



## Save the dates

- 2017 Hosta Forum  
Sunday 23 April  
➔ See flyer on last page!
- 2017 Member Meeting  
Sunday 28 May
- 2017 Bus Tour  
Sunday 25 June
- 2017 BBQ/Picnic  
Sunday 9 July
- 2017 Annual General Meeting  
Sunday 10 September



## Inside this Issue

The Future of OHS	1
OHS 2017 Executive	2
Celebrating 15 years!	3
Meet the 2017 Hosta Forum Speakers	4
AHS Region 7 Director Update	5
SWOHS News & Events	5
Buyer beware!	5
Eastern OHS News & Events	5
Q&A with Cindy Deutekom of Goldenbrook Hostas	6
TC (Tissue Culture) vs. OS (Originator's Stock)	7
The Hosta Collectors' Challenge	8
Showering with your plants	11
I Love Those Minis!	11
Hosta Forum flyer	12

## The Future of OHS

Did you know that the OHS has been around since 1995? Maybe you're one of the 29 people who are celebrating 15+ years of OHS membership (Congratulations! See page 3). Or maybe you've joined in the last few years.

OHS offers some fantastic membership benefits: the annual Hosta Forum, OHS picnic, OHS bus tour, and two OHS general meetings. Most of these events also include hosta giveaways, hosta sales, and/or hosta auctions. If you need more hostas, OHS membership gets you discounts from many suppliers, and of course you receive the OHS newsletter with lots of hosta photos and hosta-related articles every few months.

But do you ever stop to think that volunteers make all of this possible? These are the people who plan our OHS activities, who take minutes of those planning meetings, who find and book the room, or the bus, or the speaker(s), or the gardens to visit; who take the registrations; who solicit donations and/or discounts from suppliers, coordinate auctions, transport the plants and set up the tables; who take photos and organize photo contests; who source and order club merchandise, edit the newsletter, manage the website, manage the budget ... without these enthusiastic and dedicated volunteers there is no OHS. We proudly name everyone on the OHS Executive on page 2 of every issue of the newsletter.

Some of the current OHS Executive have been in their positions for several years, and some are relative newcomers. If you've ever attended a Hosta Forum or participated in an OHS meeting or

activity, you already know what a fantastic job they're doing... Both in their area of responsibility and as a team. The future of the OHS, however, depends on members like me and you.

When someone needs to step down, or sideways (to a different position), we need make a call to the membership for someone new to step in. Is our call getting through?

Glenn Wilson, having served as OHS President for the past two years, announced at the OHS meeting in September 2016 that he needs to step down for health and business reasons.

On behalf of the OHS Executive and all OHS members, Glenn deserves a heartfelt thank you for all of his time, effort, sacrifices, and the many contributions he has made during his time as OHS President.

The ideal scenario would be for a seasoned Vice President to take over. The VP acts as a backup for and shares responsibilities with the President, and ultimately assumes the role of President when the President's term expires or the President cannot fulfill his or her duties. But the OHS VP position is also vacant. Without a President or a VP, the Executive is like an orchestra without a conductor. Capable and motivated people are without direction.

Now, not everyone sees themselves as Presidential (or VP) material. That is understandable. Before you had children, did you see yourself as parenting material? OK, that may not have been a fair question, but what the President does is really more like what a parent or grandparent does: provides

...continued on page 3

## OHS 2017 Executive

President – **OPEN–SEEKING A VOLUNTEER!**

Past President – **Cindy Deutekom**  
[cindydeutekom@gmail.com](mailto:cindydeutekom@gmail.com)

Vice-President – **OPEN–SEEKING A VOLUNTEER!**

Treasurer – **Keith Skanes**  
[keithskanes@hotmail.com](mailto:keithskanes@hotmail.com)

Secretary – **Kelly Williams**  
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Hosta Forum Coordinators –

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**Donna Hussey** [hussyede@sympatico.ca](mailto:hussyede@sympatico.ca)

Photographer – **Trish Symons**  
[symonstrish@gmail.com](mailto:symonstrish@gmail.com)

Bus Tour Organizer – **Sandra Shrieve-Mahoney**  
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Directors at Large –

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**Russ Talbot** [rwtalbot@teksavvy.com](mailto:rwtalbot@teksavvy.com)

SW OHS Dir. at Large – **Lynn Bisschop**  
[past-president@swohs.org](mailto:past-president@swohs.org)

