



Hosta Happenings

July 2009

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M.V.H.S.

**GARDEN WALK
SUNDAY, AUGUST 2, 2009
2:00 P.M.**

**East Moline – Colona, IL
Areas**

See Page Two for directions

Bring a chair and table service, your own libation, and an hors d'oeuvre to share!

Hosta Walk

(East Moline – Colona, IL)

Sunday, August 2nd

First home begins between 2:00 and 3:00 pm

June Hessel, 3363 2nd St., (maybe shown as 3363 Second St on some maps) East Moline, IL. June's phone number, if necessary, is 309-755-2871.

If coming from Davenport, take I-74 bridge, exit at 7th Ave, turn left on 7th to 12th Ave and turn left (12th Ave will become 30th Avenue in East Moline) turn right on 2nd Street to 3363.

If coming from the south, drive 23rd Avenue to Kennedy Dr., turn north to 35th Avenue and turn left. 35th Avenue becomes 2nd St.. look for 3363.

More detailed directions to the other homes will be provided at the Hessel residence.

Second home is at the opposite end of East Moline, Jo & Pete Clark, 2400 179th St N., East Moline. Jo lives approximately 1 mile east of the I-80 East Moline exit. The remaining homes will be in the Colona, IL area, 8/10s of a mile west of the Interstate-80 Colona Exit.

Third home is Jeanne & Jerry VandeWiele, 6099 Dayton Corner B St., Colona, IL. From the I-80 exit drive west to just passing United Methodist Church, just as the road bears to the left goes uphill. On the right is a small green road marker for 590E.. turn in for approx ¼ mi... house will be on the right with a wrought iron fence.

Fourth house is Pat & Dale Church, just across Cleveland Rd, a few feet further uphill at road marker 595E (on the left). House is at the end of the short road. They have approx 7 acres, most of it is gardened.. where we will sit back, relax and enjoy the garden and our hosta friends..

**Bring a chair and table service, your own libation,
and an hors d'oeuvre to share!**

HOSTA PRICE LISTS

Likes, Dislikes and Other Observations

by Ray Rodgers

from Northwest Indiana Hosta Society Newsletter
Ray is an author and frequent contributor to the Illinois Prairie
Hosta Society newsletter.

When I look at hosta price lists, whether hard-copy or via the Internet, I am most appreciative of the lists that provide a great deal of detail. The more detail one has, the more apt they are to make a purchase decision that will bring joy to them and to those visiting their gardens. The more that is known about hostas and those that introduce them, the more useful the detail becomes.

Most sellers (vendors) specializing only in hostas would consider it price prohibitive to include as much detail as I would like on their hard-copy price list. Fortunately, a number of vendors produce paper and electronic price lists. Website lists typically provide more detail and pictures.

Some hard-copy lists are enhanced by a few pictures, but on electronic lists, pictures are a must for me. Keep in mind vendors typically use the most flattering picture they have access to. Also be aware that it is very difficult to depict colors exactly, especially shades of blue. For additional photos, I highly recommend checking out the Hosta Library, <http://www.hostalibrary.org>.

There are a few larger-scale growers, offering a wide variety of plant material, who do promote their offering in high quality catalogs, two of the ones most familiar to me are Klehm's Song Sparrow Farm & Nursery and Plant Delights Nursery.

In my opinion, lists that only include the following are providing the bare minimum and should be avoided, unless the potential buyer is familiar with the vendor and with the plants of interest:

Hosta Name, Size (Mini, S, M, L, Giant), Description, Price

Additional details often included include:

Registered By, Year Registered, Parentage, Plant Dimensions, Leaf Dimensions, Flower Color, Scape Color, Introduced by if not Registered (NR), Ploidy if other than Diploid.

I know of one list that even provides the number of pairs in typical cultivars' leaves.

It is very important to most buyers to know whether single or multi-eyed divisions will be provided. On occasion, when double-eyed divisions are promised, one may be the recipient of two single division plants. This happens more commonly with newer introductions.

