

MIDWEST REGIONAL HOSTA SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

# HOSTA LEAVES

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WINTER SCIENTIFIC MEETING REGISTRATION

DAVENPORT, IOWA CONVENTION



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## President's Message

When I was approached some months ago about becoming a part of the Midwest Regional Hosta Society Board, I was somewhat hesitant, primarily because I was unfamiliar with the scope of the task I was about to take on. I knew that the MRHS had sponsored signage at some display gardens, sponsored a yearly convention, and that a newsletter was published. Beyond that, what was the role of the MRHS or any other of the regional groups? After discussing the matter with other members of the Board, our goals and objectives are becoming a little clearer to me.

We are (and should strive to be) a conduit of information and assistance for the many local hosta societies in our region. The primary vehicle for sharing information is our newsletter *Hosta Leaves* now under the capable direction of Floyd Rogers. A well written newsletter can be a powerful educational tool and Floyd is well on his way to developing ours to its fullest potential, assuming that the rest of us continue to do our parts by contributing information and photographs.

At the recent convention in Davenport, Tom Micheletti opened up a new and potentially valuable communication path among our sixteen local groups. Local hosta society presidents were invited to meet and share information about fund raising events as well as educational and social activities that they found to be successful. It is my intention to make that a yearly event.

Tom also added to his legacy to the MRHS by suggesting that we serve as an organization which recognizes the contributions of those who have served Midwest hosta groups especially well. The Board voted to establish the DeEtta Montgomery Award which appropriately was awarded posthumously to DeEtta and presented to DeEtta's brother Dean Piatt who has carried on his sister's devotion and service to our favorite plant.

The MRHS also sponsors the Winter Scientific Meeting in conjunction with the Northern Illinois Hosta Society. The Winter Scientific is truly one of the highlight events of the winter for hostaphiles and draws participants from all over the country.

Of course, the MRHS shares with all other hosta societies an interest in furthering the popularity of the hosta in the U.S. and that means helping out when a pest or disease threatens the plant. Toward that end, the MRHS last year donated \$2,000 to help fund an AHS research grant for Hosta Virus X research and this year has budgeted an additional \$5,000 donation.

Are there other ways in which the MRHS can serve hosta lovers and the local societies? If you think so, I would like to hear from you. In the end, the MRHS will only be as valuable to the hosta fancier as our creativity and effort allow it to be and that includes intellectual contributions and constructive criticism from the entire membership.

Lou Horton

## The Voracious Earthworm — Friend or Foe?

Successful gardeners have always told us that worms are wonderful for our flower and vegetable gardens. They help with the decomposition of organic matter and the aeration of the soil through their persistent tunneling, allowing air and water to more easily reach plant roots. Yet some ecologists worry that such worm activity may not necessarily help tree roots and shade-growing woodland plants in the same way.

They maintain that several types of worms that flourish and proliferate in forests and heavily shaded areas are actually hurting and dramatically hindering the growth of some trees and plants, most particularly, hosta! Moreover, they say that our tendency to add compost and mulch around hosta, for example, greatly increases the worms' reproductive capacity. As a result, they overpopulate the soil to such a point that they begin to eat the plant and tree roots, thus stunting the plant growth.

The ecologists conclude that the problem is really the number of worms that may be present in a given area. Accordingly, they suggest that the best way to find out if worms are damaging your trees or shade plants (such as hosta) is to dig around after a rain in the moist soil of your woodland garden and count the worms present. If you find more than five in a three-foot square area, you may have a problem; and to help correct it you should immediately get rid of the mulch and/or grass clippings in the area. Sulfur pellets can also be applied to the soil to make it more acidic and less hospitable for the worms.

Much more information about this overall problem can be found in an excellent March 15<sup>th</sup> New York Times article by Anne Raver entitled "The Dark Side of a Good Friend to the Soil".



*Lumbricus terrestris*

submitted by Captain William Shepherd, USN Ret.

A total of approximately 182 earthworm taxa in 12 families are reported from America north of Mexico, i.e., USA & Canada, of which 60 (ca. 33%) are exotic/introduced. Only two genera of [Lumbricid](#) earthworms are indigenous to North America whereas introduced genera have invaded areas where earthworms did not formerly exist, especially in the north. Here forest development relies on a large amount of undecayed leaf matter. Where worms decompose that leaf layer, the ecology may shift making the habitat unsurvivable for certain species of trees, ferns and wildflowers. Currently there is no economically feasible method for controlling earthworms in forests, besides preventing introductions. Earthworms normally spread slowly, but can be widely introduced by human activities such as construction earthmoving, or by fishermen releasing bait, or by plantings from other areas.

Soils which have been invaded by earthworms can be recognized by an absence of palatable leaf litter. For example, in a [sugar maple](#) - [white ash](#) - [beech](#) - [northern red oak](#) association, only the beech and oak leaves will be seen on the forest floor (except during autumn leaf-fall), as earthworms quickly devour maple and ash leaves. [Basswood](#), [dogwood](#), [elm](#), [poplar](#) and [tuliptree](#) also produce palatable foliage.

Wikipedia.com

# Realizing New Hosta Possibilities Using Seeds

by John L. Van Ostrand

Those who grow hostas from seed use different techniques. A few of you have been to my house during the seed growing season and have seen some of the techniques that are used here at Moon Shadow Gardens. For those who use substantially different ways, keep it up as long as it works. What I do works for me most of the time.

The first issue is getting viable seeds. Hosta seeds should be black, looking much like miniature maple seeds with a thick part at the tip and a wing forming the rest of the seed. I have had seeds that are completely flat and others that have white or brown spots. None of them germinate. Seeds can look perfect and still not be viable, but this is generally related to the parentage or to other issues such as the seed having an uneven number of chromosomes which causes sterility. Viable seeds will germinate without exposure to light and lying on top of the growing medium. Bottom heat is helpful, but not really necessary. Since it does seem to help, you can purchase electric pads that provide bottom heat. I have built germination chambers that are essentially ventilated wooden boxes with a fifteen watt bulb in the base, guarded by a metal shield, to provide the heat source. A standard liner is placed on top finished off with a plastic cover.

Figure 1 shows the germination chamber without the plastic lid. For this step the liner should not have holes in the bottom or moisture may leak into the heating chamber below. Note that seeds with different parentage are separated by partitions with each cell labeled. This works pretty well until you drop the tray, which has happened to me. Before I started growing seeds, I used to wonder why there were so many cultivars registered with unknown parentage. I have discovered plenty of ways to lose the parentage long before the plant is ready for its own name.