Eastern OHS Dir. at Large – **Jutta Daverne**  
[jutta.daverne@gmail.com](mailto:jutta.daverne@gmail.com)

AHS Region 7 Director – **Cindy Deutekom**  
[cindydeutekom@gmail.com](mailto:cindydeutekom@gmail.com)

# Welcome!

## Our newest members

Leslie Mannion  
 Athena Antiochos  
 Carol Mathison  
 Ila Murphy  
 Lucia Rostirolla

## ONTARIO HOSTA SOCIETY

4897 Irish Dr.  
 RR #4, Appin, ON  
 N0L 1A0

519-289-5471

Email:  
[ontgmw@gmail.com](mailto:ontgmw@gmail.com)

Website:  
[ontariohostasociety.com](http://ontariohostasociety.com)



## Membership



\$15.00 for 1 year

\$40.00 for 3 years

<http://ontariohostasociety.com/index.php/membership>

The membership year runs from January 1st to December 31st. Members joining after October 1st are deemed to be paid-up until December 31st of the following year.

## OHS Newsletter

Newsletters are published 3-4 times a year. PDF copies of past issues of the OHS newsletter are available in the Members section of the OHS website.

### Article Submissions

We are always looking for hosta-related tips, articles, and photos. Do you have something to share? Send it to: [hostanews@gmail.com](mailto:hostanews@gmail.com)

### Advertising

Hosta retailers: Business card-sized ads are only \$100 per publication year.

## Future of OHS

*...continued from page 1*

encouragement, support, guidance, maybe some boundaries. And then lets go—but is right there if needed. If you have children or grandchildren, you also know how much you can learn and get out of being on that side of the experience.

So, if you are also afflicted with an insatiable enthusiasm for hostas, you couldn't possibly be in better company. The OHS Executive is a unique group of people united by a passion for hostas. We're doing our part for the OHS and getting a lot out of it, but we really need someone to join us at the helm, someone who will bring their particular brand of hosta-enthusiasm to our mix.

Here is a description what is expected of the President:

**Enthusiasm, communication, and a time commitment** are the three primary requirements.

Everything else is details (but the rest of the Executive will help you get up to speed on those):

- Enthusiastically and proactively pursue all areas of interest to the OHS
- Keep membership informed of OHS initiatives
- Chair OHS executive meetings 2-3 times a year
- Authorize (or not) various expenses and/or decisions with support from the OHS Executive
- Follow up on action items, and help the other Executives get what they need
- Attend as many OHS meetings and events as possible
- Call and chair OHS meetings; make introductions and/or announcements as needed
- Answer members' and non-members' questions about the OHS and its activities.
- Write a message for each newsletter
- Liaise with the SWOHS and EOHS chapters

The current OHS Executive is a friendly and welcoming group. Our new President and VP will have the support and assistance of the Past President and the entire Executive to help her/him transition into the position.

Are you ready to take your hosta passion out of the shadows, and make a difference in the OHS? If so (and you reside within a reasonable driving distance of the GTA), please nominate yourself for President or Vice President. Unless more people like you and me (and rest of the intrepid OHS Executive) do our parts, there wouldn't be an OHS.

To nominate yourself for President, VP, or to volunteer for our many OHS initiatives (or to make a suggestion), please contact Glenn Wilson at [info@hostachoicegardens.ca](mailto:info@hostachoicegardens.ca)

## Celebrating 15 years!

Celebrating 15 (or more) years of OHS membership in 2017:

Elsie Baker  
 Ricki-Lee Baxter  
 Stephanie & Don Cullen  
 Bruce Cumpson  
 Mary Lou Curry  
 Cindy & Carel Deutekom  
 Kevin & Olga Elchuk  
 Dagny Ingolfsrud  
 Allan & Shirley Koch  
 Bob Leask  
 Norm & Lynne Limpert  
 Pat Loy  
 Kenneth MacDonald  
 David McKnight  
 Dale Murphy  
 Lawrence Mutual  
 Sherry Peters  
 Chris Potze  
 Lory Rutherford  
 Nancy Serrick  
 Freda Smith  
 Cindy Sweeting  
 Tony & Sue Willemssen

**Thank you all for your continued support!**

## American Hosta Society

<http://www.americanhostasociety.org>



### Membership for Canadians

\$39 US/year

\$107 US/3 years.

