

MICHIGAN HOSTA HAPPENINGS

Newsletter of the Michigan Hosta Society



2019

Save the Date!

March 15-16

GLRHS Hosta College
Pique, OH

NEW DATE

May 18

MHS Workday & Board Mtg.
Hidden Lake Gardens
Tipton, MI

June 12-15

AHS National Convention
Green Bay, WI

June 21-23

GLRHS Tailgate Weekend
Cleveland, OH

June 22

MHS Leaf Show & Plant Sale
Michigan State University
East Lansing, MI

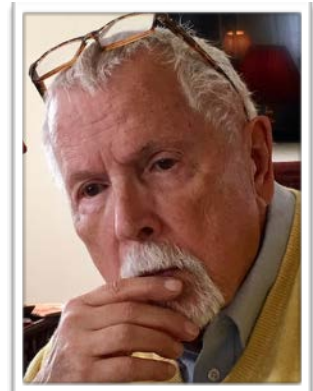
August 18

Workday and Annual Meeting
Hidden Lake Gardens
Tipton, MI

Letter from the President

Dear MHS Members,

The dictionary defines “doldrums” as a period of inactivity or recession. That certainly fits my predicament as a gardener. This time of year, I have had enough inactivity and I am longing to be out in my yard. I’m even looking forward to spreading weed killer, which is my least favorite garden activity.



Grey Gitzen, MHS President

I hope you have all taken note of the date change for our day in May at Hidden Lake Gardens. Our original date was set on Memorial Day weekend, so it was changed to Saturday, May 18. We will work on the Hillside from 9 am until 11:30 am, followed by lunch provided by MHS. Our speaker following our lunch will be Mark Hanner, who has so graciously agreed to talk to us about succulents. Mark has many, many succulents and this popular topic should be quite interesting to our group. We will also have a bag auction including a wide range of plants and other donated items. Following the raffle we will convene the MHS board for their meeting. You are invited to stay for the meeting if you wish or you could tour Hidden Lake Gardens. I’m sure you could even find more to do on the Hillside. Who knows, there might be surplus Hostas that need a new home! This is an important activity for the club, especially this year, because we are relocating several of the hybridizer’s beds in preparation for the American Hosta

Hosta trivia

Q: *What is another name for hostas?*

A: Plantain Lillies



Q: *What was the first registered "blue" hosta? When? And by whom?*

A: In 1969 there were two registered plants with blue-gray or blue green leaves. H. 'Rough Waters' was registered by Marie Armstrong, and 'Roundabout' by Bob Savory. The following year, 1970, Mrs. John Geissler registered the first hosta with "blue" in the name, 'Blue Skirt'



Q: *Which three hostas have scented flowers?*

A: Guacamole, Fragrant Bouquet, and So Sweet



Q: *Most common hosta?*

A: Undulata var. erromena

Courtesy of joanscountrygarden.com

Society convention in 2021.

On June 22 we will be back on the campus at MSU for our annual plant sale and leaf show. We have had great success with our current grower, and I am sure this year will be no different. We will have hundreds of very desirable new plants for your yard. There is always a line of hostaphiles waiting for the

sale to open. The last couple of years, we have had a fine array of leaves from all over the state for the leaf show.

Sara DaPra and her staff do an outstanding job

of presenting the leaves for viewing and judging. We need better attendance at this event, so you are encouraged to come back to this fun filled day if you haven't been in a while. Also, please try your hand at entering leaves in the leaf show. It is a lot of fun and you might win some awards!

If you can't join us in May, perhaps the August 18 workday/auction/annual meeting at Hidden Lake Gardens will fit into your schedule. I can't emphasize enough that we need lots of help maintaining the Hillside, and this is another opportunity to volunteer. Also, it is a fun day: lunch and meeting under a tent, a great selection of plants to bid on, and the company of good friends. If you don't know anybody in the organization, come to work sessions. You will leave with lots of new friends and contacts.

Last but not least, thank you for your interest in the species 'Hosta.' It truly is the friendship plant.



