MICHIGAN

HOSTA HAPPENINGS

Newsletter of the Michigan Hosta Society



President's Message



After mulling it over in my addled brain, I was able to come up with a couple of positive things about the year 2021. It was a great year in the Saginaw Valley for growing hostas, and the weeds were likewise tenacious and magnificent. I spent more time pulling weeds than I did gardening. The little rascals just outsmarted all the remedies I attempted to use for eradication!

The Michigan Hosta Society Board had an interesting and successful fall board meeting. We agreed upon and set our dates for 2022, which I hope we can keep. Let's hope that Covid-19 and its various offshoots will not cause us to cancel this year.

Please note the dates of scheduled 2022 MHS activities in the Calendar of Events listed in the sidebar. Due to uncertainty with all future events as it relates to the COVID protocols, we will send out a notification to our membership in advance of our planned meetings confirming that our gatherings at Hosta Hillside are approved by Michigan State University and if there are conditions that will be required of us while on-site. We will update you on future restrictions or any other changes if they occur.

We have a change of venue for our annual Leaf Show & Plant Sale. After many years, we will no longer hold our annual event at MSU's campus. Beginning this year we will be combining it with the Hosta Show and Plant Sale at Hidden Lake Gardens on June 18th.

Calendar of Events

Location:

6214 Monroe Rd (M-50) Hosta Hillside Hidden Lake Gardens Tipton, MI



May 21
Spring Get-Together

June 18 Hosta Plant Sale & Show

August 21
Fall Meeting, Luncheon and Plant Auction

We are looking forward to bringing normalcy back into our program and have scheduled a Hosta Hillside get together, luncheon, and board meeting on Saturday May 21. The Fall Annual Meeting, work session, lunch, and plant auction is on Sunday, August 21. Come join us. See old friends and make new ones.



We want to thank our authors for their contribution to this issue of Hosta Happenings. Don Rawson is an integral part of our newsletter. When asked, Don willingly and joyously drops whatever he is doing (and he is busy all the time) to write articles that have supplied us with much information and fun over the years. We thank you Don for all you have done and continue doing for us. In this issue Don is going to continue with his series called "Oh Deer!", the second in his series. We hope when he has completed the series that no deer will ever eat another hosta in your garden.

Also in this issue Don is starting a new series called Unusual Woodlanders. His first plant that fits this category is *Arisaema fargesii* also called Farge's Cobra Lily. If you are not growing it in your shade or partial shade garden, please give it a try. It is perfectly

hardy here in Michigan. Its leaves are as large as a good-sized hosta with an entirely different shape. The Farge's Cobra Lily's Jack-In-The-Pulpit-like flower is beautifully striped and quite unique compared to a hosta flower. Because of the giant leaves of *Arisaema fargesii* the flowers sometimes become lost, but you can use a stick to move the stem and leaves out of the way so they are more visible. Many other varieties of Arisaema are equally beautiful so why not give them a try

For those of us that like structuring of gardening activities, Don has also provided us with a Gardening Calendar to help us organize a few suggestions you might want to include in your gardening maintenance by month. You might find quite a few timely suggestions that will help you coordinate when and how to complete these activities.

Lisa Quiggle has written about the life of Bob Berarducci and their friendship over the years. She has penned this article with heartfelt thoughts of Bob and she has been trying to keep his spirit alive by growing some of Bob's potted hosta he gave her before his passing. Lisa's inspirational and personal look into Bob's gardening life will let you see him in a new light. Many thanks to Lisa for her wonderful tribute.

I hope you all had a safe and happy holiday season, and are looking forward to a successful 2022 gardening season.



Sincerely,
Grey Gitzen
MHS President

American Hosta Growers Association 2022 Hosta of the Year H. 'Island Breeze'

The American Hosta Growers Association (AHGA) is a trade organization for nurseries that specialize in the growing and sale of hostas. Each year members of AHGA vote to select a Hosta of the Year. Award winners are hostas that are good garden plants in all regions of the country, are widely available in sufficient supply, and retail for about \$15.00 in the year of selection.