### NEW! eMembership

\$20 US/year

## Meet the 2017 Hosta Forum Speakers

➔ See the **Hosta Forum flyer** on the last page for more details!



**Ran Lydell**

### Small Trees Work With Hostas For Great Effects

Ran Lydell, of **Eagle Bay Gardens in Dunkirk, NY**, is well known and respected as a hosta hybridizer, having created many hostas and registering 34 of his own originations to date. Among the better known ones are 'Archduke', 'Arctic Rim', 'Brass Ring', 'Eagle's Nest', 'June Bug', 'Lunar Magic', 'Lunar Orbit', 'Oh My Heart', 'Sails Ho', and 'Saybrook Surprise'. He has also been involved in the introduction of several Japanese plants like 'Kinba', 'Hirao Grande', and 'Yaburitsugi'.

Ran is a lively and engaging speaker who we're sure you'll enjoy.



**Sean James**

### Couples and Threesomes ~ Companions for Hostas

Sean James has been gardening professionally since he was sixteen and speaking to horticultural societies since 1991, when he graduated from the Niagara Parks School of Horticulture.

A public speaker, frequent guest on radio gardening shows, writer, teacher and environmentalist, Sean focuses on eco-gardening techniques, which makes sense, since he grew up surrounded by nature near Crawford Lake. He sits on several environmental committees, has appeared on several television and radio shows and runs **Fern Ridge Landscaping & Eco-consulting**.



**Jeff Mason**

### Naturalistic Garden Design

Jeff has spent a lifetime in the Horticulture industry. With over 30 years of experience, he has worked in virtually every aspect of the industry. He is co-owner of **Mason House Gardens**, a mail order specialty plant nursery in Uxbridge, growing and supplying hardy perennials, specialty annuals, tropical plants, and shrubs. As well, Jeff is the Horticulture Foreman and Planting Designer for D.A. Gracey and Associates, an award-winning Landscape Design/Build firm based on the GTA.

In addition to teaching at George Brown College, Jeff lectures to garden clubs, horticultural societies, as well as Canada Blooms.



#### GLENN WILSON

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## AHS Region 7 Director Update

By **Cindy Deutekom**, OHS Past President

### 2017 Hosta College

If you haven't been to **Hosta College**, make this your year! **March 17 & 18 in Piqua, Ohio**. This is the 24th year this great event has been held.

Friday night starts with a visit to the vendors room, bookstore and then the auction. Saturday breakfast and lunch are included, raffles, classes and more trips to vending!

A few of the classes that piqued my interest are: 'When the Hosta Bug Bites', 'Fantasy Hostas', and 'Love Affair with Gold Hostas'. Classes fill up fast!

Registration opens on February 11th.

Website: <https://www.ihostohio.org/glhc/>

### 2017 AHS National Convention

**Indianapolis, IN – June 7-10th**

HOSTA HYSTERIA will be hosted by the **Indianapolis Hosta Society**.

Tour 10 gardens, historic estate garden, hostas, sculptures, hostas, and more hostas! Travel on air-conditioned buses.

Enjoy amazing gardens, food, friends, and hospitality of the great folks in Indy!

For more information, check out their website:

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

## SWOHS News & Events

SWOHS scheduled lineup of events:

Saturday April 8, 2017

Annual General Meeting (venue TBD)

Sunday June 18, 2017

Bus/Garden Tour

Type of tour TBD based on interest

Selected area: Stratford, Thedford and points further north

Saturday July 15, 2017

SWOHS Picnic (venue TBD)

Sunday August 27, 2017

Corn & Sausage Roast (venue TBD)

Please visit [www.SWOHS.org](http://www.SWOHS.org) for details

## Buyer beware!

**That new hosta might not be what the label says you're getting!**

by **J.D. Belanger** – *Reprinted from the Northern Wisconsin Hosta Society Northern Start newsletter*

What's in a name? Shakespeare might think a rose by any other name would smell as sweet, but Warren I. Pollock, a columnist for the American Hosta Society's *The Hosta Journal*, thinks otherwise.

He frequently dwells on what, to some, might appear as nitpicking. (Not too long ago he was upset, perhaps justifiably, we don't know, because a hosta with "Dr." in the name contained—horrors!—a period, when there shouldn't have been one. This is probably important to purists, but to us, it was more interesting to learn that abbreviations like Prof. and Rev. have periods, but others, such as Dr and St [Doctor and Saint] do not—in England, that is. And in AHS.

His latest revelation is more pertinent. It involves television giant's HGTV selling plants, including hostas. The problem is, they're renaming well-known registered hostas, presumably to add some sales pizzazz.

One is Bob Solberg's 'Orange Marmalade,' which they call "Citrine Supreme™." Another is "Blue Dew™," registered as 'First Frost.' The list goes on.

Just be aware that if you buy an HGTV Home, or Hosta Treasures™ hosta, you might not be getting what you think you're getting. You might already have it, under another name.

## Eastern OHS News & Events

EOHS scheduled lineup of events:

- 25 March 2017 – Spring Member Meeting
- 17 June 2017 – Garden Tour, BBQ, and Plant Swap
- 30 September 2017 – AGM and election of officers

Please visit the Events page on our new website:

[www.EasternOHS.ca](http://www.EasternOHS.ca). Details about these Kingston-area events will be posted as the event date approaches. With your involvement, we hope to add some events in the Ottawa and/or Montreal regions!

## Q&A with Cindy Deutekom of Goldenbrook Hostas

If you've visited [Goldenbrook Hostas website](#) recently, you will have noticed that there is a buy 2 get 1 free of equal value promotion going on.

Sales like this don't happen every day!

We contacted **Cindy Deutekom** of Goldenbrook Hostas to get the scoop.

**OHS:** *Hi Cindy, please don't tell me that you are closing! Is this sale an inventory clean-up?*

**Cindy:** Retiring again! Selling out and moving to a smaller home.

**OHS:** *I think OHS members would find the closing of Goldenbrook Hostas newsworthy... Would mind answering a few questions?*

**Cindy:** Sure!

**OHS:** *When did you open Goldenbrook Hostas / how long have you been in the hosta business?*

**Cindy:** We started selling hostas in 2000 from a wheelbarrow at the end of the driveway! In 2001, we officially opened Goldenbrook Hostas.

**OHS:** *What did you and Carel do before?*

**Cindy:** I was a Business Analyst for EDS Canada/HP Canada. Carel had his own business and retired 2 years ago.

**OHS:** *What made you decide to open a hosta business?*

**Cindy:** Hostas became a passion with me very quickly and were not readily available in my area. Through the internet I found wholesale companies to purchase small quantities of new varieties of hosta. So, from there it grew into a small business. When I retired 7 years ago, I dedicated my time to growing the business.

**OHS:** *What was the largest number of hostas you ever had, at the height of your inventory?*

**Cindy:** The most we had were 6000 at one time. We generally keep our stock around 3500. In our show gardens we have approximately 1000 varieties.

**OHS:** *What's your favourite hosta? Why? (Name several if it's impossible to name just one.)*

**Cindy:** My all time favourite is H. 'Liberty', such a show stopper! That is one hosta you can spot across a yard. Actually, any in that family (Sagae, Ivory Coast, Majesty, Big Hobber) are top of my list.



*H. Liberty (2012 Hosta of the Year)*

As we are downsizing, I am picking my top 100 to take with us to our new home. Now, that is tough... limiting to just 100.

**OHS:** *What is your all-time most popular or best selling hosta? (OK to name several.)*

*continued on next page...*

Open mid April, 2017

Early online orders (before March 1 2017)

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Cindy Deutekom

Carel Deutekom

Phone: 905.449.5906

E-mail: [info@goldenbrookhostas.com](mailto:info@goldenbrookhostas.com)

Web: [www.goldenbrookhostas.com](http://www.goldenbrookhostas.com)

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**Cindy:** Blue Mouse Ears and all of its progeny! They are top sellers of ours and have been for many years.



*H. Blue Mouse Ears (2008 Hosta of the Year)*

All children that show an interest in the gardens, we give a H. 'Blue Mouse Ears' to get them started loving hostas!

**OHS:** Since when/how long have you been on the OHS Executive?

**Cindy:** 9 or 10 years. I would have to go back to old newsletters to see!

**OHS:** What years were you President? What years Past President?

**Cindy:** 2 years past president, 5 years president, 1 year VP and 2 years Adoption Coordinator.

**OHS:** What other roles have you had on the OHS Exec?

**Cindy:** I started as Hosta Adoption Coordinator. This program was discontinued. I then became VP for 1 year before moving to President.

**OHS:** Can you tell me a bit about your involvement with AHS? Regional Director, the Foliar Nematodes study? Other things?

