



The Royal Standard

May 2017

WISCONSIN HOSTA SOCIETY
EST. 1991

Children, It's Spring

And this is the lady
Whom everyone loves,
Ms. Violet
in her purple gown
Or, on special occasions,
A dress the color
Of sunlight. She sits
In the mossy weeds and waits
To be noticed.
She loves dampness.
She loves attention.
She loves especially
To be picked by careful fingers,
Young fingers, entranced
By what has happened
To the world.
We, the older ones,
Call it Spring,
And we have been through it
Many times.
But there is still nothing
Like the children bringing home
Such happiness
In their small hands.

— Mary Oliver

2017 CALENDAR WISCONSIN HOSTA SOCIETY

June 4 • **WHS Hosta Auction at Olbrich Gardens**

11AM Registration/Public Viewing

12:00 noon, Auction Begins

Many rare and choice hosta specimens.

July ?? • **Bus Tour to Indiana.**

More information soon.

July 22 • **Leaf Competition at Land of the Giants Hosta Farm (LOTG).**

6PM LOTG, Milton, WI

WHS is catering the meal. Bring chairs and your best hosta leaves.

August 5 • **WHS Summer Potluck Picnic (2PM) and Garden Tours (11AM-1:30PM).**

Host: Marla Robinson. 2317 Gold Ct, Fitchburg
Tours:

Kim Sorbet (1867 Paddock Place, Fitchburg)

Cherith Bruckner (1889 Paddock Pl, Fitchburg)

Windi Fourdraine (922 Johnson Ave. Oregon)

August 17 • **Rotary Gardens Tour**

6PM, Janesville Rotary Gardens, led by Rotary
Gardens Director Mark Dwyer

September 13 • **Membership Meeting**

6-8:30PM, Olbrich Gardens

"Game Night"

October 11 • **Membership Meeting**

6-8:30PM, Olbrich Gardens

Speaker: Kathy Sisson- hybridizer, Master
Hosta Show Judge from Avon, CT.

October 14 • **Bonfire at LOTG Hosta Farm,
aka "Phil-O's Giant Marshmallow Roast"**

3PM LOTG, Milton, WI

WHS is catering dinner. Bring chairs!

November 4 • **WHS Harvest Party**

1:00-4PM, Firefly Coffeehouse, Oregon, WI.

Fun, food and games to finish the season!

WHS 2017 Hosta Auction

SUNDAY JUNE 4, 2017

We are instituting a major change to the annual WHS Hosta Auction. Due to the threat of Jumping Worms, we will not be accepting member-dug plants this year. Instead we are purchasing/requesting donations of hostas from reputable commercial growers. This should help alleviate any concerns about spreading the invasive Jumping Worm. Please help us advertise the sale by posting the email flyer to your FaceBook pages; forwarding to your garden clubs and friends; plus hanging printed copies at local stores, banks, etc. The bigger the crowd, the better!

Auction set-up will begin at 9AM Sunday, and bidder registration/public viewing starts at 11AM. We'll get the auction started at noon. This year we are accepting the following forms of payment: cash, check or hosta bucks.

If anyone wants to help set up on Sunday morning, please contact Phil Timm (hostamanphil@yahoo.com).



SPECIAL DELIVERY

After a few false starts, "Bob the Birdhouse" was finally delivered to new WHS member Pat Byrne last month. Congratulations, Pat!

UPCOMING WHS ELECTIONS

Our current President and Vice President's terms will be over soon, so it's time to accept nominations for these offices. (WHS Bylaws stipulate 2-year terms) Voting is held at the October meeting. Please consider running for office, since WHS needs member involvement on all levels to stay strong. Nominations will be accepted at the September meeting or you can also contact WHS Secretary Marlene Rosenberg (uniquelyhostas@yahoo.com) with nominations.

According to the Bylaws, the duties of President are to "preside at all meetings of the Society and the Board. He/she shall appoint all Committee Chairpersons and shall be an ex-officio member of all committees except the Nominating Committee."

