

# THE HOSTA LEAF

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## Kathy's Corner

Welcome to the summer edition of THE HOSTA LEAF! It is my sincere wish that this issue finds each of you healthy and enjoying the peace of your gardens during these troubled times.

Spring was bittersweet in my garden this year. Some of my flowers did not withstand the low temperatures and a few of my hostas received frost bite despite having been covered during the coldest of evenings. However, after a few replacement flowers were planted and the hostas healed, the gardens are thriving!

BUT...as I gazed happily upon my garden, sprouting with new foliage, I was crushed to witness the invasion of the dreaded jumping worm. This foreign enemy had invaded my soil (my guess is that they came in from the mulch I had spread last year)! Now, as Cindy Tomashek put it so well, "it's a war!" And talk about timely, the American Hosta Society's (AHS) recent spring publication, The Hosta Journal, had two well-written articles on the topic, one from Cindy Tomashek and the other from Lee E. Frelich, Director of the University of Minnesota Center for Forest Ecology. If you do not already have a membership to the AHS, which includes three beautifully done Journals a year (two printed and one online), it is well worth the yearly membership fee (\$30-Individual/\$34-Family).

SO...I soldier on weeding, reading and following the research on jumping worms. I encourage you to listen to our April 2019 recorded speaker, Brad Herrick – University of Wisconsin-Madison, Arboretum ecologist. His talk can be found on our website home page: [soghs.org](http://soghs.org) Another source of information in a quick and condensed format is the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources website: <https://www.dnr.state.mn.us/invasives/terrestrialanimals/jumping-worm/index.html>

*(President's Letter continued on Page 2)*

### Kathy's Hosta Babies



## President's Letter

(Continued from Page 1)

Mother nature has a beautiful way of healing and thriving as does the human spirit. Gardens are flourishing, people are coping and life goes on. May you find peace in everyday beauty. For myself, I have introduced my hosta seed babies to the great outdoors for several hours a day when the temperatures are warm. Soon, I hope to transplant these little darlings into a special container as they outgrow their current pots. It is a slow process but worth the time and patience. (See photo above.) Stay well, and we will see you in the garden.

- Kathy Rustad, President



Need a little inspiration for a summer arrangement? While the leaves are still perfect, before the ravages of heat, slugs and bad weather, snip a few of your favorites and go crazy with creativity!

**Just a reminder to check the SOGHS website routinely for updates on activities: [www.SOGHS.org](http://www.SOGHS.org)**



# Hostas Are Amazing ... AND Resilient

Every Spring we can't wait to get into the garden to see the hostas coming alive. We count the eyes on our purchases from the year before to see if they have increased, or check out the older ones as they come up as big fat "unicorn horns," as my five-year-old granddaughter described them. It is an exciting time!

Until we get that late Spring frost! I had friends who had experienced this in the past and I would sympathize with them, hearing how disappointed they were. Well, as with anything else, you don't truly understand until it happens to you.

This Spring started out like Summer. Very little rain and unusually warm temperatures. The hostas were coming up with some even starting to leaf out. Then we heard freezing temperatures were in the forecast. We covered a few things, but of course it is impossible to cover hundreds of hostas, so they were left to take what Mother Nature was about unleash. Imagine the sinking feeling when we saw the thermometer at 24 degrees. And then a second night at 27 degrees.

The aftermath was pretty devastating. We estimated about 75 hostas were hit hard. The ones that were still pips weren't affected as much as the tender new leaves that had already unfurled.

As I told people about it, they were unsure how the damage should be handled. Some thought the whole hosta should be cut back, while others thought it would just die. Well, the task of taking care of it is not exactly pleasant. I decided to wait a few days before starting to remove the damaged leaves to give them a chance to dry a bit. The leaves are a lot like lettuce that has frozen – they become very limp, slimy and after some time, smelly. One thing I discovered is that a leaf that has not completely unfurled gets "stuck" because the damaged part dries and adheres so tightly that it can't unfurl. It took some time to get to all of them.

But, much to my surprise, they look pretty good today. Many are much smaller because they lost so much, but we can still enjoy their beauty.

I took some pictures to show before and after.



**H. 'Sagae'** (left) suffered frost damage. The photo taken May 30 (far left) shows the damaged leaves limp on the ground. The center photo from June 1 reveals progress, though the photo at right shows that it is very thin at the bottom after cleanup.



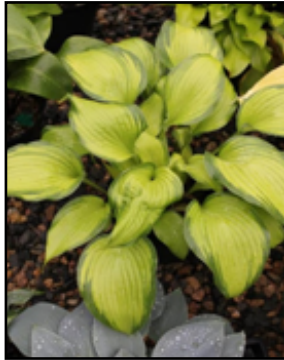
**H. 'Cloudburst'** (bottom left) looks very sad and perhaps unsalvageable in the May 1 photo at left, but lo and behold, on June 1, the same plant looks like a completely different hosta.

