



Growing Together Growing Together

Daffodil & Hosta Society of Western Pennsylvania

WINTER 2025

Looking back at 2024

Each year our club hosts a variety of events that are not all Hosta or Daffodil related. Looking back at the past 12 months, it is amazing at what we as a club accomplished in a year.

The first event was the Friends Luncheon held at the Saxonburg Hotel. This luncheon originated just as a get together of a few friends and has now become a regular event on the DHSWP calendar. The next event which was scheduled in February was the Soup Luncheon held jointly with PIDS. The speaker for this event was Michele Wright who gave a wonderful presentation on honeybees. Following her lecture everyone enjoyed a delicious lunch of soup, salad, sandwich and desserts.

During the course of the year there were four regular meetings: three "in person" and one zoom meeting. During these meetings club business, lectures and socializing occurred. Karen Schmidt always found interesting speakers and the social side was always important with pizza, ice cream or just delicious munchies to share. In the past year the topics were: What other Plants Work with Hostas, Ornamental Grasses, Fireflies, Some Useful Accessories and Chemical for Your Garden.

Once the weather improved, the day trips started. In April the club visited Joe Hamm's garden to see his vast collection of Daffodils. A day trip to Holden Arboretum in Kirkland Ohio was attended by about 20 members. And of course, shopping was a must. There was the Hoop House sale as well as two shopping trips to multiple garden centers in the Columbus, Ohio area and a trip to nurseries around Indiana, Pa.

June brought us to our annual Hosta Show and Sale at Soergel Orchards in Wexford Pa. Hard to believe we have been doing this annually for thirty years, only missing 2020 and 2021 because of COVID-19. Along with our show, members have traveled to Piqua Ohio for Hosta College, Tennessee for the Dixie Regional, Indianapolis for Hosta Tailgate, and the AHS national Convention in Marlborough Massachusetts. On the trip back home from Marlborough Karen found us a fantastic nursery (O'Brien nursery Granby, CT) to visit and purchase new treasures for our gardens. Fall Forum in Edinboro Pa finished off 2024's adventures.

Steering Committee

President
Jim Kalka

Vice-President Hosta
OPEN

Vice-Presidents Daffodils
Karen Schmidt

Treasurer
Patty McGuire

Secretary
Joanne Burzese

Co-Chair Daffodils
Gary Ball

Co-Chair Hostas
Keith Portka

Membership
Patty Reigh

Speaker Facilitator
Karen Schmidt

Education
Jim Kalka

Members At Large
Chuck Olescyski
OPEN

Newsletter Editor
OPEN

E-Mail Editor to:

In April Gary & Sue Gahagan organized a Total Eclipse Party at DJ'S Greenhouse. Yes! It was a party. Sue planned a day of activities and food starting early so we could avoid traffic before the eclipse. A wonderful day and a great experience was had by all. Thank you, Gary & Sue.

The DHSWP year was never over without a bus trip. This year Karen Schmidt and DJ planned a wonderful foray to the Philadelphia area. This was a two-day trip. Our first stop was Chanticleer Garden in Wayne Pa. After a good dinner and a night's rest, we spent the following day at Longwood Gardens, spending a full day that finished with an astonishing fountain and light show that evening. We did make a few other stops, but the two gardens were the highlight of the trip.

The year would never have been complete without our annual picnic and auction at DJ'S Greenhouse. The turnout for this event was good, the raffle competitive and the auction lively. The end of season banquet and Daffodil bulb sale in November marked the end of the season. But wait, we were not done yet. Early December members meet for a Christmas Breakfast and a Dirty Santa gift exchange.

I think I got it all! It was another busy year for DHSWP, and we are all looking forward to another year of comradery with our fellow Hosta and Daffodil gardeners.

Jim Kalka, President

The Garden in Winter

From Central Illinois Hosta Society Newsletter, October 2024



While evergreen trees & shrubs undeniably add visual interest to winter landscapes, many other plants provide interest during these very long gray months (i.e. grasses, oaks, sedum, hydrangea...). Of course, many plants have no presence at all in the winter because they are too short and remain buried by snow or they just plain disappear. Based on this premise, let's explore ways to enhance your garden using plants that have some presence during the winter.

Often, branching, bark and even distinctive form, all can be very important in providing structure and interest. Keep in mind, because a plant is deciduous does not exclude it from providing beautiful effects in the winter garden. Few things can compare to the silhouetted form of a stately Bur Oak or the winged branching of a burning bush in freshly fallen snow.

As for branching, one of my current favorites is Midwinter Fire

Bloodtwig Dogwood, *Cornus sanguinea* 'Midwinter Fire' (top left). It has bark that resembles a flame ranging from coral red to orange to yellow. I prefer to juxtapose it with the contrasting dark green foliage of yews or boxwood, to spotlight the incredible color.

