



Saturday October 21

Fall Meeting

Speaker: David Teager

DVHS Past President and Fearless Leader

TITANS AND GODS: THE OLYMPIANS OF THE HOSTA WORLD.

Tredyffrin Public Library, 582 Upper Gulph Road, Strafford, PA 19087-2052

12:00 Set Up

12:30 Lunch

1:00 Business Meeting,

1:30 Speaker

2:30 Clean-up

Directions for October 21

The Tredyffrin Public Library is off the Main Line (Route 30), not far from the Devon Horse Show grounds.

From Philadelphia: Take I-76 or the PA Turnpike West to King of Prussia/Valley Forge. Take Route 202 South to the Swedesford Rd exit just after King of Prussia mall. Take the first left onto Swedesford Rd, then the next left onto Old Eagle School Road. Follow Old Eagle School Road 2 miles to traffic light at Upper Gulph Road, and turn left. The Library is 0.2 mile on the right.

Or take I-476 South (or North) to Rt. 30 and use the directions “from the South” below.

From the West or Southwest: Take I-76 East to King of Prussia/Valley Forge, then follow directions above. Or, take Route 202 North (e.g. from Rte. 1) to West Valley Road. Turn right at the traffic light onto West Valley Road. Follow West Valley about 2 miles up a long hill and down to a stop sign. Turn left onto Upper Gulph Road, and proceed through the traffic light about 0.3 mile. The Library is on the right.

From the South: Take I-95 North to I-476 North to Rt. 30 (Villanova/St. Davids) West. Take Rte. 30 (E Lancaster Ave.) 2.5 miles to Old Eagle School Rd. Turn Right, and go 0.7 miles to Upper Gulph Rd. Turn Right, and the library will be on your right.



DVHS Officers

Retired President

David Teager
1411 Deer Meadow Ln.
Garnet Valley, PA
(610) 485-4149
dsteager@earthlink.net

Interim President and VP, Programs

Marilyn Romenesko
106 Hoiland Dr.
Wilmington, DE 19803
(302) 750-4525
mromen9@gmail.com

Vice President, Membership

Debby Bryan-Purbrick
341 MacKenzie Dr.
West Chester, PA 19380
610-639-6528
deborah.l.bryan@comcast.net

Treasurer

Stephen Fugate
1411 Deer Meadow Ln.
Garnet Valley, PA
(610) 485-4149
skfugate@earthlink.net

Secretary

Missy Kashey
460 Halteman Rd.
Pottstown, PA 19465
(610)-310-0096
mjkashey@gmail.com

Committee Chairs:

Display Gardens

Marilyn Romenesko
Debby Bryan-Purbrick
Conny Parsons
Glen Mills, PA
connyparsons1@aol.com

Hostatality

Irene Cassidy
Clayton, NJ
latte_datte@yahoo.com

Plant Sales & Auctions

Ed MacFarland
Glenside, PA
edmacfarland818@gmail.com

Publications

Kathy Miller
Kennett Square, PA
kwmlle@mtco.com

Raffles

Rebecca Boylan
Pottstown, PA
raboylan@comcast.net

Website

Kim Kelter Neu
Philadelphia, PA
kkelter@philasd.org

Advisory Board

Warren Pollock, Glen Mills, PA
Barbara Tiffany, Point Pleasant, PA
Christel Badey Media, PA
Rebecca Boylan, Pottstown, PA

President's Letter

September offered a mixed bag for gardening. Here in Wilmington, we had a very hot (mid 90's) and dry week for the beginning of the month, but much more fall-like weather with 3" of rain for the next few weeks. What a relief to get the rain as it was hard to keep up with all the watering during this heat wave.

While it was still warm out, we had a very successful work party at the Barnes Arboretum where our National Hosta Display Garden is located. There is a large, declining Princess Tree, *Paulownia tomentosa* in need of TLC and likely removal. A collection of small and miniature hostas were located close to this tree. Since the tree is roped off around the drip line to protect the roots and protect visitors from falling branches, the hosta collection there was not positioned for visitors to view. We were able to salvage quite a few plants from this area and move them to the new bed in this garden where the Tiffany bench is located. The plaque for this bed, which honors our founder, Warren Pollock is in the process of being mounted on a rock near the bench.

