\_\_\_ YES    \_\_\_ NO

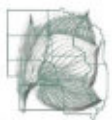
Hosta Judges Clinics: I will attend \_\_\_\_\_ Clinic I \_\_\_\_\_ Clinic II \_\_\_\_\_ Clinic III    | Need Judges Handbook \_\_\_\_\_  
( \$15 payable at Clinic )

**Registration is limited to 350 participants. Questions? – contact Debi Gerrick at:**  
**[debigerick@gmail.com](mailto:debigerick@gmail.com) or (614) 205-8187**





# *And In Regional News . . .*



## **MIDWEST REGIONAL HOSTA SOCIETY**

### **2026 WINTER HOSTA SYMPOSIUM**

**Saturday, February 21, 2026 - Embassy Suites by Hilton Milwaukee Brookfield Hotel**

The MRHS is proudly committed to promoting hosta education. Join us for this uniquely MRHS event featuring six speakers on a variety of hosta and related gardening topics.

**Registration Fee (includes Sat. lunch):** \$69 (MRHS members); \$79 (non-MRHS members) **Hotel Rate:** \$119 per night (plus taxes) includes buffet breakfast – rate applies to Fri and/or Sat night

The Symposium features:

- **Friday Evening Hostality** – time to catch up with old hosta friends and meet new friends
- **Hosta Silent Auction** – featuring plant donations from the top hybridizers and vendors
- **Jack Barta Memorial Scholarship** – one lucky attendee will have their registration fee comped. Sponsored this year by the Illinois Prairie Hosta Society.
- **Saturday Symposium with 6 speakers** on a variety of hosta and related gardening topics:
  - **Dave Collura – An Introduction to Rock Gardening**  
You will be introduced to rock garden design elements and rock garden plants that grow in the Midwest. Dave will finish with a tour of rock gardens from around the world.
  - **Don Dean – Hosta Hybridizer- You or Me- Born? or Evolved!**  
Follow one person's journey from general gardener to hosta hybridizer. Hybridizing techniques that have been used, progress onto early introductions of hosta breeding results, and finish with the latest introductions. Then ask yourself if a bit of persistence similar to this is in the works for you?
  - **Glenn Herold – Ferns for the Shade Garden**  
Ferns generally work well with hostas in the shade garden, but this talk will explore the scientific aspect of ferns as well as the aesthetic. How do ferns differ from flowering plants and from each other? Some species are great companions for hostas while others are not. Which to add to your shade garden collection and which to avoid.
  - **Rob Mortko – Drip Irrigation – a more efficient approach to watering hostas**  
In a world of climate change with ever increasing weather extremes, drip irrigation can keep those thirsty hostas happy during the inevitable and extended drought periods.
  - **Bob Solberg – My Love for Hosta Science**  
Bob will present some recent research on new hosta species, flower pigments and a couple of other short topics. Bob reassures "Don't worry, it's not too heavy".
  - **Mark Zilis – Hosta History, Part 3**  
More on AHS and MRHS members from 1980 to the present who have the greatest impact on the society and hosta introductions.

[Please register early. Late registration fees start February 3, 2026.](#)

*The hotel room rate is guaranteed through February 3, 2026. Use this link to make a reservation online:*

[Book your group rate for Winter Hosta Symposium Meeting Feb 2026](#)

**Or call Embassy Suites at 1-844-738-3913. Mention the group code "925" to get the special group rate.**



# MIDWEST REGIONAL HOSTA SOCIETY 2026 WINTER HOSTA SYMPOSIUM REGISTRATION FORM

**Saturday, February 21, 2026 – Embassy Suites by Hilton Milwaukee Brookfield Hotel**

Hotel Rate: \$119 per night + tax (includes breakfast for registered hotel guests)

Deadline for hotel reservation is February 3, 2026

To make a reservation online use this link:

[Book your group rate for Winter Hosta Symposium Meeting Feb 2026](#)

Or call Embassy Suites at 1-844-738-3913. The group code is "925".

**PLEASE NOTE THE CHANGE IN VENUE FOR 2026:** The Winter Hosta Symposium will be held at the Embassy Suites by Hilton Milwaukee Brookfield Hotel - 1200 S. Moorland Rd, Brookfield, WI 53005.