This year's winner is H. 'Island Breeze' registered by Walters Garden in 2014. It is a sport of H. 'Paradise Island'. According to Walters Gardens, "First came 'Fire Island' which was followed by its variegated progeny 'Paradise Island'. Now there is 'Island Breeze' which is the third member of this "tropical" family and a sport of 'Paradise Island'. A true winner for sure!





How to make a GARDENING CALENDAR

By Don Rawson



<u>Step #1</u>

Simply type the name of each month on a sheet of paper or cardstock, or write it in your gardening notebook: January, February, March, etc. Leave plenty of space to add new items throughout the year.

Step #2

List the gardening-related activities and chores you will need to do each month. For example:

January- shake off snow to prevent heavy build-up on branches of trees and shrubs; tune up the lawnmower, weed trimmer, gaspowered edger, chainsaw, etc.; sharpen the lawnmower blade, hedge shears, and pruners; review your gardening diary; browse gardening catalogs; order new plants and garden tools.

February- redo old plant labels and print labels for new plants on order; prune fruit

trees; clean, paint and sharpen garden tools; draw up plans for a new garden.

March- inspect newly planted hostas for frost heave; prune evergreens; clean out bird houses; plant trees and shrubs once frost leaves ground.

April- prepare the soil in a new bed; gradually remove winter mulch; remove tender bulbs from storage and re-plant; apply crabgrass preventer to lawn; cut down ornamental grasses; fertilize lawn and ornamentals; prune grapes; fill the bird baths.

May- apply a pre-emergent herbicide such as Preen to prevent weeds; apply GrubEx to lawn; mulch the garden to make it look attractive, to prevent weeds, conserve water, enrich the soil, and prevent erosion; prune trees and shrubs after flowering; divide perennials; transplant hostas, and dig some for your local garden club; check condition of all plant stakes and labels; start up the sprinkler system and the water garden/fountain.

June- buy and plant more hostas; weed, weed, weed; water bedding plants often; go on bug and slug patrols; groom the lawn and edge the borders; make sure sprinkler heads are working okay.

July- stake plants which are leaning and falling over; pinch your plants to make them fuller and bushier; last chance to fertilize hostas and many other perennials; examine your plants for pests and disease, check for over-crowding; check hostas for root competition and vole damage.

August- water plants regularly, especially on hot windy days; divide the irises; continue to monitor garden for pests and disease; avoid pruning shrubs after mid-August which would

just encourage new growth that will not harden off before winter.

September- add color with mums and pansies; inspect hostas for nematodes; apply broadleaf weed killer to lawn; fall is a good time to transplant; dry flowers to create bouquets which will last all winter long.

October- plant spring-flowering bulbs, trees, and shrubs; dig up non-hardy summer bulbs such as cannas, dahlia, gladiolus, caladium or tuberous begonia, and store them indoors; bring houseplants indoors; cut peonies to the ground; mulch hostas to prevent frost heave; protect tender plants; tip potted plants on their side and mulch over top; apply winterizer fertilizer to lawn; prune maples and dogwoods; clean up, rake the lawn, and fill the compost bins; winterize the sprinkler system; put garden ornaments into storage.

November- fertilize trees and shrubs; mulch lilies once the ground is frozen; protect roses by pruning them by one-third to half their height; review notes from the summer; put new bait in vole and mouse traps; clean the gutters; fill bird feeders.

December- prune oak trees; in addition, wisteria, some fruit trees, roses and Japanese maples also benefit from a winter pruning; plant hosta seeds indoors; read a gardening book to educate yourself on becoming a better gardener.

<u>Step #3</u>

Hang your Gardening Calendar on wall and review it each month to avoid overlooking important garden and landscape tasks. Make sure you don't lose it or ignore it!