Thanks to Rebecca Boylan, long term member, past president, past membership vice president, and self-proclaimed facilitator, we obtained a wonderful bronze plaque at a reasonable price. For the dedication of this bed, bench and plaque, we plan to schedule a visit to the site, a ribbon cutting, and a luncheon with Warren

The new head gardener at the Barnes Arboretum is Katie Jacoby. She is a horticulturist who trained at the Barnes School of Horticulture, and also worked at Bartram's Garden. Katie and her newly-wed husband, Matt were extremely helpful with supplying materials and direction at the work party. We are grateful for their efforts and attention to this garden.

Our third and final tour of the season was at the Look Again Garden of nurseryman Andy Schenck. This brought out a large group of around 50 members and friends. Andy was a gracious host, taking two groups of visitors on tour through his amazing garden. His garden offered an incredible variety of woody and herbaceous plants seldom seen on a single property. Thanks to Andy and his partner, Carol Verhake (whose fabulous garden we visited in early June), there was a table full of rare plants offered for sale. I was excited to find a Variegated Redbud Hazel, *Disanthus cercidifolius* 'Ena Nishiki'. Got it planted yesterday, so I hope it does well in the partially shaded location I chose for it.

Looking forward, our October 21st meeting will feature David Teager's acclaimed presentation on **Hosta Gods and Titans**. This is a presentation he did for a Hosta College event last year. We are fortunate to have him do it once again for our group at the Tredyffrin Library near Wayne, PA. Election of officers also occurs at this meeting. They will serve a 2-year term. Up for election are: Debby Bryan as V. P. for Membership, Ed MacFarland as V.P. for Programs, and myself as President. If you would like to serve in any capacity, please let us know. Your participation will keep our group strong, and we can use help in many areas.

I look forward to seeing you at our fall meeting.

Marilyn

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Titans and Gods: The Olympians of the Hosta World.

David Teager



How the proto-god species of hostas created families that fill our gardens with power, poetry, and sometimes mischief. Who knew Greek mythology could be relevant and fun? Story telling suitable for hosta newbies and sages alike.



David welcomes DVHS members to Teagate during a 2020 Pop-Up garden tour.

David has served as newsletter editor, webmaster, and president of the Delaware Valley Hosta Society, and as editor of The Online Journal of the American Hosta Society.

David Teager and his husband Stephen Fugate were infected with the hosta bug by close contact with Longwood Gardens over thirty years ago. Then further afflicted by a nice encounter with Warren Pollock. David was completing his doctorate in organic chemistry at the time, and found in hostas a worthy and beautiful research subject to fulfill his gardening interests -- first, in a small city garden and now at Teagate, their home for 25 years in Pennsylvania near Wilmington, Delaware.

Big Leaf 2023

Our previous **Big Leaf** contest was held in July of 2019. There was a total of 18 entries - at that time it was pleasant to see "so many". However, this year's contest received an unbelievable number of entries - 44 entries, grown by 15 different gardeners. And, wouldn't you know it, the chairperson of the contest forgot her measuring tape. Luckily, Andy Schenck, our host, was able to supply a yardstick.

The most popular leaf was, again, 'Sum and Substance', with nine entries (Table. 1). For many years 'Sum and Substance' "ruled". Then came 'Empress Wu', captivating us all with those unbelievably long green leaves.

2023 **Big Leaf** Entries

Cultivar	#
'Sum and Substance'	9
'Empress Wu'	7
'Wu-La-La'	3
'Humpback Whale'	2
'Winter Snow'	2
'Elegans'	2
'Azure Snow'	1
'Made You Look'	1
'Sun Power'	1
'Warwick Comet'	1
'Blue Angel'	1
'Leading Lady'	1
'Gunther's Pride'	1
'T. Rex'	1
'Pie Ala Mode'	1
'Frances Williams'	1
Unknown	9

Table 1. Entries.