**Cindy:** I have been VP Genus Hosta since June 2013 and I will complete my 2nd 2-year term in June 2017. Regional Director reports to the AHS Executive with what's happening in the local societies. Updates local societies through our newsletter when I have updates.

**OHS:** Is there anything else you would like to take this opportunity to say, or that you think would be of interest to OHS newsletter readers?

**Cindy:** Get involved! It is very rewarding to be a change agent to the society. Bring in new ideas. The Executive is always open to making changes. The OHS needs expertise and enthusiasm... We always need more volunteers!

**OHS:** Thanks, Cindy, for everything you do for OHS and for the love of hostas!

## TC (Tissue Culture) vs. OS (Originator's Stock)

by Ray Rodgers

*Reprinted courtesy of the AHS Newsletter Exchange*

Have you ever looked at a hosta price list and wondered what the "TC" and/or "OS" meant in some of the hosta descriptions? Occasionally one would even see two prices for the same plant, the lower price being for TC (Tissue Culture) and the more expensive price for OS (Originator's Stock).

TC references plants which have been propagated via tissue culture. In very simple terms, these are chemically energized test tube babies started from small shavings of the parent plant's meristem (the central growth point of a hosta crown).

Compared to increasing the number of plants through manually dividing garden plants, tissue culturing results in rapid reproduction. Tissue culturing must be performed in a sterile lab type environment. This is a tedious, exacting, repetitious process that must be monitored very closely. Except for a few serious hobbyists, tissue culturing is better left up to the professionals. The resulting plants are typically wholesaled in multiple quantities to retail outlets.

The OS designation basically means the plant being offered is a division of the original named hosta. This hosta could have been derived through hybridization

*Continued on page 10...*

## The Hosta Collectors' Challenge

I don't ski. I don't skate. I don't toboggan. It is the middle of winter and my idea of a good healthy regime in the cold bleak months is to sit at my computer with the dogs at my feet, exercising my fingers. Every morning I check email; see what the weather is bringing for the next 14 days; and I must, must read my horoscope to see what the day has in store for me.

Winter is my time to check out the upcoming hostas for the new year. I place my orders for not only newer hostas for my business, but hostas that are on my own wish list. You don't want to know how long my 'wish list' is. We all know I'm addicted to these plants. There must be cocaine or some other addictive drug within the leaves, because nothing else can explain my continued addiction with hostas. Yes, we know they are lovely and easy to care for, and offer a variety of sizes and colours to stand out in any garden. But why do I feel that each and every one of them is one of my children away at school for the season? I long for those first few days of warm spring weather when they announce their return 'noses first'. To see the little buds peeking out of the ground makes my heart so happy. And as each little bud unfurls to a beautiful, unique leaf, I am rewarded with a lovely reminder as to why I chose that particular hosta for my gardens.



*Juvenile H. June in a sunny location*

I have been blessed to make many friends and acquaintances while dealing with hostas. Most, like

myself, want nothing more than to share both hostas and hosta gardening experience with anyone that will listen. I have a dear friend that has been in the business forever and actually went to horticultural college. We talk hostas on the phone for hours on end, comparing the merits of one hosta over another. You'd think after all these years we would be tired of it, but with the thousands of hostas out there, I don't think we've even touched on a small fraction. We've had discussions on certain hostas that look like, well, CRAP in both our gardens. And yet when we see photographs of same, we scratch our heads wondering where we went wrong.



*Mature H. June in deep shade*

Case in point is both June and June Fever. I've had both in my gardens for seven years now. They have been small in size and insignificant in colour. I have seen pictures where they look outstanding and have often thought that maybe my own had been labeled incorrectly when I purchased them. Mine didn't look like that!

And then came the drought and heatwave of Summer 2016! Holy Mother of the Lord above! Where did those plants come from? Someone has dug up my June and June Fever and replaced them with these outstanding, glorious, flamed and stunningly green specimens. Oh, wait a dog-gone minute. They must love the heat. Duh! Nothing else has changed. And Justine looks glorious as well, and she's only four years old in my garden. All from the same family of hostas. And guess what...

*Continued on the next page...*

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they looked great in my friend's garden as well. She lives several kilometers from me but had the same weather conditions during the summer.