The Vice-President "shall, in the absence of the President, perform the duties of the President and shall serve as Chairperson of the Program Committee."



WHS Board Members

Jeff Miller
President
MrHosta@charter.net

Phil Timm
**Vice President &
Program Chair**
hostamanphil@yahoo.com

Marlene Rosenberg
Secretary
uniquelyhostas@yahoo.com

Marla Robinson
Treasurer & Membership
j_robinson@charter.net

Sandy O'Malley
Member-at-Large
4gardenstuff@gmail.com

MARCH AND APRIL MEMBER MEETINGS

(AKA "A SERIES OF UNFORTUNATE EVENTS")

At our March meeting we were lucky to host Rob Zimmer, an award-winning nature/garden author, columnist, and radio host. After a visit from "Murphy" (as in "Murphy's Law") we were finally able to see Rob's fantastic photos of shade gardens. Inspirational!

"Murphy" returned for the April meeting when we unexpectedly found ourselves meeting in Mary Polancih's living room instead of Olbrich. It was a fun, cozy gathering, and we really got to know each other well! Mary's oversized window shade made the perfect place for VHS President Jeff Miller to present photos, tips and tricks for hosta growing. Thank you Mary!



ID Label/Stake Group Order

From Terry Anne Taylor :

Labels and stakes look so nice in our gardens. I know I get as many comments about my stakes as I do my plants! If you are thinking of ordering labels/stakes this year, now is a great time to start your list....as you can see where old signs are broken or missing; as new plants are coming in that you got last year; or as you buy new plants. Not just for hosta, but anything else you have that you want labelled also. Labels with stakes are usually around \$2.25 each. I will order in July, with delivery at the picnic in August. Happy gardening!

FYI

WHS SUMMER POTLUCK PICNIC AND GARDEN TOURS

Marla Robinson is hosting this year's summer picnic on August 5. She is located at 2317 Gold Ct., Fitchburg, WI 53711. (Phone 608-273-3641)

As in past years, there will be additional gardens to tour before the picnic. WHS members Kim Sorbet (1867 Paddock Place, Fitchburg), Cherith Bruckner, (1889 Paddock Place, Fitchburg) and Windi Fourdraine (922 Johnson Ave., Oregon) will open their gardens for pre-picnic tours from 11am-1:30 pm on August 5.

The picnic starts at 2pm. WHS is providing meat, water/soda, plates, utensils, and napkins. Members should bring a dish to pass and lawn chairs. There also will be a shade canopy set up over long tables and chairs.

WHS is providing plants for the picnic auction, but note that we will **NOT** be doing a plant swap. (so don't bring plants!) Instead, we are going to have a **Garden Art Swap**. It will run in the same format as past plant swaps, so if you want to pick early, you should bring something eye-catching! You can make it yourself or you can purchase it, just as long as it's garden art.

Please RSVP to Marla (j_robinson@charter.net or 608-273-3641) if you plan to attend the picnic. Family members are invited too. Hope to see you there!



YIKES! WHERE DID THOSE WEEDS COME FROM?



We've been blessed with a cool wet spring this year which the plants are loving. Unfortunately, the weeds are also flourishing. One particular offender, Garlic Mustard, is flowering now. This is an insidious invader that loves dappled shade conditions....so our hosta gardens are paradise for it. Whether you choose to bag/burn/poison/eat it, make sure you keep an eye out for it!



HOSTA VIRUS MYTHS

BY C.H. FALSTAD

(originally posted on the Hosta Library site)

***NEW* MYTH** - HVX spreads easily/HVX is difficult to spread.

FACT - Which is it? Dr. Lockhart, who is credited with discovering HVX has said it is difficult to spread, while others say it is easy to spread. It depends on the point of view. A virologist considers it difficult compared to other viruses which can spread more easily because they are transmitted by insects or other vectors. Gardeners and nursery owners on the other hand feel that it spreads easily because it is easy to spread it while doing the things they normally do with the plants, like cutting flower scapes, damaged leaves, or dividing. In this case there is no myth because both are true.