Andy Schenck leads a tour of his Look Again Garden.

cont'd p. 4



Big Leaf Prize Winners

Category	Cultivar	Grower	L x W
Green	'Empress Wu'	Cheryl Wardle	351.7
Blue	'Elegans'	Victor Risch	285.0
Yellow/Gold	'Sum and Substance'	Debby Bryan-Purbrick	332.5
Variegated	'Winter Snow'	Victor Risch	248.6
Streaked	'Gunther's Pride'	Ed MacFarland	Fabulous

Table 2. Prize winning Leaves.

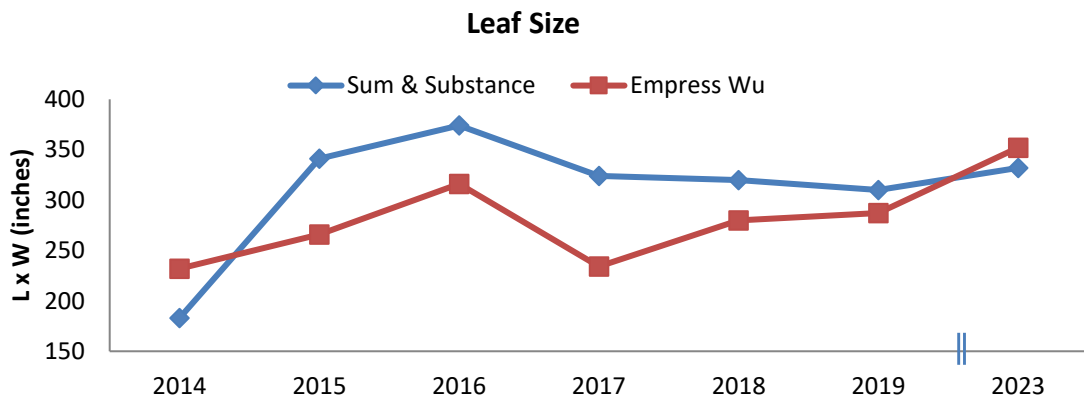
The chart below describes the on-going rivalry between 'Sum and Substance' and 'Empress Wu' in the Delaware Valley area. Which is bigger? The registered L x W for each is 270 (18 x 15) and 700 (no misprint! 28 x 25) respectively. 'Sum and Substance' seems to be right in line with the predicted dimensions, but why such disparity for 'Empress Wu'? A good question.

Of course L x W only approximates the true surface area of the leaves. We are working at coming a little closer to actual leaf size by tracing the leaves on to tracing paper and then weighing the tracings on an analytical balance.



What a beautiful setting for the August meeting. So difficult for a gardener to present a late summer garden, but Andy came through with an interesting, idea-inspiring venue.

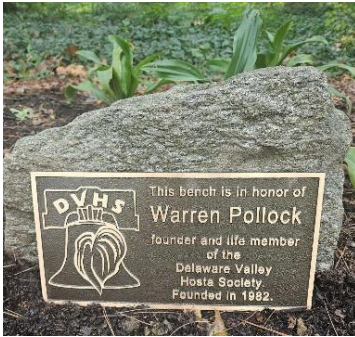
Thank you so much, Andy.



Update on the Barnes Hosta Display Garden

Debby Bryan-Purbrick

As Marilyn has remarked in her President's letter, quite a lot of activity has been going on at the National Hosta Display Garden located in the Barnes Arboretum. Besides general clean-up and weeding, we have been moving hostas and designing a bed surrounding the bench which will be dedicated to Warren Pollock.



The mini hostas, which seem to be a favorite for visitors, were moved around the bench, where those seated could easily see them. Also adjacent to the bench we moved other plantings to accent the plaque which is to be mounted on a large stone.

We are indebted to those who came out this year to help at various stages in the spring, summer and fall. My many thanks to Conny (garden designer) and Jim Parsons, Marilyn and Dan Romenesko, Anastasia and Clint Cleaver, Irene Cassidy, Victoria Buckley, Ed MacFarland, Bill Halberstadt and Sharee Solow, Carol Dutil and my husband Andy Purbrick.