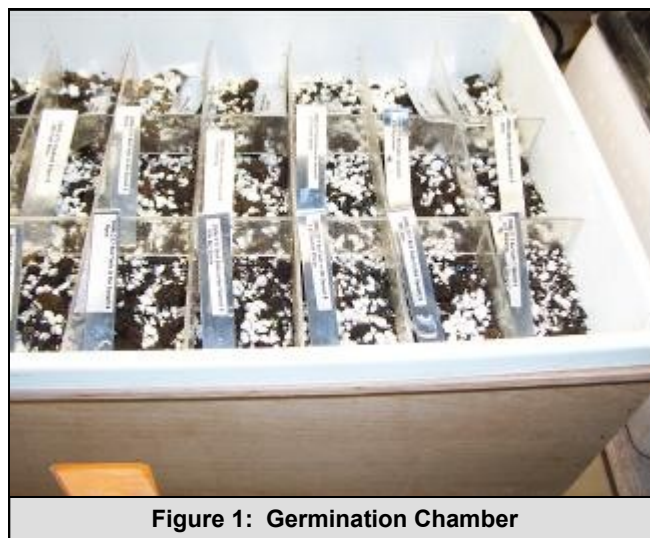


Figure 1: Germination Chamber

Labeling is a whole issue in itself. I use aluminum flashing cut into strips about ½” by about three inches with laser printed clear address labels. Don’t forget to fold over the exposed metal edge to keep from leaving a hazardous sharp edge exposed. Squirrels are pretty good at digging these out if they get all of the way to the garden, but I have developed a way to mount them securely to a wire so the same label can accompany the plant into the garden. Squirrels in general are pretty good at helping you develop new cultivars with unknown parentage. At the stage where the plants are still in liners, you can just stick the markers into the liner cell for identifying the parentage.

For a growing medium I use 50% sterilized peat moss and 50% Perlite. I emphasize sterilized because failing to sterilize the growing medium will almost certainly result in swarms of fungus

*(Continued on page 5)*



gnats which are pretty unpleasant. Before sterilizing I remember rigging up a device for mounting horizontal strips of flypaper in an afterthought attempt to control the little pests. I sterilize the peat moss by steaming it in an old Weber charcoal grill dedicated to this service. I pour about a half inch of water in an old metal oil drainage pan which just about fits the inside of the grill with the grill cover in place. The peat moss also goes into the pan inside the covered grill to be heated and sterilized. A thermometer probe (remote oven thermometer) keeps track of the temperature. When the peat moss reaches 212 degrees, the sterilized peat moss is removed to a large holding container. A dedicated microwave can also serve the same purpose. However you sterilize is your business, but do it. This does not completely sterilize the mixture, but it seems to really help prevent fungus gnats. The 50/50 mixture is made up in large enough batches to last for one season.

Once the seeds are in the covered germination chamber, mist them daily. They should not dry out during the germination phase. Some seeds may develop fungus. Generally these are sterile seeds. Pick them out quickly with tweezers and sterilize the tweezers with alcohol before reusing them. The seeds will generally begin to germinate within two to three weeks; some in as little as one week and some will take six weeks depending on the percentage. Of course some of them will never germinate because they are inherently sterile so you try to remember not to grow that cross next time. The fault causing sterility usually is with the pod parent.



**Figure 2: Germinated Seeds**

If you have used a growing container that is deep enough to hold an inch and a half of growing medium or so, you can just let the seedlings develop in the same container in which they germinate. I do not favor this approach because the roots tend to get tangled up and become difficult to separate if they are left too long. I have at least one bunch of plants growing in the garden that are still all mixed up in a single clump because of my failure to separate them early enough.



**Figure 3: Seedlings labeled by row**

Consequently, I separate them as they germinate. This has the advantage of leaving the seeds that have not germinated yet in the germination chamber while placing the germinated ones into a better growing environment. I usually like to have a root developed and the start of the first leaf before they come out of the germination chamber, see Figure 2. These go into one half inch square cells with two hundred cells per liner with each row of ten cells devoted to a single cross. This way you can initially just label each row rather than each cell (see Figure 3).

*(Continued on page 6)*



**Figure 4: Milled sphagnum moss cover**

milling. Figure 4 shows a kind of half funnel that I made from aluminum flashing to apply the sphagnum moss. I also use a small artist's brush. The handle of the artist's brush serves well as a dibble. A long pair of tweezers is one of my favorite gardening tools for selecting and transplanting newly germinated seedlings. It is still good to keep the plants covered with a clear plastic top for a while. You have to use your judgment on when to remove the plastic cover; I am still trying to figure out the proper time to remove the cover after raising hosta seeds for about eight years. Figure 5 shows the seedlings in half inch square liners under fluorescent light. Some earlier germinations have the plastic top removed while the newer ones are still under cover.

During this phase I continue to water with a spray bottle from the top. Others insist on bottom watering, but I have had better luck with top watering all the way through. For watering use a solution of water and diluted fertilizer. I use Miracle Grow diluted to about one-fifth the recommended dosage. Prepare this in bulk storing it in a fairly large container so you do not have to mix it up every time you water (see Figure 6



**Figure 6: Fertilized water supply**

The next step I have found to be critical. Once the seedlings go into the half inch square cells, they are covered over with a thin layer of milled sphagnum moss. The regular sphagnum moss is too coarse and the milled form is just a bit coarser than powder. Sphagnum moss is very resistant to fungus which helps prevent the seedlings from getting damping off fungus. You can buy it on line, or you can buy regular sphagnum moss locally and mill it yourself with scissors and a lot of patience. I use a dedicated blender which works fairly well to perform the task of



**Figure 5: Seedlings under light**

which shows the fertilized water supply resting on an articulated-top table that I built to collect the water at one end when the container gets low).

At this stage you are almost home free. Well, maybe not free at that, but it is a way to keep on gardening all winter long at a moderate cost. I usually start seeds on Thanksgiving weekend which gives me most of the winter for growing. Some people start even earlier and some much later. Once the seedlings are up enough to distinguish their color and a hint of leaf character, I

*(Continued on page 7)*

move them to larger containers using liners having cells that are about two inches in diameter and four inches tall with only thirty two cells per tray. You can water with a watering can at this point. The seedlings can stay in this size cell until they go into the garden. This transfer of the seedlings from smaller to larger liner cells affords a good opportunity to make a first cull. I do not grow out every germinated seedling as it gets crowded enough just saving the seedlings that appear to have some hint of promise. At this stage each individual seedling gets its own label with some form of identification. I record its parentage along with the first year that they will grow a full season followed by a unique identifier for that particular seedling like .01, .02, .03 or A, B, C etc. This helps keep track of individual seedlings and records their age. If you eventually register the plant you are supposed to report how old it is along with its size at that particular age.