***NEW* MYTH** - Some hostas are immune.

FACT - The basis for this myth (and it is a dangerous myth at that) is a study done by Dr. Lockhart. In this study several varieties were not infected despite numerous tries. The report on this study in *The Hosta Journal* did unfortunately use the word "immune" to describe these plants. Testing for this "immunity" was not exhaustive, and the use of the word was clearly a case of jumping the gun. Since this study, one of the "immune" cultivars has tested positive (not the actual plant from the study), and this should be taken as evidence that these cultivars are not to be considered truly immune unless further testing proves them so. In a sidelight, articles mentioning this "immune" list have started adding plants that were not in the original study. One included 'Gold Standard', which is one of the most easily and heavily infected in the marketplace. No hostas should be considered immune at this time.

MYTH - Plants infected with a virus may recover.

FACT - Viruses do not just disappear, nor does a plant "fight off" an infection. The virus is permanent and will be with the plant until it dies. For practical purposes in the garden and nursery, there are no cures for viruses.

MYTH - Hostas from Tissue Culture will not have viruses.

FACT - If a hosta has a virus before going into tissue culture, the virus will be propagated along with the plant. Many infected hostas in the marketplace were tissue-cultured. Plants that were clean after the tissue culture process may also be infected when being grown on. Labs are beginning to test all propagating material so in the near future tissue cultured hostas from those labs will be clean.

MYTH - All hosta cultivars will exhibit the same symptoms if infected with the same virus.

FACT - Symptoms can vary considerably with the same virus, and different strains of a virus may cause different symptoms.

MYTH - All mottled foliage in hostas is caused by viruses.

FACT - Mottling patterns in hostas can have a variety of causes, some of them environmental, and many have causes which we do not yet understand. 'Xanadu Paisley' has been repeatedly tested and despite its similarity to HVX symptoms has yet to be shown to be infected with any diseases. Old plants like 'Cynthia' and 'Filigree' also have no known cause for their mottled appearance and have never been known to pass this trait to other plants.

MYTH - Viruses will kill, or at least severely inhibit growth of the host plant.

FACT - Eventually, some deterioration in the health of the plant can occur, but a plant may survive for many years when infected with a virus. Different viruses affect the plant's health at different rates, but some effects may go unnoticed.

HOSTA VIRUS MYTHS, cont.

MYTH - If symptoms disappear after showing up in a previous year the plant has either cured itself or didn't have a virus in the earlier year.

FACT – The expression of virus symptoms can disappear, but this does not mean the plant is cured. The virus is still present in the plant and still able to infect other plants. Sometimes this can be due to environmental factors that might reduce the rate a virus replicates thus preventing a high enough population, or titer, to effect expression.

MYTH - Removing a leaf showing infection, or dividing out the portion of the hosta showing symptoms will help cure the plant.

FACT – Removing some symptomatic tissue will have no real effect in "curing" a plant of a virus. The virus is already in all or most all parts of a plant by the time symptoms show.

MYTH - All plants infected with HVX will show symptoms immediately.

FACT – To the contrary, many plants in Dr. Lockhart's study did not show symptoms after three years despite testing positive for infection. We do not know if they will ever show symptoms, but they are infectious in this state.

MYTH - If the symptoms have not spread to nearby plants the virus is safe.

FACT – If a virus is "safe", how did that plant catch it? The only way to tell if HVX has spread to other plants is through ELISA or other more sensitive scientific testing. It may be years before infected plants show symptoms.

MYTH - If a plant doesn't show symptoms it doesn't have a virus.

FACT – It can take years for an infected plant to show symptoms. During this time it very much can infect other plants. Only careful scientific testing can determine if a plant that does not show symptoms is infected with a virus - there is no way for the gardener or nursery owner to tell.

MYTH - HVX is the only virus affecting hostas.