Oh Deer, Oh Deer, Oh Deer! (Part II)

by Don Rawson



An array of plantings is ravaged at the garden of John Gamradt

Oh deer... Bambi is in the garden!!!

Unfortunately, deer are a significant problem for many gardeners. Hostas often become a delectable meal for these four-legged critters, and sadly, one deer can reduce a large specimen to just a mound of stubble in quick order. Providing an effective means for repelling them can be a real challenge because they are so persistent and they eat a lot. This explains why Bambi must be expelled from the garden!

While there are various methods intended to ward off deer or to restrict them from certain places in the landscape, in this series we are covering three easy techniques for your consideration. The first method previously discussed – the Green Wire Deer Fence – was shared by fellow gardener, June Nestle. Now in this issue, we will look at another approach which involves adding predator

lights to the garden area to ward off any would-be intruders.

Method #2: Installation of Predator Lights



A young deer appraising the food supply in the garden of Ann Borth

Jim and Betty Meyer, owners of a large pheasant farm in central Minnesota, were frustrated year after year with the deer herd which was constantly damaging their food plots. Eventually, the problem led to an innovative solution to remedy the situation — a small but very bright, flashing red light to deter these pesky creatures. Their invention, the Nite Guard Solar® light, was patented and came to market in 1997. Subsequently, the deterrent lights have proven to be an effective means of repelling predator animals.

The Nite Guard device attacks the deepest, most primal fear of night animals — that of being discovered. A simple, intense flash of light is sensed as an

eye, becoming an immediate threat to the most ferocious night animals. The lights are

solar-powered and equipped with a photocell which turns them on at dusk and back off at dawn. During the darkest hours, deer and other invaders become leery when approaching the flashing red lights and change course to avoid them.

Effective in Repelling Deer

Nite Guard Solar predator deterrent lights are an effective deer repellent. The lights have been proven time and again to keep deer away, leaving the garden, farm, or orchard well-protected. After installing deer repellent lights, you can rest easy, knowing that your plants and gardens are safe from deer during the night-time hours.



The lights are not effective, however, against deer which persistently enter the garden to feed during daytime hours when the lights are not operating. To address this situation, the company offers repellent tape. This holographic flash tape scares animals with light, movement and noise. The reflective tape produces a loud crackle noise and a bright flash, and it is claimed by the Nite Guard company that their tape is noisier, brighter, and longer-lasting than ordinary flash tape from other manufacturers. When used in conjunction with the flash of Nite Guard Solar lights, the two products have been shown to repel even the most difficult of deer.



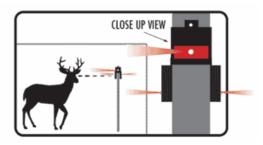
Nite Guard Repellent Tape has a holographic finish that will give off a mirror-type flash in addition to a rustling sound when the tape is windblown. This additional rustling sound, along with the flashes of the tape and Nite Guard Solar lights, attacks the hearing sense of deer and intensifies the "fight or flight" response.

Installation Instructions for Nite Guard Lights

For best results, set the lights up a few weeks before the hostas and their companions emerge in spring. Don't wait until deer have already established a feeding pattern in which your garden is their favorite smorgasbord.

Correct positioning of the lights throughout your landscape is critical for keeping deer at bay. Predator animals such as deer must see the flashing light to be repelled. Mount the lights at eye level of the animal to be stopped and face it AWAY from the area to be protected. One to four lights will be required depending on your application. The lights are NOT motion activated, but will flash automatically from dusk through dawn, so night animals are stopped at long distances (500 yards or more away). They sense the flash as a threat the instant they are aware of it. Protecting ALL directions will eliminate the night animals from finding an alternate entry point.

One option for deer is to mount four lights about 4 feet high on a single post with each light facing a different direction (cluster mount). Place the post in the center of your garden. Unlike other night animals, deer become used to seeing something in the same location, so it is best to relocate the cluster mount about every 1-2 weeks to break the pattern.