Photo by Michael Greanya

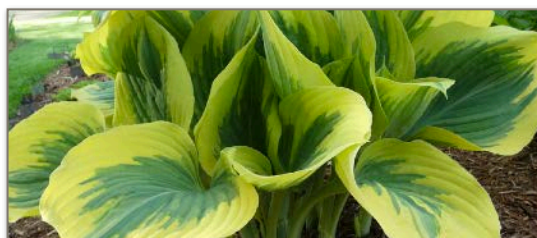


Photo by Michael Greanya

Sincerely,
Grey Gitzen
MHS President

Spring Hosta Tips

By Don Rawson

The snow is melting and spring is on the way. You've been anxiously waiting for the chance to walk through your gardens and dream about the new plants you've ordered from your favorite mail order websites. And you can't wait to put your gloves on and get your gardens cleaned up. Hold on.



Photo by Michael Greanya

Tip #1: Don't remove that winter mulch until the last frost is gone. Early arrivals, like *Hosta montana* 'Aureomarginata', may require additional protection from that late season cold and wind. When all danger of frost is gone, then go for it. Get your rake and wheelbarrow.

Tip #2: Thoroughly clean your gardens. All debris should be raked and added to the compost bin to eliminate a breeding ground for slugs. Be careful not to rake or step on the shoots that are just popping up to avoid damaging the leaves which are about to unfold.

Tip #3: Look to see if the frost has heaved your plants out of the ground, especially young hostas which were planted last year. Are your plants in good shape? As the ground freezes and thaws,

freezes and thaws, and freezes and thaws (get the idea?), those plants may need to be tucked in on several occasions.

Tip #4: Make sure all plants, including new arrivals, are accurately labeled and the tags are in good condition. Can your friends easily read those plant labels? Or has the name tag completely disappeared? Remember that large hostas will cover up name tags that are too close to the mound.

Tip #5: Spring is the best time to prune most trees, and shrubs after flowering. Perhaps you have trees and shrubs which need to be pruned. Those branches which are dead, or make it too shady, should be cut off cleanly, chipped up, and added to the compost bin or reserved for a woodchip path.

Tip #6: Turn over your compost pile. That pile of leaves, garden wastes and grass clippings from last fall should be flipped over now. You may want to add a little sand. The warm, rainy weather will turn all that debris into black gold. Then when those hot summer days reach 70 or 80 degrees, apply that free mulch around the base of your plants.



Photo by Michael Greanya

Tip #7: Take an inventory of your gardening supplies. How is your supply of fertilizers, herbicides, and pesticides? Take inventory of tools, gloves, hoses, sprinklers, wheelbarrows, fencing, tomato cages, etc. Shop and replace worn out items now so that you're not stuck in the middle of a job when summer arrives.

Tip #8: Spring is the best time to dig in your hosta bed. Spring is a great time to divide and transplant your hostas. Did you



Photo by Michael Greanya

promise to give a hosta to a friend, or donate a plant for the hosta auction? You can create interest and educate others about gardening, and eventually turn your neighborhood into a

hostaholic community. Review your garden records from last fall to see which ones need your attention. How wonderful to see those long awaited hostas shoot up, bigger and stronger than the year before!

Tip #9: Don't neglect to apply a slow-release fertilizer.

But don't over fertilize, and keep those granules off the crown and newly emerging of the plant. Above all, enjoy the fresh spring breeze, the chirp of the robins, and the signs of



Photo by Michael Greanya

life as they appear, knowing that Old Man Winter is giving way to a new season of gardening and fun everywhere!

HOW TO START YOUR DAY WITH A POSITIVE OUTLOOK

1. Open a new file on your PC
2. Name it "Yard Work"
3. Send it to the RECYCLE BIN
4. Empty the RECYCLE BIN
5. Your PC will ask you, "Are you sure you want to delete Yard Work permanently?"
6. Answer calmly, "Yes," and press the mouse button firmly...
7. Feel better?
8. Yard work all done!



The Rise of the Pesky Red Asian Lily Beetle

By Michael Greanya

Spring is always a busy time in the garden. There are so many things to do that gardeners frequently operate in a crisis mode to try to stay ahead of all of their chores.

Often in May and June, there is little time to just sit back and enjoy Mother Nature's wonder as our plants unfold in the garden. But sometimes, lurking just out of your sight there can be unexpected and unwelcome guests that crash your garden party spaces without your knowing it. This is what happened to me in the spring of 2017 when I was obsessed with tending to all of the needs of my hosta beds and neglected to see the "forest for the trees" with the rest of the garden.

One morning before I got started in the hosta beds, I began by inspecting some of my martagon lilies (*Lilium martagon*) that were up and I knew it wouldn't be long before they would bud in preparation for blooming. I do love the liliium species

(not to be confused with daylilies that are actually a species called *Hemerocallis*) and have quite a few scattered throughout my gardens. They offer a vertical diversion to the eye in areas that are otherwise quite flat. They also have no fear of hosta and sprout up, not only through the canopy of the hostas leaves, but also will actually compete favorably with a hosta crown if necessary. I have at least one example in my yard where a liliium bulb is

sprouting through a hosta crown. If you're not growing liliiums, you should highly consider trying a few.

It was during my inspection of one of my martagon lilies that I noticed it looked somewhat sickly with several of the stems completely dead. Upon further investigation, I would discover the true reason why this martagon was in trouble. I noticed numerous red beetles scurrying around as I got closer to take a look. I have seen reddish colored bugs in the garden over the years, but none that were entirely red from their head to the behind like these were. But it didn't take Google long to help me identify my newly discovered pest. It was the Red Asian Lily Leaf Beetle (*Lilioceris lili*), but what the heck is this new bug all about, I thought?

What I discovered was that this is a relatively new invasive species that was first discovered in Montreal Canada back in the 40's. It has

Photo by Marla Greanya



Photo by Michael Greanya

since been transported into the United States most likely on bulbs shipped to the east coast sometime around 1992 where the insect's



Photo by Michael Greanya

distribution numbers continues to be the highest, and it has been migrating westward ever since. It is thought that the beetle first came to Michigan through Detroit. This detrimental pest is now in Jackson County and has been reported to me by several other gardeners in the area who also have infestations. Talking with other gardeners across the state over the last several years, gardeners to the northeast around Saginaw have not seen them yet, nor have those in Kalamazoo or the Grand Rapids areas. My advice is, don't let your guard down just because you haven't seen them... yet. This insect is very mobile and it is probably not a matter of "if" but "when" the infestation will spread throughout the state.

Here's what you should know about the Red Asian Lily Leaf Beetle according to the Michigan State University Extension. Adults overwinter in the soil and early spring they begin to emerge through June. Liliiums are their preferred food of choice although they will attack some Fritillaries. To date, they

have not infested my *Fritillaria camschatcensis* (Chocolate Lily) though. The insect is devastating to true lilies such as *Lilium* species plants, tiger lilies, Easter lilies, Asiatic and Oriental lilies. Daylilies are not affected by this pest, thank goodness. However, in addition to liliiums and fritillarias, the beetle may also feed on other plants like lily of the valley, Solomon's seal, bittersweet, potato, hollyhock, and some hosta species, although checking my hosta has not turned up any damage. Adults lay their eggs on the underside of the leaves. Larva that can resemble a slug (so don't be fooled) will hatch in one to two weeks and they will feed for 16-24

days. These larvae have a peculiar way of camouflaging themselves while they are most vulnerable. They cover themselves in their own excrement to deter predators. Yikes! It is actually more disgusting in real life than what I just described.



Photo by Michael Greanya



Photo by Michael Greanya

What to do if and when you first see the beetle? You should immediately begin control by "picking" the beetles off your leaves and dropping in a container with a little liquid dish detergent in some water. This will reduce the numbers of beetles in your yard quickly, but beetles from your

neighbors and their neighbors and so on may find their way to your garden, so be vigilant. Picking is an organic method that is very easy to do if you are committed to doing it every day for a while, and sometimes it's



Photo by Marla Greanya

necessary to do several times a day if you can. And, do this throughout the summer months. It doesn't

take very long and there is great satisfaction seeing the little beasts go to their maker. The beetle does have one trick up its sleeve though. If you hesitate or think you can just very slowly reach in to pick the little critters off a leaf, you will find out quickly that they will throw themselves off the leaf and land on the ground upside down. When they do this, they blend in with the soil or mulch because their underside is black. On the bright side, they will be back on the plant shortly and you'll get another try.

Non-organic methods are also effective. MSU Extension reports that Permethrin, Cyhalothrin, Deltamethrin, Pyrethrin, and other insecticides labeled for ornamental use have shown the most effective control. They also report that a systemic containing the chemical imidacloprid can be applied as a foliage spray or a soil drench. I use a product called Bayer Advanced 12 Month Tree and Shrub Protect, which contains 1.1% imidacloprid that I apply in the late summer and again in the very early spring (usually mid-March). I have found that



www.bioadvanced.com

combining picking bugs off and the systemic applications have greatly reduced the number of beetles in my yard. So if you grow lily — and you should because they are a great companion plant to hostas — just be aware of



Photo by Michael Greanya

this pest and take action as soon as you see them. Your lilies will be just fine and will thank you for eradicating these little suckers by rewarding you with the most beautiful floral displays and often times some of the most fragrant flowers you will grow in your garden.