If you do not care for all the fuss that I have just described there is a simple alternative as shown in Figure 7. Take a cleaned out milk carton. Cut it in half horizontally except for one side that will remain to act as a hinge. Poke a few holes in the top and bottom or make some knife slits to provide a little ventilation and drainage without permitting too much moisture loss. Put about an inch of planting medium in the bottom and throw in the seeds. Moisten the soil and close up the milk carton taping it shut with masking tape or duct tape. Put the cap back on and set it outdoors in the snow. You do not have to touch it again until spring when the seedlings come up and are ready to be planted in the garden. This actually works most of the time, but it is not nearly as much fun as the hard way and the germination is less than spectacular.



Figure 7: An alternative method

Attend the 2008 MRHS Convention and see the results of John Van Ostrand's hybridizing and growing practices. John's garden will be one of six gardens on tour.

**Check the expiration date on the back of this newsletter.** Don't miss out on the next issue where we will have registration forms and the convention schedule.

Remember -- due to our bulk mailing practices, you must contact Peter Postlewaite if you will not be at your normal mailing address. The post office will **not** forward our newsletters.

Peter can be contacted at [Peter@ShadyPath.com](mailto:Peter@ShadyPath.com)  
telephone (847) 438-7790  
or by letter at the address on the front cover.



## The Shindelar Garden, LeClaire, IA

Joe and Arlene have been playing in the dirt for just shy of a quarter century. “This used to be a vegetable garden,” Joe boasted and after retirement the man with a farm background got serious about cultivating a garden of perennials and annuals.



A kaleidoscope of color and dimension and the sound of rushing water greets you as you visit their hillside estate. Birds, including Hummingbirds, love the plants and the feeders. The creek that runs the length of the house is a coffee drinker’s nightmare.

Joe doesn’t concern himself with labels as his first hostas were acquired on a \$20 shopping spree when Klehm was in Champaign. The garden has pleasant surprises of whimsy from a bear tea party to a gazing ball, made from a recycled bowling ball that Joe found while walking in the neighborhood. I ambled on aggregate stepping stone and pine needle paths to discover all the fun plants awaiting me at every turn. They winter over the elephant ear caladium, year after year.

Arlene has an eye for art as evident in her quilts. I know this transfers to the garden. Heck, they brought the quilts to the garden too! Her color palette is full. I am not easily over stimulated and I LOVED the colors in this garden! I felt welcomed as I sat on one of their benches that had quilted throw pillows. I asked Joe what his favorite plant was and he replied, “My favorite....well that’s Arlene.”

I admired his *H.* ‘Regal Blush’ and *H.* ‘Trail of Tears’ that his friend Chub gave him. If I didn’t know any better, I’d think the Shindelars were from Minnesota. This couple wanted all of the visitors to experience the pleasure of growing egg(plant)s from seed. Complimentary seed packages were given to all visitors. Now we can plant a seed and grow an unusual annual and





think of them. I think they planted friendship too! A real example of Minnesota nice offered in Iowa.

submitted by Lisa Putnam



## The Jim and Ellen Kelley Garden, Bettendorf, IA



Sample of the conifers

which deer evidently are greatly fond. The deer lick at the peanut butter and are given a startling, but not harmful dose of electricity. Apparently, for most deer, the lesson is quickly learned as everything within the protected area seemed quite untouched by deer. Jim told me that once the year's crop of fawns has been introduced to the fence, they can even turn the fence off without fear that deer will invade their gardens. Without that protection, it would be quite impossible for the Kelleys to grow their collection of woodies or hostas.

The conifers and woodies are displayed on a series of berms, between switchback paths and around a



This was a hosta convention, I know. The truth is, however, that at the Kelley garden, hostas play second fiddle to perhaps the finest privately owned collection of ornamental conifers that I have ever had the privilege of viewing. The Kelleys have been gardening on their 1½ acre property for about 18 years. Before they could even hope to build the garden of their dreams, however, they had to reckon with a herd of resident deer who clearly view their plants as a delicacy. About ¾ of an acre is, therefore, protected by an electric fence which is “baited.” Every several feet along the fence, metal tabs attached to the fence are baited with peanut butter, of



beautiful pond. The conifer collection consists of over three hundred plants including ornamental cultivars of spruce, pine, fir, larch, and many others. Woodies include some beautiful dogwoods, viburnums, and ginkgos. While the most established conifers have been on the property for no more than 18 years, the garden contains many specimens that are much more mature than one normally sees. This speaks very well for the care with which the trees were sited and for the continuing attention which they have received.

The hostas and other shade plants are located on

*(Continued on page 11)*



a wooded portion of the property which contains native trees and a number of well grown hemlocks. The hostas are beautifully displayed in that setting. I was particularly impressed with *H.* 'On Stage', *H.* 'Captain Kirk', and *H.* 'Maraschino Cherry' among others that were very well grown and mature. The Kelleys are especially fond of a lime green seedling with ruffled margins given them by Ron Simmering, which they have named *H.* 'Sarah Catherine' after their eldest granddaughter. The Kelley garden was the last of the day for our group and it was a wonderful way to conclude our tour.

submitted by Lou Horton





## The Jason 'Chub' Harper Garden, Moline, IL

We were welcomed to Jason 'Chub' Harper's spectacular garden by Chub and his dog Molly. And what a garden experience! We followed a trail of manicured grass and brick paths that led us through a display of 600 plus hosta in every size and shape. Beautiful well grown plants included *H.* 'Satisfaction', *H.* 'Royal Flush', *H.* 'Dance With Me', *H.* 'Cadillac', *H.* 'Lakeside Coal Miner', and *H.* 'Katie Q' to mention only a few. A large collection of miniature hostas in hypertufa troughs and other container-grown hosta placed under a large Amur Maple provided enjoyment and some great ideas.



A Trough of Hosta

As if beautifully grown and well labeled hosta weren't enough, we were treated to an amazing variety of mature, rare, one of a kind conifers, and other woody plants. Amazing specimens from the original Korean pine 'Anna' (*Pinus koraiensis*) to a columnar beech (*Fagus sylvatica* 'Fastigiata').



Chub Harper

We mentioned the Amur Maple, but that was just one of many interesting and unusual maples. Other notable specimens included a Paperbark Maple (*Acer grisieum*) and a small flowered maple (*Acer micranthum*).