If you have a very large garden, you can place the lights about the perimeter at 100 ft. intervals and four feet high, pointing them outward in different directions. The lights can be fastened to a tree or stake with a screw. Move lights around with a cordless screwdriver every couple of weeks.

An easy alternative for mounting the lights is to use Velcro self-adhesive tape. This will allow you to easily remove the lights and reinstall them in another location throughout your landscape.



Nite Guard Solar lights and Nite Guard Repellent Tape can be purchased directly from the manufacturer at www.nitegard.com, or by calling 1-800-328-6647. The lights are

\$19.95 each. A 4-pack can be purchased on Amazon for \$65.84. The lights should last for three years or more.

Alternative brands are now available as well, but research has indicated that some of the competitor lights do not work as well as the original Nite Guard product.

Note: During the winter season when the garden is dormant, ideally the lights should be placed indoors next to a window where they can be charged up daily — not thrown into a drawer or other dark storage area which would allow the battery to go dead. A piece of tape can be placed over the bulb if the bright flashing light is an annoyance.

In the Next Issue...

Oh, deer...are you having a deer problem, too? Animal repellent lights seem like a simple and effective solution that's worth a try. Quick and easy to install. Give it a go and let us know if this method works for you. To keep Bambi from eating his way through your own private paradise, in the next issue we will share a third innovation for repelling deer. Meanwhile, happy (deer-free) gardening!



Deer damage in the garden of Olga Petrysyzn



Deer in the garden of Brenda Bremner Clark



Catching a glimpse of the culprits responsible, in the garden of Laurie Kassen



Hosta 'Striptease', munched on in the garden of Pat Dormaier Maclachlan



of Tina Torrens-Burton



A hungry deer feasted on this hosta in the garden of Tina Guarisco

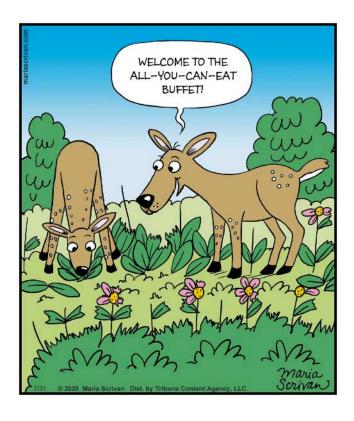


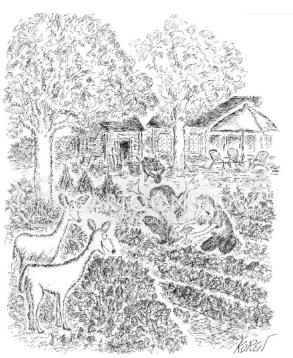
A deer completely ruined this specimen in the garden of Tricia Torrens-Burton

Hosta 'Orange Marmalade', before and after, in the beautiful garden of Tricia Torrens-Burton









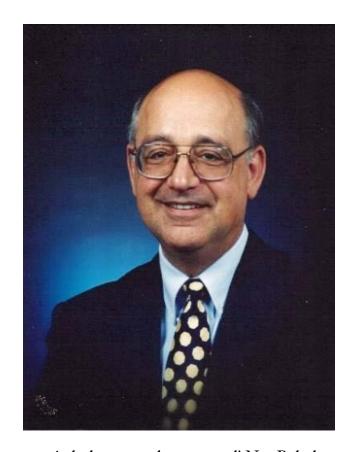
"I love the moment when they discover we paid their garden a nocturnal visit."

Remembering Bob Beraducci 4/4/1940 - 10/22/2021

By Lisa Quiggle

Editor's note: Bob was a long-time member of Michigan Hosta Society and was a MHS board member for many years in various positions. He volunteered for any job that needed someone to fill in, most notably organizing our annual plant sale. He would always be there when the plants arrived and would unload, sort and lay the potted plants out in a logical order, help customers with their selections, and stay for cleanup. He was also a fixture at Hosta Hillside working in the hosta bed near the parking lot with Lisa all the while with that smile you see in his picture and jovially joking with his deep voice with anyone who would listen. We will dearly miss him especially during these events.