When offering a hosta with splashed variegation, description should include whether the plant sets viable seed. Splashed is the correct term according to the American Hosta Society (AHS), yet most people still refer to this form of variegation as streaked. Such plants are often referred to as breeder plants. With

just a few exceptions, splashed hostas are unstable, meaning given enough time without division, they will stabilize into an edge- or center-variegated or solid-colored plant. It is not unusual for splashed hostas to display all forms in a single clump.

Most vendors do a pretty good job of documenting which plants are viridescens, albescent or lutescent, although they seldom use these words - as follows:

~~Viridescens - possessing leaves which begin the season lighter colored and become more green as the season advances.

~~Albescent - possessing leaves which begin yellow or more pigmented and become whiter as the season progresses; i.e. *H. 'Gold Standard'*.

~~Lutescent - possessing leaves which begin the season darker and become lighter or more yellow as the season progresses; not the same as bleaching due to poor nutrition or too much sun.

Hostas for which Plant Patents have been granted, or Plant Patents have been applied for (PPAF) are also typically documented.

For some people, knowing whether the plant being offered is Originator's Stock (OS) or propagated from Tissue Culture (TC) is of importance. Typically, vendors feel they can price OS plants at a premium. It is often difficult to get some of the more unusual plants to come true to form via TC. In such cases, it is advantageous for vendors to document this fact to help justify the asking price.

There are a variety of other terms occasionally used in lists. If unfamiliar with any, definitions may be found in the Dictionary of Hosta Terms, available on the AHS website, <http://www.americanhostasociety.org/HostaDictionary.html> or other publications found therein.

I would guess many people would be interested in lists that include AHS awards won by particular plants or leaves of particular plants. Especially for those newer to hostas, the latest AHS Popularity Poll results should be of interest, as well as the American Hosta Growers Association's (AHGA) "Hosta of the Year" designations, see http://www.hostagrowers.org/ahga_hosta.html.

Most price lists include a guarantee that the plants provided are true to name and will be properly labeled upon receipt. Encouraged by the AHGA, an increasing number of member retailers are also guaranteeing their plants to be pest and disease free. To me, such guarantees should be sought out and should provide an added level of confidence, especially when considering from a nursery one is less familiar with.

Many price lists include a variety of comments, like "a great specimen", "a real showstopper", "sure to be a classic", etc. Made in good faith, comments like these may grab readers' attention and help sell plants, but what is more important to me is what I consider value-added comments, like the following examples:

(continued on page 4)

- ~~Plants offered are 2nd year tissue culture.
- ~~H 'Blue Flame' may be the same as 'Secret Love'
- ~~H 'First Love' will be an early riser and can use protection from spring frosts.
- ~~H. 'Dream Queen' is similar to 'Dream Weaver' and 'Thunderbolt'
- ~~H 'Guacamole' does best if planted in a sunnier location
- ~~H 'Summer Music' is a slow grower and needs bright morning sun to grow well.
- ~~H 'Todukama Aureonebulosa' and 'High Society' are slow growing but worth the wait.
- ~~H. 'Tortifrons' dark green leaves have a corkscrew effect, twisting as the thin blades reach upward. Must be grown in lots of sun to accomplish this.
- ~~H. 'Yellow Polka Dot Binini' is quite distinctive early on but as it changes, it begins to look very similar to 'Hanky Panky'.

Of the price lists I have viewed, Naylor Creek Nursery provides the most value-added information, see <http://www.naylorcreek.com>.

Some vendors continue to offer plants that have a well-documented history of having rather serious cosmetic flaws (spring desiccation burn, melting out, etc.), and/or plants that are considered by many as difficult to grow. I'm sure vendors have their reasons for offering such plants, but what really urks me is when only the positives are promised, and no reference is made about potential negatives. When such sales are gained from less knowledgeable buyers, the potential for repeat business may unknowingly be lost. In my opinion, providing only good to great garden plants should build the vendors reputation and likely result in increased sales.

Although vendors don't typically state the flaws of the plants they are offering, other vendors occasionally point out flaws of particular plants if they are offering a plant they consider better. Example: H. 'Olive Bailey Langdon' resembles 'Frances Williams' without all of the unsightly blemishes on the golden part of the foliage.