*H. June Fever*

If you have under-performing hostas, please consider moving them. While I don't like to dig and move, sometimes it is a necessary evil. Consider the conditions in your garden that are currently affecting your hosta(s). Too much sun... move to more shade. Too much shade (yes, it's possible) ... move to more sun. Too much water? Too little water? Additives to the soil, i.e., compost. The smallest change can net the biggest results. While hostas are not finicky as a rule, there are optimum conditions that each and every plant in the world has to have to look outstanding. If that were not the case, I'd be growing pineapples in my Ontario backyard.

My friend and I have had several conversations about June and June Fever. You'd think one conversation would be enough, but as the season changed from summer to

autumn, there was a new conversation as to how well they transitioned with the cooler temperatures. Yeah, we talk a lot. But we both absolutely love hostas. Do you? If you answered 'yes', then here is my challenge. Share your thoughts and ideas. Share them with friends and neighbours that have a similar passion. Please, please, please, consider sharing them within the pages of our newsletter. Yes, OUR newsletter. I think the last issue of the newsletter was the best yet, and wrote to tell our editor just that. She did a marvelous job. And so do all the many volunteers that make the Ontario Hosta Society possible.

But if we are to keep the passion alive, we have to share it. New blood, new ideas, new concepts. I would love to see an online auction of hostas, once or twice a year, in Canada, but don't have the computer know-how to pull that together. I'd also love to see a column where volunteer 'experts' answer your hosta questions.

We have to *scream* out our passion, because if we don't, the market for hostas will shrivel up and die. We don't want that. We want to continue to bring in new plants, attend new functions, write new columns. I know everyone is busy, but if we don't make the effort, who will?

*Jayne Christiani*  
**Hosta Vista, Baby!**

**Hosta Vista, Baby!**  
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## TC or OS?

...continued from page 7

(seedling) or sporting\*, which is not uncommon with hostas. If an OS plant was purchased and a division was given to another person, who in turn eventually gave a division of their plant to yet another person, all these plants would still be considered originator's stock. On price lists, the OS designation is most often used for newer or rare plants. Originator's stock plants can help to validate exactly what was originally registered and ensure the direct lineage of the original plants are not lost.

Are originator's stock hostas better and should they demand a premium price? The newer the plant and the more unique it is, the more likely an OS division is worth the extra money. Some of the truly unique hostas are not replicated easily via tissue culturing. With these plants, a TC lab may develop a high percentage of babies not possessing the same characteristics of the parent. This inability unquestionably drives the price of these varieties up. Luckily for us consumers, most hostas can be TCed with a high degree of success.

Responsible wholesalers and retailers will typically guarantee their plants to be true to name. This starts with the TC labs' commitment to cull (throw away) or give a new name to hostas not meeting specific criteria. Since it is not always possible to know for sure if small tissue cultured plants will look like their parents in subsequent years, a small percentage of untrue hostas do reach nurseries and other retailers. Since responsible retailers typically grow TC plants on for at least one full season prior to selling them, some additional variants may be caught.

It is the untrue forms that slip through the cracks that generate some of the unfavorable comments about tissue cultured hostas. Usually such comments are used to justify the price of OS plants. Certainly people should expect to receive what they pay for. Some variants are not as attractive or as good of a grower as the named variety. But, some variants are actually better than the original

plant. As an example, in a batch of tissue cultured H. 'Great Expectations', some wider-margined plants were discovered. These plants were given the name H. 'Dream Weaver'. The additional green leaf surface allows this hosta to produce more chlorophyll than H. 'Great Expectations', making it a better grower.

Tissue culturing has also accelerated the popularity of "Sport Hunting". This is the act of hosta enthusiasts searching through nurseries for hostas that are different from their published descriptions. These plants may vary in a variety of ways, including variegation pattern (including Instability\*\*), coloration, plant size and leaf shape. For those interested in hybridizing or just growing open pollinated seed, finding an otherwise desirable plant with some degree of splashing could be a significant find. Except for somewhat rare occasions, it requires an unstable pod parent (mother plant) to produce variegated seedlings. Whether the found plants turn out to be better than the named variety or not, it is occasionally worth the purchase price to the hunter to have something a little different to display in their garden.

Make no mistake; tissue culture plants have fueled the popularity of hostas by rapidly increasing the availability of many newer varieties of hostas at affordable prices. The elevation of hosta to the rank of most popular perennial from almost obscurity can directly be linked to the early 1980s when plant tissue culture was in its infancy.