I met Bob years ago at an Ann Arbor Hosta Society meeting in Saline. The National Hosta convention was coming to Ann Arbor, and he asked me to help him with the plant auction. Bob was in charge of taking in the plants and setting them up in a room for people to view before the auction. Little did he know that there was a huge hosta controversy brewing. That year it was decided that unless a hosta was registered it couldn't be auctioned. The people dropping off their latest, greatest hybrid that they hoped was going to be auctioned for a huge amount of money were so angry that we couldn't accept it. Bob referred them to the Auction Chair who was spending his time elsewhere getting 'overly refreshed', it was a zoo! I was so



worried; these people were mad! Not Bob, he was cool as a cucumber. He was cracking jokes and somehow made the entire thing fun. I didn't realize it at the time, but he was one of the rare people who could always find a way to just let it go and not let things bother him.

Most people didn't know but Bob's real job before he retired was the Manager for food service in schools. He worked for a company that had contracts throughout Michigan and he had worked in Detroit, Ann Arbor and Grand Rapids. His job wasn't easy. They had a tight budget and had to create menus meeting all sorts of nutritional requirements, most of the time with surplus food given by the government for school meals, and the kids had to eat it. He was happy to retire and spent most of his time in his garden, working with his church, playing bridge and following Michigan football and basketball.



Bob gardened a small corner lot in Ann Arbor. Ann Arbor advertises itself as a Tree City and Bob's property had Norway maples planted by the city between the sidewalk and the street in a strip that was not quite two feet wide. He was constantly fighting against

their roots. He had tried raised beds lining them with some 'magic' coated landscape fabric that was supposed to stop the roots - it didn't. He then decided to put all of his hostas in pots. In the winter he kept the pots in his one car garage. He had planted quite a few minor

bulbs which the squirrels had distributed throughout his yard. When the bulbs were

done blooming, he would move in the hosta pots. It always was a topic of discussion about when the hostas were going away and when they were coming out. I can still hear him laughing about the pots that he was growing his mini hostas in. They were huge saucer like

> pots that he filled with the sand they use to make cement blocks. The hosta did wonderful, but they were heavy and they never did make it into the garage.

> Bob fought prostate cancer for quite a few years. He was always planning what would happen to his hostas if something should happen to him. He

wanted his church to have some for their garden and then his brothers and sisters



would take some but there would still be a few hundred left. He came to our workday last August, but he was very tired and didn't stay too long after lunch. Bob hadn't been feeling well since the spring and he finally went to the doctor a few weeks later. He had developed another type of cancer and was admitted to the hospital. Bob knew that he couldn't get the hostas into his garage, so he had his sisters contact me to move the hostas into my horse barn for the winter. Bob was able to come home, and he died in the morning right before I arrived to pick up a load of hostas.



I was able to get all of the more than 300 hostas in my barn before winter hit hard. As I was putting them away, I was reading the labels and remembered where we were when Bob got them. There was a H. 'Foxfire Good Friday'. Bob had bought this originally with H. 'Foxfire Palm Sunday' from a nursery that we had stopped at along the Ohio Turnpike

when we were coming back from the Hosta Tailgate in Buffalo. A H. 'Blue Umbrellas' that was from Cory's Wildflowers in Ohio, where Mr. Cory who was about 90 years old at the time walked though his nursery and was digging hostas for us. There was a H. 'Blue Hawaii' that I got Bob and put it in a huge pot that was filled about halfway with horse manure. Bob laughed about this every time he moved it - it weighed a ton! Numerous hostas that Bob got from trips we made to K Gardens. There was a hosta he got when we were at Van Wade's. Bob wanted a particular hosta that was in the garden and Van had us jump into his golf cart and he drove us out to it and dug it up himself. Van and Bob were laughing the whole time – it was some particular species that only Van had. Bob got some of his hostas from Rosewind Nursery in Osseo. I selected the best-looking rare hostas for the church garden and many of these were from Rosewind.