Symposium check-in is Friday afternoon from 4 to 6 PM, and Saturday morning from 7 to 8 AM. The Symposium will be from 8:30 AM to 4:30 PM on Saturday. Lunch is included with your registration.

Hostatality will be Friday evening at the Embassy Suites Hotel.

**PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY.** Fill out registration form completely.

Make a copy of this registration form for your records. Confirmations will be sent by email.

Note that MRHS memberships are family memberships, so individuals in the household are also MRHS members.

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ ☐ MRHS member ☐ Non-MRHS member

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_ If a non-MRHS member,

CITY \_\_\_\_\_ your \$10 surcharge will be applied to a

STATE/ZIP \_\_\_\_\_ 1-year membership in the MRHS.

PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

FAMILY MEMBER(S) ATTENDING \_\_\_\_\_

**Registrations postmarked after February 3, 2026 require a \$10 late registration fee per person. Cancellations before February 3, 2026 will be sent a full refund.** (Exceptions for medical emergencies or death in family)

Number of members \_\_\_\_\_ X \$69 = \_\_\_\_\_

Number of non-members \_\_\_\_\_ X \$79 = \_\_\_\_\_

Number of late registrations \_\_\_\_\_ X \$10 = \_\_\_\_\_

TOTAL \_\_\_\_\_

**PLEASE MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO MRHS**

Mail your registration form and check to:

Dave Collura, 13600 W. Graham St., New Berlin, WI 53151-2572

Questions about registration? Contact Rob Mortko ([robmortko@gmail.com](mailto:robmortko@gmail.com)) (913) 206-6939



# Dixie Regional Hosta Convention



## SAVE THE DATE

Hosted by the Hosta Society of North Alabama

*May 29 - May 30, 2026*  
*Huntsville, Alabama*

Register at <https://alabamahostas.weebly.com>

Email: [alabamahostas@gmail.com](mailto:alabamahostas@gmail.com)



Join us for a Golden Celebration in Madison, WI.  
We are celebrating the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the  
Midwest Regional Hosta Society.



**July 9-10-11 2026**

**Madison Marriott South Hotel**



The 2026 convention plant, grown by Don Dean, has been named Golden Celebration. It's a small/medium bright yellow hosta. The perfect name for a perfect celebration.



## 2026 MRHS 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration Convention REGISTRATION FORM

**July 9-11, 2026 – Madison, Wisconsin**

Madison Marriott South Hotel, 706 John Nolen Drive, Madison, WI 53713

Make your hotel reservations by calling (608) 251-2300 or use the link at the

MRHS convention website: [midwesthostasociety.org](http://midwesthostasociety.org)

Remember to request the special 2026 MRHS Room Rate.

(Room Rate is \$129 per night – plus \$18 per person for breakfast)



### REGISTRATION DETAILS *(Please print clearly - one attendee per form)*

Name:	Preferred Name on Badge:
Address:	City, State, Zip Code:
Phone:	Email:

\*Please see cancellation policy at [midwesthostasociety.org](http://midwesthostasociety.org)

**EARLY REGISTRATION** if received by 3/15/26

**\$ 189**

**STANDARD REGISTRATION** if received by 6/15/26

**\$ 199**

**LATE REGISTRATION** received after 6/15/26

**\$ 219**

**MEALS ONLY** (companion or vendors)

**\$ 141**

\$

\$

Optional Thursday night welcome event – Olbrich Botanical Gardens with private use of Bolz Conservatory	<b>\$ 30</b>	
<div style="display: flex;"> <div style="flex: 1;"> <b>Friday Banquet Meal Choice:</b>  <input type="checkbox"/> Caribbean Mahi Mahi  <input type="checkbox"/> Steak au Poivre  <input type="checkbox"/> Vegetarian         </div> <div style="flex: 1;"> <b>Saturday Banquet Meal Choice:</b>  <input type="checkbox"/> Rosemary Chicken  <input type="checkbox"/> Grilled Pork Tenderloin  <input type="checkbox"/> Vegetarian         </div> </div>	<b>TOTAL DUE</b>	<div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; padding: 5px; width: 150px;">\$</div>