Lastly, we really appreciate the collaboration with Katie Jacoby, the new head gardener at Barnes. We have built a great rapport with her during monthly Zoom meetings. She has been a pleasure to work with and been instrumental in keeping the garden in shape.



The American Hosta Society

www.americanhostasociety.org

Check out the benefits of AHS membership.
Join other hosta lovers from around the world.

Hosta kikutii. A Harbinger of Fall

Kathy Miller

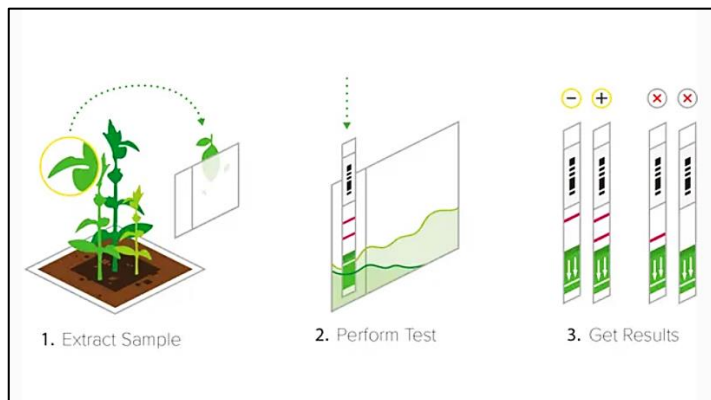
DVHS Newsletter, Fall, 2023



When the garden begins to become a brown and crispy mess and most hosta leaves are riddled with holes, there is one hosta that can cheer you up - *H. kikutii*. (Yes. It's not just your garden that looks a mess in the fall. That's why we only visit gardens in early summer!!) *H. kikutii*'s neat and tidy look is a relief compared to the general sprawl.

According to George Schmid, *H. kikutii* was originally native to southern Kyushu. It was named for the Japanese botanist Akio Kikuchi. The flowers are contained within white bracts. At one time it was referred to as the Crane-Beaked Plantain Lily because the upper part of the scape resembles a Japanese crane.

There are many sports and progeny in the nursery trade today, including: *H. kikutii* var. *polyneuron*, 'Hirao Splendor', 'Hirao Majesty', 'Fatal Attraction' and 'Valley's Dancing Water'.



This diagram, from the Agdia website, shows the steps involved in testing a hosta.

1. Note the removal of the tissue sample
2. Preparation and testing the sample
3. Negative and Positive test results, as well as two failed tests, which are missing the control

Hosta Virus X Test Kit

Debby Bryan Purbrick

Recently in my hosta garden I came across a suspicious looking hosta leaf. It's rather mottled appearance led me to question whether it had been infected by a virus. I began to research Virus X and Virus X test kits.

According to Wikipedia:

Hosta virus X is a virus that infects hostas. The disease was first identified in 1996 by Dr. Benham Lockhart at the University of Minnesota, and grouped with the Potato X viruses. The virus has reached epidemic proportions and can be found in many garden centers and nurseries around the globe.

The hosta virus test kit is available for purchase online and sold by Agdia. Their test kit contains:

- ImmunoStrips®
- Sample bags containing SEB1 buffer
- User Guide

Sixty-four distinct samples of HVX have been experimentally proven to be detected by the Agdia ImmunoStrip assay. They have used 35 different hosta cultivars to test their assay. Have you used a Covid test kit? This assay is similar to the Covid test.

One simply collects a suspected leaf or root, places a homogenized sample (approximately 1 square inch) in the buffer and inserts the test strip. See diagram lower left.

Positive results can be seen in as little as 5 minutes, but they advise to wait 30 minutes. Just as in the Covid test, a positive result needs the presence of two lines: the test line and the control line.

The kits used to be price at about \$5 per kit. Now, however, they are significantly more expensive. One can purchase a kit with 5 test strips for \$65 (\$13/test strip) or a kit with 25 strips for \$155. This is much more reasonable price per kit (\$6.20) but a significant outlay for a single individual. Neither of these prices reflect the total with taxes and shipping which for overnight priority is about \$50.00.