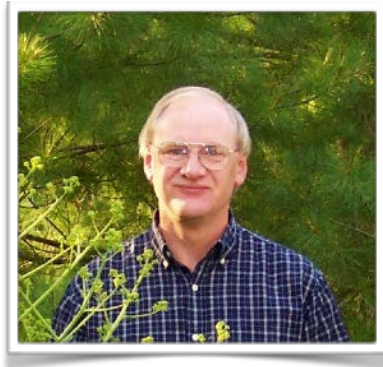


Photo by Michael Greanya

Ask the Expert!



Our “Ask the Expert” series continues this issue as Don Rawson of Comstock Park, MI tells us more about Hosta Virus X (HVX). This is the second of five articles on this topic.



What are the symptoms of Hosta Virus X?

Hostas infected with Hosta Virus X may show symptoms that include mottling, leaf distortion, leaf desiccation, and poor vigor. With blue- and green-leaved hostas, the mottling is generally lighter colored than the surrounding leaf tissue. With gold hostas, infected leaves often show green speckles and mottling.

In some cases, the foliage of a hosta infected with HVX has dark bands referred to as “inkbleed” along the leaf veins.

This is perhaps the most common visible indication of HVX. It is an early sign which is commonly present



Photo by Joseph Rand

to some degree in almost all hostas showing noticeable signs of HVX. The virus is believed to come from the veins and then spreads outward into the healthy surrounding leaf tissue, leaving an area of discoloration along the veins.



Photo by Barbara Bazzell

In addition, a more severe stage of infection results in collapsed leaf tissue. Eventually, the leaves may become wrinkled and distorted. To



Photo by Brenda Fox

see photos of hostas infected with HVX, go to the Hosta Library (www.hostalibrary.org) and click on the tab titled “HVX Info.”

While this disease does not kill plants, its primary danger lies in its proven ability to spread prolifically. Hostas which are tolerant of the virus may indeed be infected, but they show no symptoms. Because symptoms may take years to show up after infection, HVX has infected hundreds of thousands of plants

and is at epidemic levels around the world. If a batch of hostas contains any individual plants that show HVX symptoms, the whole batch should be considered infected and



Photo by Jeff White

should be destroyed, as individual testing is impractical and not a guarantee.

What hostas are commonly infected with Hosta Virus X?

All hostas are susceptible to viruses, and while many hostas are showing up with HVX, those most commonly encountered are plants of 'Gold Standard', 'Striptease', and 'Sum and

Substance.'

However, other common varieties are being reported in large numbers as well.



Photo by Jeff White

Chris Wilson of Hallson Gardens provides a somewhat longer list of hostas commonly infected with HVX: 'Birchwood Parky's Gold', 'Blue Cadet', 'Diamond Tiara', 'Gold

Standard', 'Golden Tiara', 'Goldrush', 'Stiletto', 'Striptease', 'Sum and Substance', 'Sweet Susan', and 'Venucosa'.

Sometimes those cultivars which are known to be commonly affected by virus are referred to as "virus prone." A list of "Virus Prone Hostas" is posted on the Hosta Lists website at www.hostalists.org.

A wise gardener would be well aware of the symptoms and

be on the alert when purchasing hostas at a nursery or garden center, but remember that some hostas may be infected without showing any visible symptoms at all. It just depends upon the

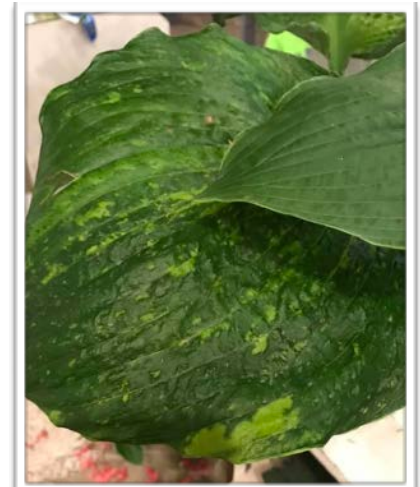


Photo by Joseph Rand

concentration of the virus. And once you have a virused hosta in your garden, you take the risk of the virus spreading to other plants. It is better to purchase from a nursery which is informed about HVX and which periodically tests their stock to ensure they are supplying virus-free plants. Ideally, the goal is to have healthy, vigorous, and virus-free hostas in our gardens which we all can enjoy!