Please list any dietary restrictions or food allergies. \_\_\_\_\_

Make Check Payable to: **Wisconsin Hosta Society**

MAIL THIS FORM AND PAYMENT TO: **Dave Collura, 13600 W. Graham St., New Berlin, WI 53151-2572**

<b>Hosta Show:</b> Please check if you wish to <input type="checkbox"/> Judge <input type="checkbox"/> Clerk Plan # _____ entries in the Hosta Leaf Show  <b>Seedling Competition:</b> Plan # _____ entries in Seedling Competition  Rules & Regulations available at <a href="http://MIDWESTHOSTASOCIETY.ORG">MIDWESTHOSTASOCIETY.ORG</a>	<b>Friday night auction</b>  I plan to donate _____ items for the auction.  <hr/> <b>Saturday Gardens tour ride sharing transportation:</b> I can provide transport for _____ persons. I will need transport for _____ persons.
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# Videos now available on the AHS Website

## Brendan Shick, AHS Video Producer

This quarter we have launched a video section on the AHS website. At present, three presentations and two garden tours are available to view in total. Garden tours were featured at American Hosta Society conventions and include interviews with the gardeners themselves. We look forward to producing similar content during the next AHS National Convention (Peoria, IL) in June 2025 and including this on the AHS website in the months to follow.

Non-members may **preview** some of the content available to members at <https://americanhostasociety.org/videos> and enjoy a full-length sample presentation on Hosta Virus X. Meanwhile, members of the American Hosta Society have exclusive access (password protected) to the extended garden tour videos and presentations at <https://americanhostasociety.org/members/resources/videos>.

Grab a beverage, sit back and relax, and watch these videos as you glean design ideas, jot down your favorite hostas, ooh and ahh over impressive landscapes, and maybe learn a thing or two. We hope these pieces will also serve as a resource for local Hosta Clubs to use at their gatherings.

Editor's Note: You can also go to <https://americanhostasociety.org/> to explore all that is available on the website including the Videos and Members Only area.





# BECOME A MEMBER!



- Receive *The Hosta Journal*, mailed to you
- Gain access to members-only online materials
- Participate in exciting events and auctions
- Further your love of hostas and gardening

**HOSTA.org**



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- Receive two print issues per year of our popular publication, *The Hosta Journal*. This 84-page publication is filled with color photos and current information regarding Hostas.
- Receive a copy of *The Hosta Adventure – A Growers Guide* and the *Hosta of the Year* booklet, both filled with color photographs and a wealth of information.
- Receive access to the members-only section of the website to read our *Online Hosta Journal* and access other publications and our member directory.
- Attend national and regional meetings where specialty vendors offer the most recently introduced *Hostas* and companion plants and where a live auction offers rare and distinctive *Hostas* and other garden items.
- Enjoy garden tours open only to AHS members.
- Exhibit your favorite *Hostas* and compete for recognition in various AHS national and regional cut-leaf shows.
- Vote on the most popular *Hostas* with our popularity poll.
- Enjoy the camaraderie of fellow *Hosta* enthusiasts.

***For more information or to join go to [hosta.org](http://hosta.org) or call 309-678-4119.***





## **A reminder that the cost of eMembership in the American Hosta Society has been reduced!**

Previously \$20

**Join as an eMember now for one year for only \$12.  
A three-year eMembership is only \$32.**

Join Online at [HOSTA.ORG](https://HOSTA.ORG) or

Call the Membership Secretary for details. 309-678-4119

**eMembership in the American Hosta Society will unlock the following benefits:**

- Full-color issue of *The Hosta Journal* available to read online twice each year
- Unique digital edition of *The Hosta Journal* emailed once each year
- Access to “Members Only” section of the website
- Eligibility to purchase a member-only hosta every year
- Exclusive invitation to exhibit hostas and compete for recognition in AHS-sanctioned Hosta Shows
- Updates on speaker programs, events, awards, plant auctions, news, and more!