Another negative I occasionally see, which I believe is merely the result of not updating descriptions, is the reference to "new" used in descriptions of hostas that have been in the trade for a number of years. Albeit unintentional, this could be misleading. The use I am referring to is not the same as when vendors denote plants that are being offered by them for the first time or offered again after an absence of one or more years.

Be cautious when you see statements like "improved version off..." in the description of newer hostas. If a sport has a wider edge than the parent, brighter coloration, or if the original plant is a diploid and the sport is a tetraploid, I think most hosta enthusiasts would consider these as improved versions, but not all sports are improvements over the parent.

There are thousands of hosta varieties available in the trade today and more entering each year. Based on parentage and coloration, well-informed hosta vendors will have a pretty good idea if newer varieties should or will likely not develop into quality garden worthy plants. Hopefully, such vendors will add only the best of the new introductions to their offering. Just as I would expect all vendors to continually add new varieties to their product offering, I believe they should also be responsible enough to drop off underperformers.

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### POEM

by Audrey, Emmmitsburg, Md. and borrowed from Barb Schroeder

- You know you're a gardener when:
10. You rejoice in rain...even after 10 straight days of it.
  9. You have pride in how bad your hands look.
  8. You have a decorative compost container on your kitchen counter.
  7. You can give away plants easily, but compost is another thing.
  6. Soil test results actually mean something.
  5. IPM rules!
  4. You'd rather go to a nursery to shop than a clothes store.
  3. You look for gardens open to the public whenever you go on vacation.
  2. Your non-gardening spouse is actually getting involved with your garden endeavors, digging ponds, building bird houses, watering, pruning, turning compost piles, planting....

And you definitely know you're a gardener when...

1. You are surrounded by terrific people who share your passion!!!

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MANY THANKS TO ROD KUESTNER WHO GAVE A TALK AND A HAND'S ON DEMONSTRATION ON SUNDAY, JULY 19, OF HOW HE DOES HIS HYBRIDIZING!

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**"The philosopher who said that work well done never needs doing over, never weeded a garden."**

**Ray D. Everson**

# The Hosta Gardening Calendar

*From The Green Hill Gossip by Bob Solberg*

## **Summer (Period of bloom and seed set) June-July-August**

The time of bloom in hosta species and their cultivars varies from late May or June to September. A particular hosta will normally bloom once for about 3 weeks during the summer, producing a flower scape from the growing bud that just finished producing the flushes of leaves. The scape has a number of lily-like flowers that are open for one day only and are bee pollinated. (*H. plantaginea* opens in the evening and may be moth pollinated.) Seed pods are formed from fertilized ovaries at the base of the pistil and swell in size. Black, single-winged seeds are usually ripe in 6-8 weeks.

**Labeling:** Replace the labels that the squirrels have pulled up.

**Light:** This is the brightest and more importantly, hottest light of the year. The sun is at its maximum height in the sky and often beds that were bathed in shade in early May are now in full sun. Hostas can tolerate direct light but they hate heat! If leaf margins begin to brown, it may be time to move that hosta to a cooler spot in the garden. On the other hand, year by year shade gardens become shadier. Consider removing a branch here or there during the summer to create spotlights of bright light in the garden. Maybe even consider removing an entire tree, but that should probably wait until winter.

**Nutrients:** Blooming hostas still need nutrients to maintain their foliage and produce seeds but not a high nitrogen diet. If you are liquid feeding weekly, continue if there is ample rain. In times of drought reduce feeding to every other week. Discontinue any supplemental foliar feeding; hosta leaves have expanded to their maximum by now. Remember if it doesn't rain, then your slow release fertilizer is not being released. Irrigation may be a good idea.

**Pests:** If it turns dry, the deer will show up looking for some lush hosta foliage full of water. Spray deer repellent every 3 weeks or more often and rotate your favorite brands. Leave the electric fence on at all times. Be on the look out for the symptoms of foliar nematodes, those nasty brown streaks. If you have a major problem, remove the most highly infected hostas and water less and feed less. Starve the hostas and stress the worms. Quarantine your garden. If you have a minor issue, remove infected hostas and all the ones touching them. A few years of this may eliminate the problem almost completely.