FACT – There may be more than ten viruses currently known to be found in hostas. HVX is now the most common by far, but Impatiens Necrotic Spot, Tobacco Rattle Virus, and Tomato Ringspot Virus have been frequently identified. Some as yet unidentified viruses have appeared also.

MYTH - Symptoms of Hosta Virus X look attractive.

FACT – Actually, this is not really a myth. The effects of HVX on some hostas can be attractive to many, thus heightening the risk of introducing the virus into the home garden. In addition to the mottling, these symptoms can include making the infected plant more compact and more glaucous. Nursery professionals and home gardeners alike have actually named HVX-infected hostas and offered them as new varieties.

MYTH - Virused hostas are worth more money than healthy hostas.

FACT – Well, does this really make any sense? If you buy a hosta for \$5 and infect it with a disease as common and widespread as HVX, how could it possibly be worth more? When infected with an incurable disease, it should be thrown away because it is no longer worth anything. Putting a different name on it once it is infected doesn't really change this.

HOSTA VIRUS MYTHS, cont.

MYTH - If we pretend the virus doesn't exist it will go away.

FACT – If we ignore the presence of Hosta Virus X in our gardens or nurseries, it will continue to spread until many more plants have it. In time, the number of infected plants will increase beyond any hope of eliminating the virus. It is irresponsible to keep the virus around, because it can infect other plants and spread itself. All plants exhibiting HVX symptoms must be destroyed immediately to prevent further infection, and in nurseries all plants in a batch that had symptomatic individual plants must be also considered infected and likewise destroyed.

MYTH - Talking about HVX and other diseases will ruin hosta gardening.

FACT – While it may be unpopular in the short term, allowing incurable diseases to run unchecked through nurseries and gardens will certainly cause worse problems down the road. The long-term impact of disease-filled gardens on their owners will surely be a negative one and far outweigh any short-term effects of facing our problems now. A healthy garden is a source of joy to the gardener, but a garden full of diseases and other problems will never provide the same enjoyment, and if it gets worse every year we will lose our enthusiasm.

MYTH - People don't want to know about HVX.

FACT – It is not a pleasant subject, but as adults we all understand that life isn't perfect. The world contains many harmful organisms, and some of these do affect hostas. We can face the issues of plant health when we need to. We understand that sometimes there are outbreaks of a particular disease that require our special attention. We don't really want to know, but we have to know to keep our plants healthy. We don't want that information kept from us when the time comes that we need it.

MYTH - Viruses are a "grower problem" and not a cause for concern among gardeners.

FACT – Hostas infected with HVX or other viruses ceased to be simply a "grower problem" when the retailers sold them to gardeners. Thousands of virus-infected plants have already been sold at the retail level, and many gardens now harbor virus-infected hostas. All gardeners should be aware of HVX and other viruses and be careful to avoid spreading them to other plants and to other gardens.



OTHER 2017 HOSTA EVENTS OF INTEREST

American Hosta Society Convention

June 7-10, 2017

Indianapolis, IN

<http://www.americanhostasociety.org/> or

<https://www.indyhosta2017.com/>

Midwest Regional Hosta Convention

June 22-24, 2017

Kansas City, KS

<http://www.midwesthostasociety.org/index.shtml>



Editor's Note: Grrrrr.....



ATTENDING ANY CONVENTIONS THIS SUMMER?

Going to any of the upcoming hosta conventions? We'd love to hear about it! Where you went, the neat things you saw and most importantly, what hostas did you bring home!?! If you're interested, contact Windi (twotxaggies@frontier.com). Looking forward to some fun trip reports and pictures!

Corrections? Comments? Suggestions? Contact Newsletter Editor Windi Fourdraine at twotxaggies@frontier.com



"Oh, the joy, the joy of Spring, a joy so grand, so absolute, so lavish and engaging, dipping my humble soul in magic, uplifting and exhilarating, instilling beauty and virtue into my days." — Amelia Dashwood