In awe of the many different, rare, and unusual plants and trees, we could hardly take it all in. We found one glorious surprise after another in this lovely and relaxing garden.

submitted by Arlie Tempel



*H.* 'Fantabulus'



*H.* 'Trail of Tears'

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## Addendum

Chub's garden went through many changes in its 54 years of existence as the plant interest of the owner changed over the years. It started with tall-bearded iris then migrated to daylilies. Later, as more property was added, roses were the focus and then later changed to flowering annuals and a vegetable garden. The biggest change was 40 years ago when dwarf and rare conifers became the focus. There were no limits on collecting this group of plants. Then in 1980 all the garden space, along with two other lots, was taken and something had to change. So in 1981 three semi-truckloads of conifers were dug and donated to Michigan State University Hidden Lake Gardens in Tipton, MI and became the start of "The Harper Collection of Dwarf and Rare Conifers." Today this collection is considered one of the premier conifer collections in the United States with over 500 accessions. In 1990 a similar space problem developed again so nearly all the conifers were dug and donated to the Bickelhaupt Arboretum, Clinton, IA to form "The Heartland Collection of Garden Conifers." In 2001 there were additional plants dug and donated to the Quad Cities Botanical Center, Rock Island, IL when the adjoining lot to the north was vacated.



Thank, Chub, for sharing your knowledge, expertise and plants with so many others.





## The Rick and Teresa Holmquist Garden, Moline, IL



I walked across the street from Chub Harper's "Hostaretum" to the home of Rick and Teresa Holmquist (Rick was away at a jazz festival, but Teresa was a wonderful hostess!).

This garden is quite different from the many that we convention goers have enjoyed at Regional and National Conventions. It is a family garden; a kid lives and plays here! I have been reflecting upon the fact that we don't usually see evidence of young people. But it was here. After seeing a nice front yard, with lawn, trees, and hostas, I walked around the corner into the back yard, a large square area about forty yards

square. Tricycle, lawn furniture, a swing, play equipment, soccer ball, kickball, and much more were out in the middle. The four edges of the large square were packed with striking hostas and conifers. (This is just across the street from Chub, and Teresa grew up next door to Chub! So she and Rick like hostas and conifers.)

There were many fine examples of each. Favorite hostas included a shiny, black *H. 'Potomac Pride,'* a bright *H. 'Liberty,'* and an old, very large *H. montana 'Macrophylla.'* I went quickly to a conifer that I have in my yard: *Ginkgo biloba 'Elmwood' Witches' Broom.* But what a difference! Mine is young, had not been trained, and is only about four feet by four, with would-be leaders going every which way! Teresa's is columnar, very thin, and is fifteen feet tall. (It was nineteen, but a strong wind broke off four



*H. montana 'Macrophylla'*



*Fagus sylvatica 'Roseomarginata'*

feet at the peak. You may have already guessed that mine is now a five-foot column.) Other outstanding conifers included a Nootka cypress (*Xanthocyparis nootkatensis 'Van den Akker'*), and a Nordmann fir (*Abies nordmanniana 'Prostrata'*).

I wasn't done being awed; other trees included four Paperbark Maples (*Acer griseum*) and a very handsome Tricolor Beech (*Fagus sylvatica*

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‘Roseomarginata’). The Holmquists had another feature I admired; several large mirrors propped up against the fences to reflect the backs of hostas and small trees. Very interesting!

But then the show started. Two-and-a-half year old Jack, Teresa’s and Rick’s grandson, awoke from his nap and came out to direct the tour. His yard was full of people, and I am quite sure Jack could see that they lacked discipline. He directed traffic along the narrow paths near the large tub of mini hostas. He did not need to yell or give verbal directions; his hand signals were quite clear, and the garden tourists quickly straightened out. He had authority!

submitted by Irwin Johnson



*Ginkgo biloba* 'Elmwood'



*Acer griseum*



## The Howard and Sandy Fedler Garden, LeClaire, IA



Woods and Meadows. WOW... doesn't that sound like a great place to live. Twenty years ago the Fedlers made the decision to build at this location. Their three acres was just that, Woods and Meadows with no good trees to be seen, no flowering shrubs and definitely no hostas.

Howard was raised on a farm. Sandy's father always had vegetable gardens, roses, other perennials, and annuals. Both Howard and Sandy had that inner desire to assist God in making beautiful gardens. Facing a lot of hard work did not worry them. Brother (Franc Freeman) owned a landscape business and gave the little sister a discount on many specialty plants. They were guided by him to become members of the Mississippi Valley Hosta Society.

How fortunate for Howard and Sandy that they both love working the earth with their hands. Also fortunate that Howard has the "power" to do the heavy things and the ability to "build" whatever Sandy's mind imagines. And, how lucky that they work so well together.

The Fedlers planted many trees to provide the shade needed for their hostas. They cleared the wooded areas of the unwanted trees leaving the walnuts. Then they built paths, steps, bridges, walls, arbors, and added many unusual trees, while bringing in truckloads of good Iowa dirt and sand.



**H. 'Christmas Cookies'**

Each year they agree that they just don't need to add anything else to these three acres. Yet every year they continue to add more plants. There is always something out there that they just have to have. Sandy first discovered hostas 40 years ago while living in Oklahoma and knew she had to have them at her own home. Today Howard and Sandy have over 600 varieties.

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We could all tell they enjoyed gardening. As Sandy says, "What better way to spend time with God than doing something we love?"



*H. 'Showboat'*





## The Vander Veer Botanical Park, Davenport, IA



Vander Veer Botanical Park is located on 33.8 gently sloping acres of land in the heart of Davenport. The park was farmland in 1865, fairgrounds in 1867, and became a City Park in 1885. The park is home to a collection of more than 600 trees representing over 70 species, some over 100 years old.

Vander Veer Park continues to evolve and expand, delighting the public. There are Old World Gardens featuring annual beds of the style popular in many European countries of the

19th century; the Municipal Rose, an All-America Rose Selections garden, under a pergola with fountain; the Children's Sculpture garden; an All-America Selections Display Gardens where you can enjoy perennial and annual plants of the year and the whimsy of the Plant Zoo. The park also includes the Hosta Glade, which includes over 300 varieties of hosta, companion plants, and spring woodland wildflowers. This glade was created by the Mississippi Valley Hosta Society in 1996 and named an AHS National Display Garden in 2003.



Other attractions include a fish-stocked lagoon with two constantly spewing fountains and a treed island in the center. The island is an attraction to many wild ducks that nest there, and the ducks attract many people who want to watch and feed them.



**Audra Wilson and Liz Stratton**

There is the Grand Allee, a brick paved walkway, running north to south, beginning in front of the Conservatory and culminating in front of the large stone fountain. The Grand Allee is patterned from photos taken at the park at the turn of the century. In the evening the restored stone fountain is a sight to behold with its colored lights and rhythmic patterns.

Another popular attraction is the sculpture, Majestic Hope, carved by a local artist, Tom Gleich, from a large tree.