**Protection:** Watch for petiole rot. This fungus attacks the base of hosta petioles, secreting a substance that eats through the plant tissue causing the leaves to fall on the ground. This usually occurs in the first hot dry weather of the summer. Pull back mulch. Treat with 10% bleach solution immediately and retreat if necessary. There are also fungicides (e.g. Terrachlor) that can be applied. Other fungi may attack the hosta leaves, especially in hot, humid climates in wet summers. Apply fungicides (e.g. Daconil) as a preventative in late June every 2 weeks as necessary. Rotate fungicides.

**Propagation:** Divide hostas as the heat of summer passes. August is the best time to drastically divide and plant or pot hostas. Try to give your hostas 6 weeks before the first frost to establish new roots in their new home.

**Water:** Like nutrients, a hostas demands for water are reduced after their leaves are mature. Increased temperatures however, increase the transpiration rate, the rate at which the water is pulled out of the hosta leaves, requiring more water to replace it. Transpiration affects trees to an even greater degree as they pump water up and out of the garden soil. In hot weather sometimes keeping your hostas full of water all day long is a constant battle. Continue the fight. Dry soil may cause your hostas to go heat dormant or worse, dry rot at the bottom of the crown. In heavily shaded gardens, irrigation during the day can cool those hot leaves.

**Fun!** Cut some scapes after a couple of flowers have opened and bring them inside to enjoy for two or more weeks. Cut and remove the other scapes when 75% of the flowers have opened, unless you wish to save the seeds. Take in a hosta convention, regional events are inexpensive and allow plenty of time to socialize. Visit other local gardens and get some new ideas. Remember to bring a hosta along as a gift. Begin to plant new acquisitions.

**AHS DUES:** The American Hosta Society offers participation in all national activities, including a convention, 3 issues of "The Hosta Journal", and a directory. They also have a web page - [www.hosta.org](http://www.hosta.org). Dues are \$30/yr, \$57/2 yrs and \$600 life for an individual. Family memberships are also available at \$34/yr and \$62/2 yrs. Make your check to AHS and send to the Membership Secretary, Sandie Markland, 8702 Pinnacle Rock Ct., Lorton, VA 22079.

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Midwest Regional Hosta Society Dues are \$10/yr. Send your check to: Peter Postlewaite, Treasurer, 21172 Andover Rd., Kildeer, IL 60047.

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**MISSISSIPPI VALLEY HOSTA SOCIETY DUES** are \$7/YR. Please make your check payable to MVHS and send to Dean Piatt, Treasurer, 2910 Telegraph Rd., Davenport, IA 52804. We offer 8 newsletters a year, reduced prices on hosta offerings, garden walks, first opportunity to buy plants at our annual hosta and plant sale and many other good opportunities.

Mississippi Valley Hosta Society  
909 Mississippi Blvd.  
Bettendorf, Iowa 52722

**WHAT'S HAPPENING!**

**Sept 20** - Annual Picnic, VanderVeer  
Hosta Glade

**Oct 11** - MVHS Meeting - 6 PM  
Riverdale Fire Station

Visit our MVHS Web Site: **[mvhosta.org](http://mvhosta.org)**

Other hosta and garden web sites:

American Hosta Society - <http://www.hosta.org>

Midwest Hosta Society - [http://www.](http://www.midwesthostasociety.org)

[midwesthostasociety.org](http://www.midwesthostasociety.org)

Hosta Library - <http://www.hostalibrary.org>

Hosta Forum - questions/answers - [http://](http://forums.gardenweb.com/forums/hosta)

Mini Hosta Forum - [http://](http://groups.yahoo.com/group/minihosta)

[groups.yahoo.com/group/minihosta](http://groups.yahoo.com/group/minihosta)

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**LET US KNOW!!! IF YOU HAVE MOVED
or HAS YOUR EMAIL CHANGED?**

**Send your corrected info to DEAN PIATT,
2910 TELEGRAPH RD., DAVENPORT, IA
52804.** His email is: dpiatt@mvhosta.org