***So, if this ever happens to you, find a sympathetic friend, and then be assured that all is not lost.***

**HOSTAS ARE AMAZING!!! - By Mona Keehn**



## SOGHS 2020 Scratch and Dent Offerings



### H. 'Love Of My Life'

(Solberg 2017) Bob Solberg says this *medium* Hosta is a sport of 'Sun Shower X Designer Genes' that sported right away from an all yellow plant to one with a green edge. Having H.' Longpipes' and H. 'Sieboldiana' genes, in many ways it is like H. 'June' but more robust. In addition, it has red petioles and pinkish purple scapes.

SOGHS price \$ 23      Usually sold for \$35



### H. 'Jane's Blush'

H. 'Jane's Blush' is a beautiful, *medium* hosta, that features waxy blue heart-shaped leaves with a dreamy wave around the edge. Magically, the leaves blush purple in the early spring becoming blue again in summer. It's a rare find from the late Jane Diesen.

SOGHS price \$18      Usually sold for \$35



### H. 'Fairy Dust' GHF Introduction *Mini 5" by 8"*

Solberg's 2017 introduction H. 'Fairy Dust' is a very bright yellow narrow-leaved mini. This Hosta holds its color with flush after flush of new foliage all summer. A second generation seedling from H. 'Corkscrew' and H. 'Green Eyes,' it has good substance. It will add magic to any garden!

SOGHS price is \$11      Usually sold for \$15



### H. 'Ruffle Truffle'

(M. Bendig 2020) (H. 'Curly Fries' seedling) *Small, (8" x 18")*

This vigorous, highly ruffled, holly-leaved hosta emerges almost **white** and turns blue green in summer. This hosta from Matt Bending has good substance and makes an unique specimen in the garden.

SOGHS price is \$16      Usually sold at \$35



**SOGHS**



**2020**



**Order Form**

1. One hosta of each variety per member, maximum 4 plants total. If two SOGHS members are in the same household, orders may be combined for a maximum total of 8 plants (two of each variety).
2. Check made out to SOGHS must accompany order form. Orders received without payment will not be honored.
3. Orders must be postmarked by Friday, August 28, 2020
4. Member agrees to pick up plants. **Pick-up dates are:** Thursday, September 10, 2020, in Jan Gerke’s Driveway (5317 Timberidge CT SE Rochester) or at the SOGHS Founder’s Picnic Saturday, September 12, 2020.

Name	Price	Quantity	Total \$
H. Jane’s Blush	\$18		
H. Fairy Dust	\$11		
H. Ruffle Truffle	\$16		
H. Love Of My Life	\$23		
			Order Total \$

Member(s) Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

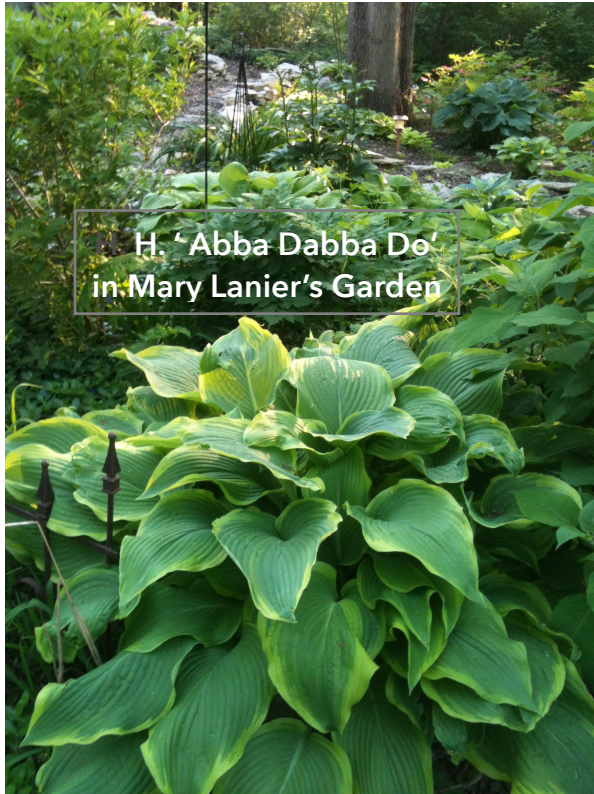
Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

**Mail the completed order form & check made out to SOGHS to  
 Sue Martino (40437 Ryans Bay RD Zumbro Falls MN 55991) by Friday, August 28<sup>th</sup> 2020  
 Questions? Call Sue Martino at 507-753-2430, email [suewmartino@gmail.com](mailto:suewmartino@gmail.com)**

## Notes from Joan Till-born, Membership Chair

**T**his is a challenging time to be a member of a group that has depended a great deal on face-to-face interactions at social gatherings, garden tours, open houses, meetings with speakers, plant sales and conventions. Members have planned and prepared for months for some events and have looked forward to the fun times. Many friendships have been formed over the years. Cancellation of events for the safety of our members and friends can make some feel isolated. It is membership in an organization that can help us deal with many of the challenges we are facing even if we do not physically see each other. Reach out to members with a friendly phone call or through Facebook to share how your hostas and gardens are doing. Discuss the usual slug issue, deer visitors, wanted or unwanted, jumping worm worries or the occasional storm damage.