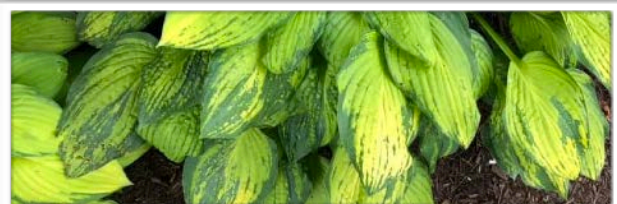


Photo by Matt Wingate



HOSTA SALE CONTINUES

**40% off or Buy 10 + and
get 50% off**

➡ Saturday, May 11th, 8am-6pm ⬅

Thousands of Outstanding Hostas Still Available at Greatly Reduced
Prices Including Seedlings & One-Of-A-Kinds

Check out our website at kgardens.com for Hosta availability

K Gardens, 2938 72nd St SW, Byron Center, MI 49315. Ph: (616) 583-9069
Email: info@kgardens.com

Just south of Grand Rapids. Directions: Take Hwy M-6 to Exit 5; turn onto
Byron Center Ave. and go south 1.3 miles; turn west onto 72nd and go west .7 mile

A Week in the Life of a Gardener's Spouse

By Lindsay of Blenheim, New Zealand

She dug the plot on Monday, the soil was rich and fine,

But she forgot to put the dinner on, so out we went to dine.

She planted roses Tuesday, she says they are a must,
They really were quite lovely, but she forgot to dust.

On Wednesday it was daisies, they opened with the sun,

All pinks and whites and yellow, but the laundry wasn't done.

The poppies came on Thursday, all bright and cherry red,

I guess she really was engrossed, she never made the bed.

It was violets here on Friday, in colors she adores,
It never bothered her at all, the dirt upon our floors.

Saturday I hired a maid, I'd not admit defeat,
She can garden all she wants now, and the house will still be neat.

It's nearly lunchtime Sunday, I cannot find the maid,
Oh I don't believe it, she's out there with her own spade!



Photo by Marla Greanya

Local chapter events

Eastern Michigan Hosta Society Calendar of Events 2019

February 14 - Esther Benedict
Mayfield Twp. Hall; Lapeer, MI

April 11 - Aaron Strouse
Mayfield Twp. Hall; Lapeer, MI

May 9 - Eldred Steinkoph
Mayfield Twp. Hall; Lapeer, MI

June 13 - Garden Tour
The Gavits; Saginaw, MI

July 11 - Garden Tour
The Trotts; Columbiaville, MI

August 8 - Garden Tour
The Marttilas; Lapeer, MI

September 12 - EMHS Plant Exchange
Sun Crest; Lapeer, MI

October 10 - "Amaryllis Presentation"
Mayfield Twp. Hall; Lapeer, MI

November 14 - Board Meeting
Whitey's; Davison, MI

December 12 - Annual Christmas Party
Mayfield Twp. Hall; Lapeer, MI

EMHS Officers

President: Glen Pace
Vice-President: Becky Hanner
Treasurer: Barb Hunter
Secretary: Marlene Daniels
Past President: Mark Hanner
Fundraising: Mick and Cathy Hodgson

Metro Detroit Hosta Society Calendar of Events 2019

March 25, 7pm

Julia Hofley, "Ferns & shade companions"
First United Methodist Church; Birmingham

April 22

George Papadalis, "What's new in annuals & perennials"
Telly's Greenhouse; Troy, MI

July or August - TBA
Sundaes in the Garden

MDHS Officers

President: Candy Rosowski president
2nd VP (program): OPEN
Treasurer: Rich Rosowski
Secretary : Violet Ryan
Newsletter: Dave Wolf
At Large: Harvey Goldstein, Preston West,
Carl Eggers, Andy Torvinen



Photo by Marla Greanya

Saginaw Hosta Society Calendar of Events 2019

More information coming soon

Southwest Michigan Hosta Society Calendar of Events 2019

March 24, 3pm
New plants of 2019
Romence Gardens; Portage, MI

April 28, 3pm
Don Rawson "You can have a Treemendous Garden!"
Romence Gardens; Portage, MI

June 6, 6pm
Member Plant Sale
Flesher Field; Kalamazoo, MI

June 29
Bus Trip TBA

July 28, Noon
Potluck/auction
Oshtemo Grange Hall; Kalamazoo, MI

September 22, 3pm
Nate Fuller, "Invasive Plants in Michigan"
Romence Gardens; Portage, MI

October 27, 3pm
Gail Walter, "Toxic Plants in Our Yard"
Romence Gardens; Portage, MI

SWMHS Officers

President: Ed Steinbrecher
Vice President: Margaret Strzelecki
Treasurer: Bobbe Luce
Membership: Cindy Speicher

West Michigan Hosta Society Calendar of Events 2019

Saturday, May 11
Workday at local WMHS gardens
Contact Don Rawson for more information

May 23, 6pm & auction 7-9pm
Potluck & Plant Auction
Allendale Township Hall; Allendale, MI

July 20-21
Hosta Show
Frederik Meijer Gardens; Grand Rapids, MI

August 15
Meeting at Kent/MSU Extension
Grand Ideas Garden; Grand Rapids, MI

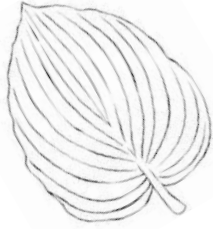
October 18, 6pm
Fall Harvest Potluck
Forest Hills Aquatic Center; Grand Rapids

WMHS Officers

President: Don Rawson
Vice-President: Noah Schwartz
Secretary: Julie Deppe
Treasurer: Kay Anderson
Member-at-Large: Ginny Pearce
Member-at-Large: Dean Deppe
Webmaster: Ginny Pearce



Photo by Marla Greanya



Officers of MHS

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Vice President
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Treasurer
Patty Creal
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Unassigned
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Local Club Liaison
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Unassigned
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Plant Sale Chair
Robert Berarducci
bobberarducci@att.net

Newsletter Editor
Marla Greanya
marla.greanya@gmail.com

Presidents of the five local Michigan chapters

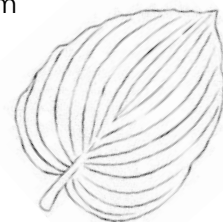
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West Michigan Hosta Society
Don Rawson
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Saginaw Valley Hosta Society
Elaine Rappley
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Membership in the Michigan Hosta Society

If you wish to find out more about Hosta, please consider joining the Michigan Hosta Society. We welcome new members and friends who share our interest in hosta and their many uses in the landscape. The society maintains a large hosta display at Hidden Lake Gardens near Tipton, where many varieties of hosta can be seen. "The Benedict Hosta Hillside" is one of only two nationally designated Hosta display gardens.

Activities of MHS include:

- ▶ A summer tour of gardens that feature Hosta
- ▶ An auction/sale of hostas contributed by members
- ▶ Speakers and educational programs
- ▶ Local chapter meetings
- ▶ A workday and information sharing at Hidden Lake Gardens in Tipton where the Society has a demonstration garden
- ▶ A listing of MHS members who retail Hosta
- ▶ A yearly membership directory

Members receive the Michigan Society Newsletter "Hosta Happenings," as well as the newsletter of the Great Lakes Regional Hosta Society. If you are interested in joining please complete the attached application form.

You may also want to join The American Hosta Society. They have two colorful journals each year, and an annual national convention featuring a Hosta Show, garden tours, scientific programs and a plant auction.

Contact: www.americanhostasociety.org

MHS Membership Application

Last name: _____

First name: _____

Last name of 2nd member: _____

First name of 2nd member: _____

Street Address:

City: _____ State: _____

Zip: _____ Phone: _____ - _____ - _____

E-mail:

Choice of **either** black and white newsletter via First Class US Mail or full color newsletter via e-mail. All the pictures are in color and there are often bonus pictures not included in the mailed version. Please check one: Mail ☐ E-mail ☐

Check if you wish to receive an updated membership directory when published: ☐

New Member: _____ Renewal: _____

Dues are \$15 per household for up to two people, good for 2 years.

Total remitted: _____

Mail to:

Michigan Hosta Society
2509 Wembly Lane
Troy, MI 48084-1280

Make checks payable to: The Michigan Hosta Society