Tissue culture and originator's stock plants both have their place in the hosta world. Whether purchasing OS plants is a good value depends largely on the specific hosta variety, but the ultimate decision rests with each individual buyer.

\* A Sport is a hosta arising from another hosta, possessing different characteristics.

\*\*In hosta, Instability is a plant that does not maintain its solid or variegated pattern, resulting in a Splashed pattern (formerly referred to as Streaked, also known as Striated). Splashed hostas have many non-connected light and dark variegated sections. Splashed hostas typically stabilize into a solid colored or variegated plant over time.



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## Showering with your plants

**By Sean James** (speaker at 2017 OHS Hosta Forum)  
*Reprinted from the Fern Ridge Landscaping and Consulting Newsletter Issue 3 with permission*

Showering with your plants down in the bottom of the stall or tub may seem like an odd thing to do but, in the middle of winter, it serves several purposes.

By February, many of your house plants may have collected a lot of dust. Showering with them will wash that away, helping them breathe and looking their best. It also serves to reduce pest populations to levels that the plant can tolerate (two-spotted spider mite being a great example). Another challenge that house plants suffer is a build-up of salts in the soil. Giving them a good soaking will help leach those salts away.

On the topic of soils and watering, it's interesting that more plants die from overwatering than under-watering. Try and ensure that soils dry out between waterings and avoid putting your plants on a regular watering schedule. The only way to tell if a plant needs water is to stick your finger in the dirt and see if it's cool and moist or warm and dry. If it's moist, leave it for a day or two and check again.

House plants use water at different rates depending on the species, exposure and the size of the pot in relation to the root system.

Now is a good time of year to check and see if plants need repotting into a larger container. With most plants if the root system is compacted and circling the pot, they need to be given a new, larger vessel to live in. When re-potting, strip away dead and diseased roots and add new, fresh potting mix.

Now is also an excellent time to clean up dead leaves and branches, making room for new growth, reducing disease and insect infestations and improving the overall aesthetics of the plant. Make sure you rotate them on a regular basis to help them grow evenly, getting full exposure to sunlight.

Your plants will love you for this extra care and intimacy. In exchange for your love, they'll clean the air in your house of carcinogens (up to 80% in the first day).

## I Love Those Minis!

**by Joe Haber, Centerport, NY**  
*Reprinted courtesy of the AHS Newsletter Exchange*

Gardening on a small piece of property with a steep hillside in my backyard, I must confess that mini and small hostas have become my favorites. Obviously I'm not alone since the American Hosta Society decided to conduct a separate popularity poll for minis in addition to their poll of the most popular standard varieties. Also, I have noticed that articles on this subject and photos are appearing in *The Hosta Journal* more frequently in recent editions.

These little guys look great in containers and my favorite containers are troughs. Troughs can be filled with many different plants including dwarf conifers, small succulents and of course, mini hostas.

Making hypertufa troughs is not difficult and can be a good winter pastime as you wait for your hostas to start emerging in the spring. There are several recipes for hypertufa mixtures. The main ingredients are portland cement, peat moss and perlite – all readily available in local home improvement centers. They can be made using molds that are rectangular, round, etc., or even free shaped. Whatever shape you choose, the final product can really dress up a patio.

I grow mini and small hostas in a variety of containers and even have 'Lemon Lime' growing in a tree stump. It has been there for eight years. In most of my containers I mix hostas with companions like Ajuga 'Metallica Crispa', Tatting Fern (*Athyrium Frizellae*), and even small annuals. Some mini hosta favorites that I grow in our rock garden are; 'Pandora's Box', 'Surprised By Joy', 'Medusa', 'Teeny-weeny Bikini', 'Blue Mouse Ears', 'Green Eyes', 'Crepe Soul', 'Chickadee', 'Kinboten', and 'Thumbnail', to name a few. Like peanuts, you can't have just one.

Slugs are a bigger problem for small hostas than large ones. My way of combating the "damn slug" is by spreading a topping that forms a barrier. My formula for this very successful topping is a mixture of ground egg shells, ground sea shells, and chicken grit. An occasional sprinkling of Sluggo also helps.

In closing I will quote Bob Solberg: "Miniature hostas are cute, little babies that will grow in a thimble. They often run in herds through rock gardens, around ponds, or along the edge of a path. Minis are especially happy in containers, strawberry pots, troughs, or even whiskey barrels. Hundreds can live comfortably along a driveway. Just give them water."

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