### **FIRST-TIME MEMBERS ALSO RECEIVE**

- \$15 voucher for use at participating nurseries
- *Hosta Adventure—A Grower's Guide*, a primer on hostas outlining what every gardener should know
- *Hosta of the Year Booklet*, a full-color publication featuring the American Hosta Growers Association Hostas of the year

**An eMembership also makes a great gift for your hosta gardening friends!**

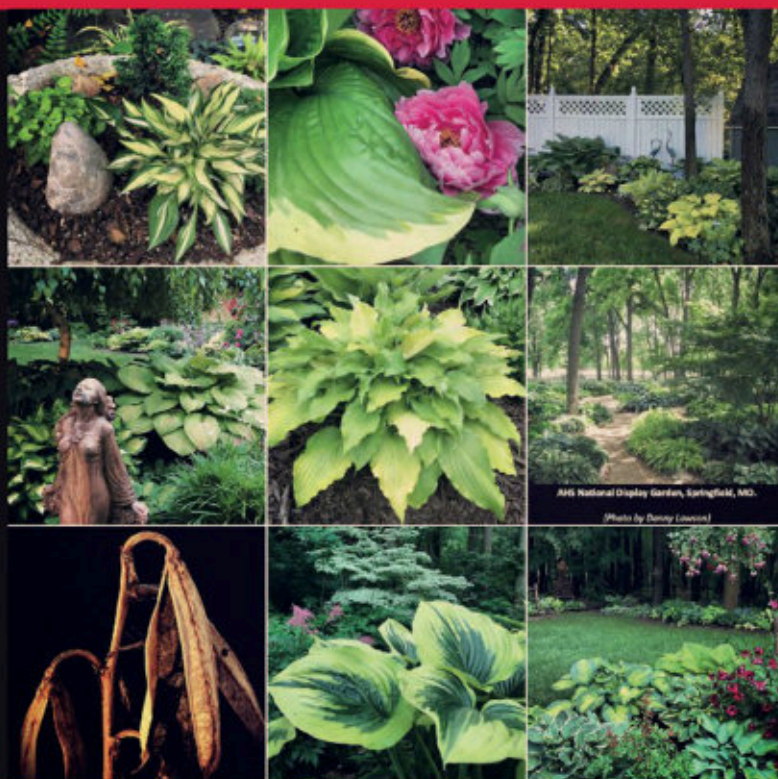


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## Dr. Robert Olson Memorial Plant



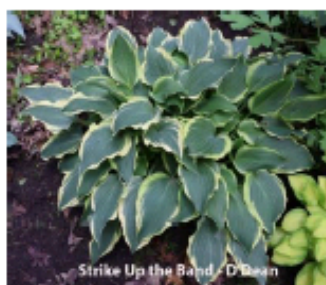
Bob Olson served in many roles for both the American Hosta Society and the Midwest Regional Hosta Society. After his passing several years ago, it was determined that a memorial plant be produced with the proceeds of the sale of the plant going to pay for memberships in the American Hosta Society (AHS) or the Midwest Regional Hosta Society (MRHS).

Memberships for younger members was always a priority of Bob's, as he knew that the future of the hosta societies would rest in the hands of younger members. Your purchase of this plant will provide a complimentary membership in one or both organizations for younger members. Please indicate your preference below.

*Hosta* 'Bob Olson' was registered by Herb and Dorothy Benedict in 1995. This small hosta from Dr. Benedict was named after Bob Olson, a past president of the AHS. It has long dark green leaves with a creamy-white margin that ripples slightly. The plant has good substance and seems to do well in a location with morning sun. It has a medium-lavender bell-shaped flower. The mature plant is about 6 inches tall and spreads to a width of about 12 inches.

To purchase this plant, fill in the form below or call 309-678-4119 with a credit card. **Plants will ship Spring, 2026.** The cost of \$25.00 includes shipping. Plants can only be shipped to locations in the United States.

## Jack Barta Memorial Plant



Jack Barta was a well-known hosta vendor who was always found at both the American Hosta Society (AHS) and Midwest Regional Hosta Society (MRHS) Conventions. He owned and operated Jack's Hostas in Wisconsin for many years. Jack was also a frequent speaker at local and regional hosta clubs.

Jack was a retired high school band director, who took many of his bands to college bowl parades and bowl games over the years. After Jack passed away several years ago, it was decided to produce a tribute plant as a memorial to Jack.

Memberships for younger members was always a priority of Jack's, as he knew that the future of the hosta societies would rest in the hands of younger members. Your purchase of this plant will provide a complimentary membership in one or both organizations for younger members. Please indicate your preference below.