I am working on a garden to plant Bob's hostas in and in the spring, I'll check and see if the church could use a few more. Many of them have outgrown their pot and many pots have lost their integrity so I will change their pots in the spring. But they will always make me smile whenever I look at them remembering Bob who always seemed to find the laughter wherever he went.



More of Bob's garden













Unusual Woodlanders for the Shade Garden: Farge's Cobra Lily

By Don Rawson

"China has more plants than anywhere else in the temperate world," says Peter Raven, one of the world's leading botanists who, for four decades, headed the renowned Missouri Botanical Garden. "In fact, it has almost twice as many plants as the United States

which is about the same size, and about three times as many as there are in Europe."

In reality, China is home to more than 30,000 species - oneeighth of the world's total. Many form the backbone of our modern ornamental gardens - like Farge's Cobra Lily in the garden of Pam & Don Rawson

important components of the cultivated flora of our gardens in the Western world. His collections have confirmed that Chinese flora is the richest and most diverse flora in the temperate world and has identified the usefulness of many species for cultivation.

One woodlander, originally native to western and southern China and now occasionally encountered in Western gardens, is Farge's Cobra Lily (*Arisaema fargesii*). *Arisaema* is a large and diverse genus with the largest concentration of species (you guessed it!) in China and Japan, while other species are native to other parts of southern Asia, Africa, Mexico and eastern North America. Asiatic

species are often called Cobra Lilies, while western species are usually called Jack-in-the-Pulpit. Both names refer to the distinctive appearance of the flower which consists of a spathe and an erect central spadix.

gingkos, rhododendrons, azaleas and forsythias. That plant wealth has been a magnet for botanists for centuries and it continues so today. The famous plant collector Ernest Henry Wilson once referred to China as the "mother of all gardens". Wilson collected plants extensively throughout China between 1899 and 1910 and many of his introductions have become

Discovered by French botanist and plant explorer Père Farges in the early 1900s, Farge's Cobra Lily has turned out to be one of the easiest to grow and most spectacular of all *Arisaema* species. Simply put, *Arisaema fargesii* — Farge's Cobra Lily — is an absolute knockout in the woodland garden. First of all, the tropical-looking foliage is just fantastic! A young plant quickly becomes an enormous,

clumping perennial which reaches 3' x 3' with huge tropical-looking leaves, each with three broadly ovate, glossy green leaflets 11" x 18" in size.



Farge's Cobra Lily (Arisaema fargesii) in the garden of Don and Pam Rawson

Alongside the leaves emerge the flower stalks in June and July, each topped with a beautiful large wine-red pitcher marked with dramatic white striping. The tip of the pitcher ends with a graciously narrow tip. Then in the center of the flower, a dark maroon spadix stands up like a child's tongue below the flower's hood, resembling a tiny red lizard peeking out of the pitcher... an absolutely stunning aroid!

Planting and Cultivation

All *Arisaema* species will be successfully grown in part sun to light shade, requiring moist well-drained soil. They are summer green and winter dormant, hardy in zones 5 to 8.

Farge's Cobra Lily, in particular, is a surprisingly easy species to grow despite its extraordinary exotic appearance. The planting depth of the tubers is three times their size. The large foliage makes an excellent specimen, and additionally forms quite a statement when planted in a group. The leaves turn golden-yellow in fall.

Arisaema fargesii is a species that offsets freely. Seeds can be sown in any rich peaty, well-drained soil; germination is irregular and may start well after only 2 weeks or may need up to 3 months and more.

For more information and photos of *Arisaema* species, see the webpage by Pacific Bulb Society at http://www.pacificbulbsociety.org/pbswiki/index.php/ArisaemaSpeciesOne, and the webpage of Rareplants.eu at http://www.arisaema.info/index.htm.



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Photos by Marla Greanya





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 newletter via email. 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