I have contacted Agdia, and they recommend storing the kits in a refrigerator. They will be good for 1 full year. Having a test kit on hand so a gardener would know when to remove an infected hosta would be beneficial. DVHS board is looking into purchasing the 25strip test kit with the objective of selling the kits at cost to active members when needed.

Editor's note: After perusing newsletters from other societies, I've noticed this has become a common practice.

Fall Gardening Tips

These are excerpts taken from articles written by Rob Mortko, which appeared in the Central Illinois Hosta Society newsletters of August and September 2015. These tips are apropos at this time of year.

Many of you will recall that Rob spoke about hosta tissue culture at our October 10, 2020 Zoom meeting

August is traditionally the hottest month of the year. With all that heat our hostas will really benefit from regular watering. Our goal at this point in the season is to grow the rhizome so that we can reap the benefits next spring.



Hosta sieboliana 'Elegans' rhizome.
Photo: Grotanical.

During the growing season the hosta rhizome (or crown) is building reserves that will be used the following spring. Large amounts of water are also required to replace the natural transpiration of the plant while supporting all the foliage. When we encounter a prolonged spell of hot dry weather, the rhizome will spend its own reserves to support the plant. It's rare that a hosta will wilt, even when the soil is very dry - so we don't get any early warning sign like we do with many plants. Ever wonder why a hosta appears OK at the end of the year, but reappears much smaller and/or

less vigorous the following spring, or (even worse) fails to reappear altogether the following spring? This is often the result of a decline in the crown mass the previous summer due to lack of adequate water.

Many folks might conclude that hostas can only be planted in the spring because they seem to "disappear" in local nurseries and garden centers by the first of June. Fact is, container grown hostas can be planted any time during the growing season. What's more, by planting now you can gain nearly a full growing season as compared to waiting until next spring. This will be readily apparent next spring as you will most likely have multiple eyes or pips emerge as a result of planting now.

Fall is considered the "optimum" time for hosta division as roots can continue to grow and establish themselves until our first killing frost. Remember hostas never need to be divided as opposed to most perennials that will become less vigorous after 3-5 years if not divided. With hostas it's a choice you make.

To divide hostas it is usually easiest to dig and lift the entire clump. Then use a spade or knife to divide into smaller sections. The key is to retain an adequate root structure (*editor's note*. particularly rhizome structure) for each division. If needed, use a hose to wash away the soil to get a closer look at where you should be making your divisions. When replanting, use a root starter/stimulator solution, but avoid any high nitrogen fertilizer this late in the season. Don't forget the value of good soil prep.

(*editor's note*. An excellent "how to" for dividing hostas is David Teager's "Dividing a Streaker" article which appeared in of the *DVHS Newsletter Vol 28:2*. This article includes many helpful pictures. Check the Archives on our website.)

Board Members, please check too!

DVHS MEMBERSHIP DUES. Please check your mailing label. If you see a number less than 23, you owe DVHS dues for 2023. The dues pay for the publication of this newsletter and maintenance of the website, as well as for other activities. Note that the return address is not the same as in the past. Stephen, who is our Treasurer, will forward your form to Debby, who is our Membership Chair.

----- Cut off and mail in. -----

Delaware Valley Hosta Society Membership and Renewal Form

Dues (household membership) are \$10 per year.

Mail to: Stephen Fugate, DVHS Treasurer
1411 Dear Meadow Lane
Garnet Valley, PA 19060

Please use this form also to update your records for address and e-mail, or to offer your garden for a potential meeting or tour. Thanks!

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

E-Mail _____

Would you consider opening your garden for a members' tour? _____

Are you in the nursery trade? _____

Calendar of Events 2023 www.delvalhosta.org

Please watch our website for more!

Saturday, October 21, 2023. DVHS Fall Meeting. Tredyffrin Library

June 19-22, 2024. AHS National Convention.

Marlborough, MA

The Delaware Valley Hosta Society has been growing and would like to welcome the following new members who have recently joined our group:

DVHS Newsletter v32.5
341 Mackenzie Dr.
West Chester PA19380
ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED