

# THE CHATTANOOGA REGIONAL HOSTA SOCIETY



## THE HOSTA CONNECTION



### OCTOBER 7, 2017 MEETING at 1 O'CLOCK Reflection Riding Arboretum & Nature Center 2017 Fall Native Plant Sale



#### *Notes from the Editor*

*Our meeting will be at Reflection Riding Arboretum at the foot of Lookout Mtn.*

*We will meet Saturday in front on the lawn at the Humphrey House, we will have a quick 15 minute meeting, if you want to sit you need to bring a lawn chair. I'm including a schedule of the programs, you might want to come earlier to listen to some of the other speakers and buy some plants.*

*President Judy Nowlin arranged this program for us, I'm so excited, Johnny and I will be going early, yes! I'll have to buy some plants but I'm, also, interested in the programs.*

#### SCHEDULE

##### **Saturday, October 7**

**10:00am-11:00am:** Fall Wildflower Tram Ride: Join Naturalist and Historian Michael Green for a tram ride through the Arboretum discussing and identifying our Fall Wildflowers.

**10:00am-11:00am:** Tree diseases: Join City Forester Gene Hyde for a presentation on tree diseases found in our area, such as Emerald Ash Bore.

**11:15am-12:15pm:** Fall plantings for Hummingbirds: Join Chris Mahoney for a discussion on what to plant in the fall to attract hummingbirds next season.

**12:30pm-1:30pm:** Fall Wildflowers and the pollinators they support: Join Reflection Riding Arboretum & Nature Center volunteer and Wild One Ann Brown for a presentation on Fall Native Wildflowers and the pollinators that they support.

**1:30pm-2:30pm:** Fall Wildflower Tram Ride: Join Naturalist and Historian Michael Green for a tram ride through the Arboretum discussing and identifying our Fall Wildflowers.

**2:45pm-3:45pm:** Plant Propagation: Join Wild One Sally Wencel to discuss methods used to propagate plants from seed.

*Our December 2, meeting is our Christmas luncheon, Johnny and I will have it at our home. We'll meet at 12 noon, bring a covered dish or two, we'll supply the drinks and meat. I'll give directions to our home in the December newsletter. **'Something you need to think about for the December meeting - is what we want to do next year'**. We can do programs, field trips, make a hypertufa container, or use your imagination to think of something different we might do. We'll have our usual picnic/plant sale in the spring. You might like to host the picnic at your garden.*

*You can pay your Hosta dues at the December meeting for 2018..*

*This is how I feel about our Hosta Society*

*We come together because of our love for the plant, but we keep coming back because of the friendships that we form as members of this group.*

## **HOW TO PLANT HOSTA SEEDS**

Planting Hosta Seeds Chances are you have at least a few Hosta bloom scapes that set seed. The seed pod will crack open in due time indicating the seed has matured. The seed is generally viable if it's turned black.

Hostas do not obey the normal rules of genetics. You might think that if a variegated Hosta is crossed with another variegated Hosta then the offspring

would be, for the most part, variegated. However this is not true, or at the least it is very, very rare. Hybridizers use "streaked" Hostas as the pod parent for developing new variegated cultivars. These streaked breeding plants are somewhat unstable and command a relatively high market price.

But with all that said, you can still have some fun by germinating your own Hosta seeds. Just realize that they will likely be a solid color even if originating from a variegated parent. Here are a few tips for starting seed which can be a great winter time activity. The timing on starting seed is a variable with some folks starting in October or November while others wait until February.

Start the seeds in flats with a clear plastic dome (or similar high humidity setup). Wash the flats and use a sterile soilless mix to minimize any potential fungal problems. Cover the seed lightly to a 1/8" to 1/4" depth. Germination typically occurs in 12 to 15 days. Target an air temperature of about 75 degrees F. Heating mats can be useful when working in cooler basement settings.

Lighting is critical when gardening indoors (although not relevant to the actual seed germination process in this case). Use supplemental lighting (cool-white fluorescent tubes) to give 16-24 hours of daily lighting following germination. Maintain the lights about 2" above the dome, or 2" above the plants once the dome has been removed.

Never let the seedlings dry out. Keep the soil moist but not soggy. Grow until the tops of the plants touch the dome. Then transplant (typically at the 2 or 3 leaf stage) and begin using a water soluble fertilizer. How much water soluble fertilizer you use will depend on how much you want to "push" the growth process.

Before moving seedlings to the spring garden, don't forget to harden them off - just like a tomato plant that was started inside.

*Written by Rob Mortko, the Hosta Guy, Made in the Shade Gardens*