If you are comfortable with some social distancing, you may want to plan a garden visit with a friend, keeping the distance of a mature Empress Wu between you. One bonus of being a hosta aficionado is many of us have gardens where we can get outside and be safe. If you want to take a drive, visit an area park or the MN Landscape Arboretum. A friend recently visited the Minnesota Landscape Arboretum where there are 1,200 acres of display gardens, educational displays, trails, driving tours and so much more.

There is plenty of space to social distance. Note that you do need to purchase tickets in advance, online at this time: <http://arb.umn.edu/order-tickets>

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### Members Receive A Free Year's Membership

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I don't need to say much about 2020 as we all know that it has been challenging. Due to the COVID-19 situation, most of the wonderful SOGHS activities have been canceled. The SOGHS Board felt that members weren't getting much for their membership because of cancellation of meetings, the plant sale, garden tours etc. The board unanimously voted to extend all memberships by one year. That's right. You get a "bonus" year. If your dues are paid through 2020, it will be extended through 2021. Some members are paid past 2020 and, their memberships will also be extended a year. The updated membership list is on the website. Thank you for sticking with the group. We miss seeing you.- Joan Till-Born

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## Just a Few Reminders Concerning Hostas

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- Reprinted from the May 2020 issue of *Great Expectations*, the Central Illinois Hosta Society newsletter

**Hostas Like Plenty of Moisture:** While hostas tend to be fairly adaptable to a drier shade, they will always be more vigorous with an adequate amount of moisture. This is especially important in the first year or two after planting as the hosta is becoming established. The rule of thumb is 1 to 1.5 inches of moisture per week for hostas. It's not uncommon for us to go into extended dry spells during the hot summer months, so don't forget your hostas during these times.

**Mulching your Hosta Beds:** Going hand-in-hand with maintaining proper soil moisture in your hosta bed is the proper application of mulch. Mulch helps conserve soil moisture as well as reduce competition from weeds. The key is not to overdo it. A depth of 1 to 2 inches of mulch is plenty. In fact going overboard with mulch helps create an even more inviting environment for slugs and also encourages fungal diseases as well as voles. Backing the mulch about 3 to 4 inches away from the base of the hosta will also create a slightly drier microclimate which further discourages both slugs and fungal activity. Is one type of mulch more preferable than another? Not really. We use pine bark mulch because it's reasonably attractive and relatively inexpensive in our area. Since hostas actually prefer a lower soil pH (optimally between 6.0 and 6.5), any type of mulch that adds to soil acidity (like pine bark or pine needles) is an added benefit.

**Slug Control --- Don't Let Up:** The downside to spring rainfall is that slugs are generally more active. Pin hole sized holes in hosta foliage is the telltale sign of slugs. A proactive approach remains the best control method. Continue to apply repeat applications of slug bait per the directions on the package. Remember there are two different slug bait formulations available - those that contain metaldehyde and those that contain iron phosphate. Both will give good control if used regularly.

**Caterpillars:** If you're seeing larger, more irregular shaped holes in your hosta foliage, chances are this is the result of a caterpillar (most likely cutworms or army worms). Most tend to be active after dark (like slugs) so it can be difficult to spot them at work. The good news is that these pests are easier to deal with than slugs. Sevin (carbaryl) is listed for control of these critters and will not harm the hosta foliage. Simply follow the labeled directions. Note that some slug baits also contain Sevin for control of both slugs and caterpillars.

**Four-Legged Garden Visitors:** It seems like it's been a good spring for rabbits as we are seeing quite a few baby rabbits scurrying around the garden. Rabbits can be a nuisance most any time, but especially so if you've been "blessed" with one or more recent litters in the general vicinity of your garden. Trapping is a good option using apple slices as bait. Once trapped the rabbit can then be relocated. Spray-on repellants can also be effective but must be reapplied as directed. We recommend a product called "Liquid Fence" which is reasonably priced and works well. Just remember repellants are not systemic so any new foliage that emerges after the application is not protected. Like slug bait, repellants need to be reapplied per the label instructions.

**Fertilizing Hostas:** Hostas will do just fine without any supplemental fertilizer program. In fact, we generally recommend spending your time and energy on good soil prep prior to planting and plenty of follow-up watering. However, if you desire more vigorous growth, then fertilizer can help. Three applications per growing season can be used starting in April with the last application no later than August 1st. That means the 2nd of the 3 applications should be applied during June. Use a balanced granular fertilizer (12-12-12 or similar). About a handful of fertilizer per mature hosta clump is spread around the foliage drip line and then watered in well. For younger hostas, use a half handful or less per plant. Remember that fertilizing means you will need to water more often if Mother Nature doesn't provide the needed rainfall.

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## Calendar of Events

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**B**ecause of Covid-19 restrictions and to protect the health of our members, the SOGHS Board elected to cancel activities planned for the summer of 2020. We are just as anxious as you to resume our activities and are busy making plans. Stay tuned for more information.

**A**s of now we plan on the Founders' Day picnic, September 12. It will not be pot luck. Just bring your own picnic lunch. Hopefully we can mostly be outdoors, even for the auction. Details are forthcoming. Check the website often.

Mary Lanier  
Shades of Green Hosta Society  
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