

THE CHATTANOOGA REGIONAL HOSTA SOCIETY



THE HOSTA CONNECTION



MAY 11, 2019

PICNIC AND GARDEN TOUR

12 O'CLOCK

JIM & LINDA KEOWN'S HOME



Notes from the Editor

Spring is finally here, my hostas are loving all the rain, the weeds are flourishing. We have a trip next week that will double the weed count by the time we come home. No need to worry about getting behind, we have so much to do and redesign we'll probably be caught up by August. The area in my garden that was crushed by the fallen trees are trying to survive, there is new growth on the stems of the azaleas that were leveled to the ground, a few hostas and ferns are growing, my Japanese maple that was hit at the top and split the tree trunk (kinda in half) is still alive, I can't believe this, I can put my finger through the trunk of the tree where the split is, the split is about 10 inches long. I have seen this happen before, 20 years ago the electric power board was installing a new pole on the back of our property, they backed up into an oak leaf hydrangea and split the the bush in a couple of places,

I trimmed up the broken branches – the power board bought me a new hydrangea, I was surprised at the time that the hydrangea lived --- it is still alive, the replacement hydrangea died when the trees came down this fall, Funny how nature works.

Our picnic will be the second week end in May, thank you members for delaying the picnic a week so Johnny and I could attend. The Keown's gardens are always wonderful, Jim has become a collector.

Gardeners, Collectors, Splitters, Clumpers

By Ray Rodgers Reprinted courtesy of the AHS Newsletter Exchange.

The purest of “Gardeners” (collectors) have a predetermined place for every purchase and every plant must be in its place. Such gardeners have a seemingly never-ending thirst, or possibly an addiction, to work in their gardens. “Collectors” do not make purchases based on need. In the mind of the most avid collectors, there is always room for more hostas, collectors have a hard time resisting the lure of newer introductions. At least on occasion, collectors are more willing to exceed their price comfort zone for “must have” hostas. When doing so, they may choose not to share the purchase price with their spouse. A collector would rather purchase three different varieties than three of one variety, even when available space dictates otherwise. Such collectors most often keep track of all hosta purchases, usually in some sort of hard-copy or electronic spreadsheet. At any time, collectors typically know at least approximately how many hostas they have, especially during the early years of their addiction. To the most avid hosta collector, a good companion plant would be another hosta. Those that start out as true collectors, find it difficult to spend very much of their available funds on other types of plant material.

Gardeners typically are not concerned with exactly how many hostas they have, and are not terribly concerned about labeling or keeping track of plant purchases in any way. Their primary concern is to possess diverse plantings, providing ever-changing seasonal appeal.

“Splitters” purchase double or multi-eyed hostas, their mind eventually gets around to dividing. Sometimes it is right away, sometimes the action happens the following year. For these folks, more is better than big! Splitters are quick with the knife when it comes to sharing, trading, selling, or feel the need for a hosta to have a presence in another location. Newer hosta fanciers often consider dividing as a way to quickly increase their total number of hostas. Some splitters don’t know, or choose to ignore the fact, that unlike iris and daylilies, hostas do not need to be divided.

In contrast, “Clumpers” are basically the exact opposite. They take great joy in nurturing their hostas into large mature clumps. For these folks, bigger is truly better than more! When clumpers feel a particular hosta is not sited for optimal growth, they would rather move the entire clump than chop it up. Clumpers don’t make great trading partners.

I have to confess that I'm a hostaholic – I once was a collector now I have to be satified to be just a gardener.

Notes from Bob Solberg 8/22/18 – “We have now changed fertilizers again. We use a formulation from Harrell’s, a slow release 17-6-12.