*H. 'Fragrant Blue'*



*H. 'Potomac Pride'*



*H. 'Elata'*



All-America Selections



Eating Again?



## MINI HOSTA RECLASSIFICATION

The C&N (*Classification & Nomenclature*) Committee (of the American Hosta Society) has opened a hosta forum dealing with mini size hostas. Most of you know that a number of hostas originally classified as mini hostas have grown beyond the mini size. We feel that input from all corners of the world is required to solve this problem.

Please announce this in your newsletters and join us at <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/minihosta/>

W. George Schmid and Warren I. Pollock, C&N Committee, AHS

*The following is what you will first find when going to the internet site and it explains this project. It was posted on 8/2/07.*

### **Mission:**

- To assist in determining which hostas, based on growers experiences, meet The American Hosta Society criteria for a mini hosta.
- To maintain a listing of AHS Mini Hostas to be used for the annual AHS Mini Hosta Popularity Poll.
- To provide a forum for exchange of information on growing mini hostas.

### **AHS Mini Hosta Criteria:**

In 2005, The American Hosta Society adopted new, slightly larger requirements for a mature mini hosta:

- Leaf blade area - less than about 3.5 square inches (22 square cm.) (*Length x Width = square*)
- Clump height - less than about 7.0 inches (18 cm.)
- Clump width - no limit. (*Submit information in decimals, not fractions*)
- In addition, the hosta size designations tiny and dwarf were discontinued.

### **Background:**

The AHS Classification and Nomenclature Committee has responsibility for determining which hostas are minis. Dimensions given in the official registrations were used: leaf blade area (leaf length multiplied by leaf width) and plant (clump) height. Kevin P. Walek, International Hosta Registrar, has this information online at [hostaregistrar.org](http://hostaregistrar.org). Sometimes dimensions in the official registrations are not representative of a mature clump: they are too small. Accordingly, some hostas considered to be minis based on registration information do not meet the AHS Mini Hosta Criteria when mature plants.

This forum will develop two lists, with the intent of keeping them up to date. One will comprise registered and species minis satisfying the AHS requirements, and be used for the AHS Mini Hosta Popularity Poll, tabulated by Bob Olsen, The Hosta Journal editor, and published annually in the Journal. The other will comprise unregistered minis meeting the AHS requirements, be used by the nursery trade, and in designating mini hosta collections.

Help from all hosta gardeners is needed. Your input is solicited. Please participate.

W. George Schmid, Chair,  
AHS Classification and Nomenclature Committee

Warren I. Pollock, Member,  
AHS Classification and Nomenclature Committee

*To participate in the forum or to read the lively debate on this subject and view photos that have been submitted, click on **JOIN THE GROUP** box and register. Otherwise, there are some postings that can be read without registering.*

*This is an excerpt from the internet site that explains the project in practical terms. It is from a posting dated 9/7/07 from W. George Schmid.*

You don't need to be a scientist. Just get your ruler out, go out in the garden and start measuring. If you think you have found a mini that seems to be too large to be one (by our definition), take measurements of several leaves (length and width) and record them. Then, if at all possible, use that same scale, lay it next to the leaves and take a photo (digital or film is OK). We prefer digital, because that can be sent easily. Film is OK, too. Just send the slide or photo to me, I will scan it and publish it. This may seem like too much, but it will give us data to prove our position. All of this will be published on the forum, and later in The Hosta Journal.

I realize, it is late in the season, and such observations may soon be impossible. It is not too late for some of you so go ahead and get the data as much as you can. For others, plan for next season and make a list of the minis you think need to be "investigated." Remember, registered ones first. You can however, collect data for non-registered minis (while you are at it) and submit those also. We will do the analysis. Here is what we need to record:

- 1) Name and age of plant and name of observer;
- 2) How long in the garden;
- 3) Location of garden;
- 4) In-ground or potted;
- 5) Size of several leaves (length and width);
- 6) Size of clump (diameter);
- 7) Date of observation;
- 8) Any other notes regarding experience with plant (good grower, slow grower, not easy to keep alive)

Then take the picture (s) and submit these data. There are not too many hostas involved and by next year's September we should have a pretty good idea which is and which is not a true mini. Here is your chance to contribute to Hosta science, horticulture and cultivation.

When the final list (at a given date) is published, I promise that all of those who participated will get full credit for their contributions.

*To submit information to W. George Schmid:  
email at [hostahill@bellsouth.net](mailto:hostahill@bellsouth.net)  
or mail to 4417 Goodfellows Court, Tucker, GA 30084-2710*



# Hosta Hybridizing Basics and Beyond

by Don Dean

Why hybridize with such a wide selection of plants available on the market today? The answer may lie in any number of reasons. A simple joy is gained in watching a new creation begin from a single leaf and be transposed into a beautiful, mature plant. Anticipating the emergence of a seedling in the spring following each successive winter of its existence brings added excitement with knowledge that this creation will surely expose a new dimension of itself with each passing year. Curiosity is satisfied. For those with patience and vision, solutions are revealed regarding the complexities of genetic dominant and recessive traits thereby resolving puzzles. The majority of new and old introductions are chance gifts of the bees and other pollinators or are sports of existing plants. The latter lend a new color pattern in the foliage but generally maintain the other characteristics of the mother plant. Although beautiful, it is a bit like a row of “tract houses with varied paint applications.” True distinctiveness will need to come from new genetic mixtures or the possible but rare genetic mutation.



Once the decision is made the mechanics of hybridizing is a simple process. It requires the transfer of ripe pollen from the anther of a flower to a receptive stigma of another (or same) flower. Insects and wind can complete the task without any intent. The art of hybridizing is a bit more complex, requiring intent. Parent selection, a few simple tools, a method to prevent insects from completing the job, and a simple knowledge of how the pollen and stigma interact are required.

A pair of tweezers (locking are ideal) or hemostats are used to collect the stamen from the pollen parent. Take hold of the stamen by the filament below the anther and simply break them off the flower. Jeweler's tags from an office supply store and a black, fine tip Sharpie can be used to label the cross. Other materials depend upon your selected method of preventing nature's pollinators from spoiling your cross.

Setting goals is deemed important for hybridization. Know yourself well enough to be realistic about the amount of time you can reasonably dedicate to the process. Select and narrow your goals accordingly. The goal may be distinctiveness with desirable traits. From here, it may be as vast as variegation or as narrow as miniature plants with intense blue and variegation.

Select your parents. Both “line breeding” and “stirring the pot” (out crossing) will accentuate the desirable as well as undesirable characteristics. Learn the general traits of the major groups of hosta species and the many closely related hybrids. Reading plant registrations, descriptions in detailed catalogs, and references will help.