Don Dean, an award-winning hybridizer from Minnesota, offered to donate this plant, and it was subsequently named by Becky Micheletti, giving it a fitting name to honor a band director. *Hosta* 'Strike Up the Band' was registered in 2022. At maturity, it is 11 inches tall by 33 inches wide. It has intense blue green foliage with feathered .25 to .5 inch wide, yellow, slightly rippled margins; glaucous bloom on top; glaucous bloom underneath; leaves are moderately twisted and folded overall.

To purchase this plant, fill in the form below or call 309-678-4119 with a credit card. **Plants will ship Spring, 2026.** The cost of \$25.00 includes shipping. Plants can only be shipped to locations in the United States.

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**PURCHASE ONE FOR \$25.00 OR PURCHASE BOTH FOR \$45.00. Plants will ship in early May, 2026.**

**H. 'Bob Olson' \$25 \_\_\_\_ H. 'Strike Up the Band' \$25 \_\_\_\_ Both Plants \$45 \_\_\_\_**

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**Memorial Hosta Plants P O Box 7407 Villa Park, IL 60181-7407**



# 2026 AHS Member Plant



## ***Hosta 'OneMore' (Dale, 2023)***

Small (9" tall x 15" wide at maturity)

White margined leaves with dark burgundy dotted petioles, with the burgundy dots extending up into the leaves. Near white flowers with light lavender stripes on burgundy scapes. Leaves emerge chartreuse, turning light green later in the season.

***There's always room for OneMore!***

**The cost is \$26.00 which includes the shipping cost.**

Members of the American Hosta Society are eligible to purchase the 2026 AHS Member Plant, *Hosta 'OneMore'*. The plants are on sale now and will be available through April 15, 2026. We plan to ship it in late April, 2026. Sales will continue through April 15, 2026 or when the plant is sold out.

To order, complete this form and send with a check for \$26 payable to American Hosta Society Mail this form with your check to Barry Ankney, Membership Secretary, P O Box 7407, Villa Park, IL 60181-7407.

Or call 309-678-4119 with your credit card.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Address: \_\_\_\_\_

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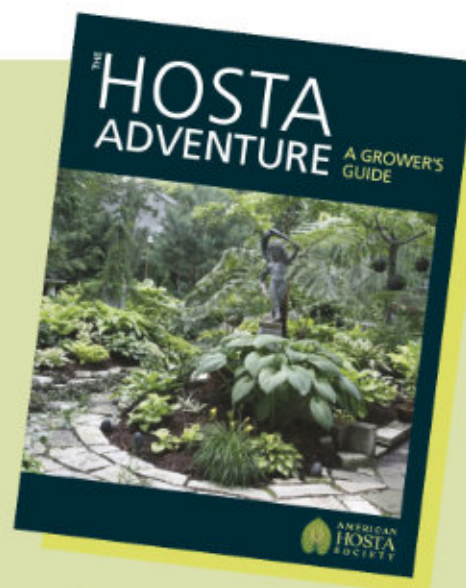
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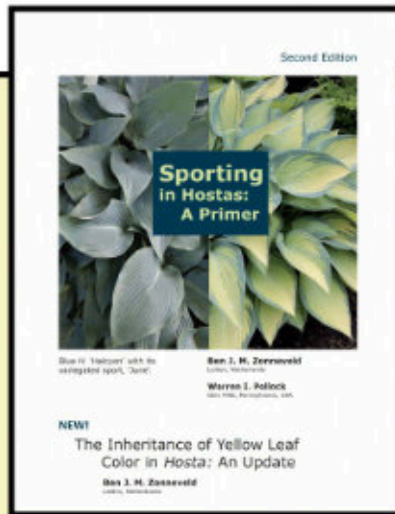
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Photo from AHS Hosta Registry  
***Hosta* 'American Halo' is a sport of *H. 'Northern Halo'* registered by Van Wade.**



Photo from AHS Hosta Registry  
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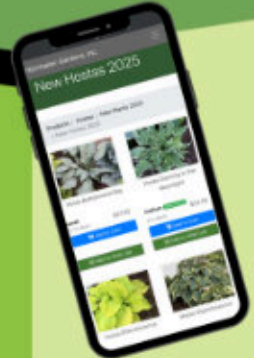


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