. I like the low-phosphorus middle number because my already rich-in-phosphorus southern soil has reached very high levels of the element in many places, almost toxic in some areas, as a result of 35 years of applying high-phosphorus balanced fertilizers such as 8-8-8 and 10-10-10. Although maybe not optimal for all my plants that get it, Harrell 17-6-12 is the best overall fertilizer in satisfying their combined basic needs. To find it or other similar formulations, just search for it on the internet or find a local provider near you. I get mine from a farm supply store in a neighboring town. Because it contains fast release nitrogen, Harrell and similar fertilizers do not last long, releasing their nitrogen in only a few weeks. Therefore, the hostas will need supplemental late spring/early summer feeding and for this, a liquid foliar feeding of Miracle-Gro All Purpose Plant Food. (formulation for tomatoes but that is often hard to find.) I apply it using a sprayer, just wetting the leaves, in late spring as they are beginning to mature. It does wonders as a tonic for pumping up leaf size and the hostas really seem to appreciate it. Just be careful to mix as directed or dilute it a little more than recommended. The tender hosta leaves can be very sensitive at this time of the year and may be burned if the concentration is too strong. I may repeat this fertilization step again in about six weeks.

Once hostas reach seasonal maturity in early/mid-summer, their needs for food slows. I do not fertilize again until autumn, about mid-to-late September. At this time, they are about to prepare themselves for approaching dormancy and the long winter's sleep. To do this, they begin storing nutrients in their roots and crown in the fall. I think that a light fertilizer at this time helps them in their winter preparations so I give them another lighter feeding, 17-16-12 fertilizer.

The routine I have laid out above seems to work well for me for my in-ground hostas but for the container hostas, I use a different fertilization procedures. My favorite product is Osmocote Plus slow release indoor and outdoor fertilizer with a 15-9-12 N-P-K formulation plus 8 additional essential trace elements. Potted hostas are difficult to fertilize after they have fully leafed out so multiple fertilizations during the growing season are not practical for me, especially since I have hundreds of hostas - mostly seedlings - growing in pots. The Osmocote claims to release its nitrogen over a six-month period although I suspect that interval is not quite as long in our warmer southern climate. However, I have used it for years as a single application fertilizer for my containers and it has proven to work quite well, used as directed. It is also easy to find at most garden centers. All container mixes also need regular applications of trace elements to replace those used by the plants over time. The mix of trace elements in Osmocote Plus takes care of that essential plant need. I doubt that it is necessary, but I also apply the Miracle.Gro spray to my container plants at the same time I apply it to my in-

ground hostas. I do not fertilize again in the fall since the Osmocote lasts so long into the season.

These are the fertilization procedures I use for my hostas. As I have said, there are other methods that would probably work equally well if not better. Don't be afraid to experiment a little to find what works best for you. : Harrell's sells online in 50 lb. Bags Hosta Registry Website

Another way to locate names or identify your hostas.

American Hosta Society's Hosta Registry

The American Hosta Society's Hosta Registry Website has over 5955 registered hostas listed as of the end of 2018 and over 12,000 photos. The site is a service provided by the American Hosta Society in its capacity as the International Cultivar Registration Authority for the Genus Hosta. It is completely maintained by volunteers. Currently another 1400 photos are being processed and will be added soon.

When available, the original photographs that were submitted to the registrar at the time of registration are displayed as part of the registration detail page. The new site includes the original registration photos and additional photos that have been submitted to AHS.

Besides photographs a new feature to the site is Hosta Finder. When you search for a cultivar you then have the option of looking at the photos and registration detail (you can click on the photo or registration detail tab) or see the show classification information for the leaf show or you can click on Hosta Finder where the AHGA member nurseries are displayed that sell the chosen cultivar. You can see their prices and click on the nursery to link to their webpage.

The site is easy to navigate. From the home page (<https://hostaregistrar.org>) go to the search tab and enter the cultivar name (or beginning, end or anywhere in the name) Originator or Registered year and click search.

Directions to the Keown's home: Take the Shallowford Road exit off I24 heading East. Go about a mile and Shallowford makes a curve to the right and becomes Morris Hill Road. Go a short distance and you will see the Belleau Woods subdivision sign on the right. Turn in, take the first right, then the first left onto Pershing Road. We are about half way down the hill

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n the right {8633 Pershing}. Phone number is 423-432-5509 if you need

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