Fertilization of the flower works on a first pollen, first served basis. Ensuring you beat the pollinators is crucial. Removing the petals which attract the pollinators and removing stamen works well if doing a small number of crosses. Complete this the evening before flowers are going to open. Some flowers open in the middle of the night, so you'll also beat the nocturnal pollinators.



A temperature-controlled, insect free greenhouse or a sunny window in your home is ideal when using potted plants.

Making large numbers of crosses on a daily basis and not wishing to mess with potted parents before winter requires a different tactic. Bamboo garden stakes, a piece of fiberglass window screen, and two spring-loaded clothespins work well. Stick the bamboo stake in the ground alongside the flower scape, fold a 14 in. x 20 in. piece of screen in half, roll half an inch of one end over twice and secure with one clothes pin. Place the screen envelope over the stake and scape, and close the third side opposite the first fold of the screen envelope by a single fold with the second clothes pin. This envelope is quickly and easily removed to make the cross and replaced when done. Folding the screen along different bisectors gives flexibility for both short and tall flower scapes. Protect both your pod and pollen parents to avoid both pollinators and pollen contamination.



Select your pollen. Keep these basics in mind. Pollen is ready when dry and fluffy. It keeps for days in the refrigerator or may be frozen and then thawed and dried. Collect the stamen as the anthers begin to crack open but before the pollen is fluffy. Move frozen pollen from the freezer to the refrigerator the evening before you wish to use it. It will be thawed and only need time for anthers to finish opening and dry the pollen the next morning. Anthers opening as well as fertilization is temperature dependent. Move anthers out in the sun to hasten opening and pollen readiness. Make your crosses

on days of more moderate temperatures. Ants can be pollen robbers, eradicate.

Strike the end of the stigma with the selected pollen. The transfer of color assures you that the deed is done! You are too late if a droplet of liquid has formed on the stigma. This liquid serves to seal the end against pollination. Time of day, air temperature, the presence of sun striking the flower, and the characteristic of fragrance will all effect the window of time which is available for pollinating the flower. Fragrant plants typically bloom in the night.



Many, many key steps remain:

- Mark your crosses.
- Collect your seed.
- Sow your seed.
- Keep accurate records,
- Cull mercilessly.
- Select, label and transfer.



Don went on to tease all present with pictures of plants and seedlings with colored scapes and/or petioles, good blues that hold their color, ones which are wavy, exhibit pebbled texture, have picrusted edges with variegation, and many other mouth-watering variations.



# Midwest Regional Hosta Society Show 2007

hosted by the Mississippi Valley Hosta Society

July 14, 2006

Davenport, Iowa

<b>Division I</b>	<b>Horticulture</b>	<b>(248 leaves)</b>
Best of Show	<i>H.</i> 'Rhythm & Blues'	Ed Schulz, Sr., Peosta, IA
Best Seedling/Sport	<i>H.</i> 'Neat Splash' x <i>H.</i> 'Northern Halo'	Greg Johnson, Marshalltown, IA
Sweepstakes		Ed Schulz, Sr., Peosta, IA
Section I	(no award)	
Section II	<i>H.</i> 'Tylers Treasure'	Cindy Tomashek, Rochester, MN
Section III	<i>H.</i> 'Lakeside Mom'	Tim Cahill, Lisbon, IA
Section IV	<i>H.</i> 'Rhythm & Blues'	Ed Schulz, Sr., Peosta, IA
Section V	<i>H.</i> 'Frosted Waves'	Terri Simmering, Bettendorf, IA
Section VI	(no award)	
Section VII	(no award)	
Section VIII	(no award)	
Section IX	(no award)	
Section X	(no award)	
Section XI	(no award)	
Section XII	(no award)	
<b>Division II</b>	<b>Container Grown Hosta</b>	(no award)
<b>Division III</b>	<b>Trough/Container Gardens Arranged for Effect</b>	<b>(5 entries)</b>
Grand Award		Sally Stewart, Riverdale, IA
<b>Division IV</b>	<b>Educational Displays</b>	(no award)
<b>Division V</b>	<b>Non-Competitive Exhibits</b>	(no award)
<b>Division VI</b>	<b>Artistic Design</b>	<b>(17 entries)</b>
Best Artistic Design	'Nothing Runs Like a Deer'	Bonnie Evensen, Baraboo, WI
<b>Division VII</b>	<b>Specialty Division</b>	<b>Midwest Preview</b>
Grand Award	Sport of <i>H.</i> 'Ghost Spirit'	Roxanne Meyer, Oxford Junction, IA
	Seedling of <i>H.</i> 'Pineapple Upside Down Cake'	Nancy Solberg, Chapel Hill, NC
Peoples' Choice	(tie) Sport of <i>H.</i> 'Ghost Spirit'	Roxanne Meyer, Oxford Junction, IA
	(tie) Sport of <i>H.</i> 'Squash Casserole'	John and Liz Stratton, Iowa City, IA
	Seedling of <i>H.</i> 'Pineapple Upside Down Cake'	Nancy Solberg, Chapel Hill, NC



**Shopping - by Arnie Tempel**



**Nothing Runs Like a Deer**



**Bonnie Evensen**



**Priming - by Lisa Putnam**



**Eating AND Shopping**



## Minutes, MRHS Board Meeting

A MRHS board meeting was held on July 13, 2007 at 4:35 PM at the Radisson Hotel in Davenport, Iowa. The following were in attendance:

Tom Micheletti, President	Audra Wilson
Lou Horton, Vice President	Barb Schroeder
Pete Postlewaite, Treasurer	Chuck Steele, Region 5 Director
Carolyn Hamilton, Secretary Pro-Tem	Floyd Rogers, Newsletter Editor

Audra Wilson advised Des Moines would like to host Midwest Regional convention again, possibly in 2010.

Pete Postlewaite presented a budget for 2007-08 and reported there would be a deficit. After discussion, Carolyn Hamilton moved and Chuck Steele seconded the budget be revised and money taken from the Mutual Fund account if needed. We would still be donating \$5000 to the AHS Virus Research Fund. Pete also advised MRHS presently had 247 members, which was up 7% from a year ago.

The by-law changes, as published in *The Hosta Leaves* newsletter, were reviewed again and will be presented for approval at the annual meeting.

Tom advised he held the first meeting of local presidents or their representatives earlier in the day and hoped it will continue at future conventions. The purpose is to share ideas and work toward cooperation between our clubs and the MRHS. He felt this first meeting had met the objective and a lot of ideas were shared.

Barb Schroeder, Chair of the 2009 Convention in Champaign, IL, advised that she and Deb Guardia had revised and updated the convention book originally prepared by Irwin Johnson. In this regard, Tom proposed the MRHS Vice President also be considered a Convention Liaison in the future. The Vice President could also be a central repository of information of past conventions, keep this convention book current and pass information on to the new convention chairman as needed. Chuck Steele moved this be established and Carolyn Hamilton seconded. The by-laws will have to be amended.

The web site was discussed and Floyd said he could add more information and photographs as required.

Tom also recommended the board consider establishing a Midwest Award to acknowledge a person or local society's contribution to benefit the Midwest Region. This award would be given at the discretion of the board or recommendation of a local society and would not necessarily be given every year. A criteria will need to be established. Tom felt this award should be called the DeEtta Montgomery Outstanding Service Award and felt DeEtta Montgomery should be the first recipient and be given this award posthumously at this year's annual meeting. Carolyn will develop a plaque, which will be given at a later date.

Audra Wilson thanked everyone for their consideration, help and prayers during the last year because of Fred's stroke.

Carolyn moved the meeting be adjourned and Chuck seconded the motion.

After the auction results were known and better than had been projected, a short meeting of board members was held and a revised budget was developed, showing new auction figures. Motion to accept was made by Lou Horton and seconded by Floyd Rogers.

## Minutes, General Meeting

A General Meeting of the Midwest Regional Hosta Society was held on Saturday, July 14, 2007, at the convention held at the Radisson Hotel, Davenport, Iowa.

Bob Poole moved and Roger Koopmans seconded the minutes, as printed in *The Hosta Leaves* newsletter, be approved.

The Treasurer, Pete Postlewaite, presented the budget for the 2007-08 year, noting there was a deficit and additional funds, if required, would be withdrawn from the Mutual Fund account. He also noted \$5000 is still going to be given to the AHS Virus Research Fund. Jim Weidman moved and Ron Simmering seconded the budget be approved. Pete also advised the membership had grown 7% to a total of 247 members.

Proposed by-law changes were published in the newsletter and Bob Poole moved and Betsy Rogers seconded these changes be allowed.

Arlie Temple, Chairman of the Nominating Committee, announced the following slate of officers and the proposed slate was approved by the membership:

President – Lou Horton  
Vice President – Carolyn Hamilton  
Secretary – Barb Schroeder  
Treasurer – Pete Postlewaite  
Newsletter Editor – Floyd Rogers

Tom presented Floyd Rogers an award for producing one of two best newsletters of the American Hosta Society. This award was received at the national convention held in Indianapolis.

Tom announced the MRHS was establishing a new award to acknowledge a person or society who had been instrumental in promoting the genus *Hosta*, and this award would be called the DeEtta Montgomery Service Award, in honor of DeEtta. This award would be awarded at the discretion of the board or from a nomination or suggestion from a local chapter. A criteria would be developed at a later date. He then announced DeEtta would be the first honoree and presented the award posthumously to Dean Piatt, DeEtta's brother.

As there was no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Carolyn Hamilton  
Secretary Pro-Tem



## Midwest Regional Hosta Society - Treasurer's Report

For FY July 1, 2006 - June 30, 2007

	Actual 7/1/06 - 6/30/07	Budget 7/1/07 - 6/30/08
<b>Revenue:</b>		
Dues	\$ 1,780	\$ 2,000
Auction	\$ 9,416	\$ 8,500
Total Revenue	\$ 11,196	\$ 10,500
<b>Expenses:</b>		
Donations	\$ 4,220	\$ 5,000
Newsletter	\$ 5,409	\$ 6,000
Brochures	0	\$ 200
Internet	\$ 192	\$ 200
Postage & Supplies	\$ 429	\$ 500
Awards	\$ 92	\$ 125
Convention	\$ 476	\$ 500
Miscellaneous	\$ 187	\$ 200
Total Expenses	\$ 10,342	\$ 12,725
<b>Fund Balances:</b>		
Checking		\$ 1,637
Savings		\$ 709
Mutual Fund		\$ 26,797

### Silently My Hosta Grow by Dawn Anderson

Winter becomes spring	Soon the slugs will come
Sun warming the earth surface	Gnawing at every leaf
Days become longer	Shimmering slime trails
Tulips are blooming	Summer passes too fast
Hosta breaking dormancy	Fall colors appear on leaves
Trees, shrubs leafing out	Gold, orange, yellow
Warm spring rains refresh	Hostas die back now
Thunder, lightning feed the earth	Taking a long winters nap
Hostas unfurling	Winter becomes spring
Nature comes to life	
Silently my hosta grow	
Sizes small to large	

## Winter Scientific Meeting of the Midwest Regional Hosta Society Hosted by the Northern Illinois Hosta Society

It's time to begin planning for winter; The Winter Scientific Meeting of the Midwest Regional Hosta Society that is. This year's big winter event will be held Saturday January 19, 2008 at the Hyatt Regency Woodfield Hotel, 1800 East Golf Rd., Schaumburg, IL (800) 223-1234. They have given us an \$87.00 room rate. Please make your own reservations before January 6 and mention the Hosta Society to guarantee the rate. The Hyatt Regency Woodfield Hotel is the same great location used for last year's very successful event.

Again we have an All Star line-up of speakers with interesting and timely topics

- |                |                                    |
|----------------|------------------------------------|
| Glenn Herold   | "You're Barking up the Right Tree" |
| Roy Klehm      | "Plant Developers of Note"         |
| Doug Beilstein | "Hybridizing and More..."          |
| Bill Segatto   | "Water Gardening"                  |
| Chris Wilhoite | "Arisaemas"                        |
| Mark Zilis     | "Hostas of Distinction"            |

The cost of the winter extravaganza is only \$45.00 per person, which includes a continental breakfast and a deli buffet lunch. Please make checks payable to the Northern Illinois Hosta Society, and mail before January 6, 2008, with your name, address, phone, and the number attending, to:

Morgan Wilson  
1880 N. Hennepin  
LaSalle IL 61301  
Phone (815) 224-1383

**Sign-up after January 6 2008 is \$55.00.**

On-site registration will begin on Friday January 18, from 3:00 pm - 6:00 pm, and Saturday January 19 from 7:00 am - 8:00 am. The program will run from 8:00 am - 4:30 pm on Saturday. Dinner Friday and Saturday nights will be on your own at one of the many fine area restaurants. The Hospitality Suite will be open from 7:30 pm - 11pm, both Friday and Saturday nights, for all that good Hosta fellowship. I look forward to seeing you there.

Sincerely,  
Tom Micheletti  
Northern Illinois Hosta Society

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Name of first attendee \_\_\_\_\_ @ \$45.00 \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Name of 2nd attendee \_\_\_\_\_ @ \$45.00 \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Late fee if paid after January 6, 2008 is \$55.00**

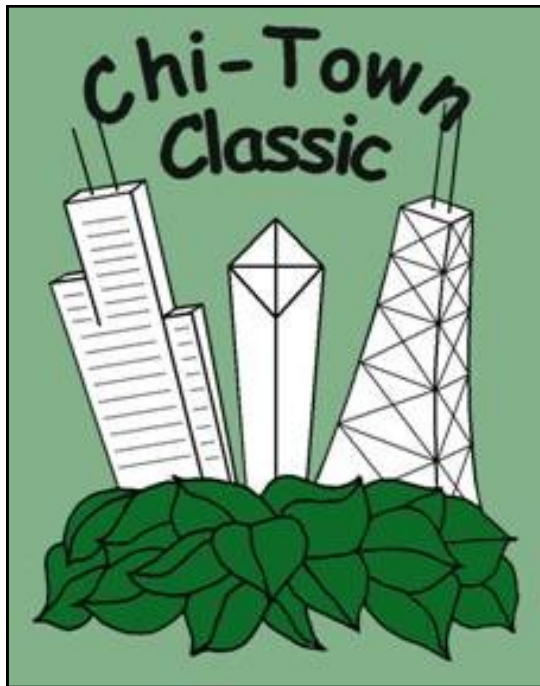
Total \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Address of attendee, or contact person:

Street \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_ Phone ( ) \_\_\_\_\_

Confirmation notices are not sent out. Please retain a copy of this registration form and your check if you are in doubt of registration. Please allow 5 working days for registrations to reach us before the event date. We will be unable to issue refunds after January 6, 2008.



## 2008 Convention

hosted by  
the Northern Illinois Hosta Society  
July 10-12, 2008  
Marriott Hotel  
50 North Martingale Rd.  
Schaumburg, IL 60173  
847-240-0100

The convention will begin Thursday evening July 10 when the vendors open for you to purchase all those wonderful new and exciting hosta plants, as well as the tried and true classics. You will want to arrive early to get the first choice of some of the rare beauties. The evening will conclude with the hostality suite where we will renew those good hosta friendships and meet new hosta friends.

Friday will feature a Hosta Leaf Show, a major attraction of every convention. Vending will also be open to purchase more plants. A speaker will inform and entertain us in the afternoon with the latest in gardening information. Later Friday evening, a banquet will be held, followed by the plant auction. The evening will end with the gathering in the hostality suite.

Saturday will begin with a breakfast at the hotel followed by a tour of the Asselborn, Harris, Horton, and McGovern gardens. We'll return to the hotel for lunch, more vending and viewing of the leaf show, then later leave for the evening barbeque at Rich's Foxwillow Pines Nursery, stopping along the way to visit the Postlewaite and Van Ostrand gardens. Rich's is a gardeners dream, featuring hundreds of rare, dwarf, and unusual trees and conifers. They also sell hostas, the proceeds of which benefit the Heifer Foundation.

The plant vendors from all across the country will be open Thursday evening, all day Friday, and after lunch on Saturday. The leaf show will be open after judging on Friday and after lunch on Saturday. Each evening will culminate with refreshments in the hostality suite where attendees can unwind and visit with other hosta enthusiasts and engage in hosta conversation.

Before leaving on Sunday for home, directions will be provided for more gardens that will be available for you to tour on your own.

Please join us July 10-12 for a Chi-Town Classic good time!

Watch the web site at <http://mrhs2008.org/> for registration information and schedules.



## AMERICAN HOSTA SOCIETY

We invite you to join over 3,000 other hosta enthusiasts as members of the American Hosta Society. Members receive three issues per year of The Hosta Journal, which includes color photographs of hostas, reports on national conventions, scientific information concerning current research having to do with hostas, and advertisements of interest to hosta families. Membership checks should be made out to "AHS," and mailed to Sandie Markland, AHS Membership Secretary, 8702 Pinnacle Rock Court, Lorton, VA 22079-3029. Dues for one year are \$25 for an individual and \$29 for a family. (Dues will be going up next year.) Joining AHS will enable you to attend our national conventions, next year in St. Louis, 2009 in Lansing, Michigan, 2010 in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

### Advertise in the *Hosta Leaves*

Contact Floyd Rogers for publishing deadlines and more details. (630) 858-3538 or [rogersf@COD.edu](mailto:rogersf@COD.edu).



*H. plantaginea* 'Aphrodite'

<b>Full Color Ads:</b>			
<b>Size</b>	<b>Single Issue</b>	<b>Full Year</b>	<b>Dimensions</b>
Full page	\$275	\$475	6½" x 9½"
1/2 page	175	300	6½" x 4½"
1/4 page	90	155	3⅛" x 4½"
1/8 page	45	80	3⅛" x 2"
<b>Black &amp; White Ads:</b>			
<b>Size</b>	<b>Single Issue</b>	<b>Full Year</b>	<b>Dimensions</b>
Full page	\$100	\$175	6½" x 9½"
1/2 page	55	95	6½" x 4½"
1/4 page	40	70	3⅛" x 4½"
1/8 page	30	50	3⅛" x 2"

**MIDWEST REGIONAL HOSTA SOCIETY**  
**FALL 2007 NEWSLETTER**

**Floyd Rogers, Newsletter Editor**  
**21172 Andover Rd**  
**Kildeer, IL 60047**

BULK RATE  
STAMP  
REQUIRED

**PRSRT STD**

**ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED**

**Bulk Mail Issue**

Because of the use of bulk mail (at a substantial savings), mail will not be forwarded. Members must, therefore, notify Pete Postlewaite, the Treasurer, each time their address changes. This can be done via email ([Peter@ShadyPath.com](mailto:Peter@ShadyPath.com)), phone (847-438-7790), or snail mail at the address on the newsletter cover.

Please check the expiration date on the label located above this notice.

**MIDWEST REGIONAL HOSTA SOCIETY**

Our Regional Society is composed of over 300 members in AHS Region Five (Illinois, Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota, and Wisconsin) and many members from other states. We publish a twice-a-year newsletter, hold an annual convention each summer, and hold the Winter Scientific Meeting each January in Schaumburg, Illinois. To join, or renew membership, please send a check for \$20 (ten dollars per year) to Peter Postlewaite. Next summer's convention will be held in Chicagoland, 2009 in Champaign, IL, and 2010 in Des Moines, IA. Our conventions include a Hosta Show; a Judges' Clinic; garden tours; speakers; vendors of hostas, companion plants, and garden art; a lively auction; a sit-down banquet and a buffet dinner; and lots of hospitality and fellowship!