Bayberry *Myrica pensylvanica* (bottom left), an underused shrub, bears dried foliage and fruit well into the winter. It has a spreading habit and reaches 4-6' in height & spread. Its glossy, green, aromatic foliage complements its waxy, gray fruit. The fruit clustered along the stem, resembles a cocoa puff with a heavier dusting of sugar, though, I don't think you will find it as satisfying. These unusual berries are widely used to scent bayberry candles. To ensure good fruit production, bayberry is, best, planted in-groups of two or more for adequate pollination. Many birds like the bayberry, but deer usually don't, as it's considered to be a deer-resistant shrub.

Listed below is a palette of plants bearing various forms of winter interest:

Colorful Fruit & Seeds:

Alder, Hawthorn, Flowering Crab, Sumac, Chokeberry, Barberry, Bayberry, Pyracantha, Rugosa Rose, Viburnum, Butterfly Weed, Aster, False Indigo, Blackberry Lily, Purple Coneflower, Joe Pye Weed, Yellow Coneflower, Goldsturm Black eyed Susan, Goldenrod

Colorful & Cool Bark:

Serviceberry, Birch, Hickory, Persimmon, Cherry, Redbud, Winter King Hawthorn, Beech, Redtwig Dogwood, Burning Bush, Oakleaf Hydrangea, Burning Bush

Evergreen or Nearly-Evergreen Foliage:

Fir, Arborvitae, Juniper, Spruce, Pine, Yew, Hemlock, Boxwood, Bergenia, Wintercreeper, Pachysandra, Allegheny Spurge, PJM Rhododendron, Wilson Rhododendron, Vinca, Bath's Pink Dianthus, English Ivy, Christmas Rose

Dried foliage:

Beech, Ornamental Grasses, Hornbeam, Siberian Iris, Bayberry, Lilyturf, Oaks (i.e. Shingle Oak), Alleghany Viburnum, Willowood Viburnum, Feather Reed Grass, Prairie Dropseed, Switchgrass, Little Bluestem, Plume Grass



Interesting Form or Branching:

Cutleaf Japanese Maple, Corkscrew Willow, Contorted Filbert; Bur Oak, Sargent Crab, Zumi Crab, Hawthorn, Alder, Birch, Serviceberry, Redbud

Dried Flowers:

Annabelle Hydrangea, Panicle Hydrangea (bottom right), Oakleaf Hydrangea, Autumn Joy Sedum

Flowers (...yes flowers that appear at either end of winter):

Red Maple, Cornelian Cherry Dogwood, Vernal Witchhazel, Common Witchhazel, Pussy Willow, Forsythia, Lenten Rose, Christmas Rose, Iris reticulata, Snowdrops, Siberian Squill, Spring Beauty, Striped Squill



Test Your Hosta Knowledge! True or False?

By Don Rawson, Michigan Hosta Society, Jan 2024

- ___ 1. Hostas are native to only three countries: China, Taiwan and Japan.
- ___ 2. There are about 38 species of hostas.
- ___ 3. All hosta species are diploid, meaning they have two sets of chromosomes.
- ___ 4. Hosta flowers typically have five petals.
- ___ 5. A hosta will reach its fully mature size about six weeks after planting.
- ___ 6. Like some houseplants, hostas are poisonous to eat.
- ___ 7. Registering a hosta means that others cannot divide or sell it without permission.
- ___ 8. The most fragrant hosta species is *Hosta plantaginea*.
- ___ 9. Hosta viruses such as HVX can be cured with the proper treatment.
- ___ 10. Hosta seeds must be refrigerated before it is planted and grown.
- ___ 11. The best way to divide a hosta is to cut it apart with a knife.
- ___ 12. All hostas grow best in a good amount of shade.
- ___ 13. The two earliest hostas to arrive in North America—in the 1790's or early 1800's—were *H. plantaginea* and *H. ventricosa*.
- ___ 14. All hosta flowers open in the morning.
- ___ 15. A hosta flower lasts for just a few days.
- ___ 16. Two of the best trees to plant for a hosta garden are Norway maple (for its dense shade) and Willow (for fast growth).
- ___ 17. You can plant the seeds from a hosta to get more of the same.
- ___ 18. The "Hosta of the Year" is the #1 most popular hosta, as voted by the members of the American Hosta Society.
- ___ 19. The tiniest hostas form a clump only a few inches across, while the most massive may reach a width of eight feet or more.
- ___ 20. Growing hostas is so enjoyable because of the great diversity in leaf shape, size, color, and texture, as well as their low-maintenance and ability to adapt to a variety of soils and environments.

Answers on the last page.

2025 DHSWP SCHEDULE

When	What	Time	Where	Speaker	Website
January					
18	Friends Lunch	12PM	Saxonburg Hotel		https://www.hotelsaxonburg.com/
26	Steering Committee Meeting	1PM			
February					
15	Soup Lunch		Indiana Township Bldg		Indiana Twp
March					
8	Pizza Party General Meeting	1-4PM			
21-22	Hosta College		Piqua, OH		Hosta College
April					
TBD	Joe Hamm Daffodil Show				
26	Steering Committee Meeting	1-4PM			
26	Hoop House Clean Up	10AM	105 White Rock Rd, Freeport, PA 16229		
May					
TBD	Hoop House Sale	10AM	105 White Rock Rd, Freeport, PA 16229		
June					
19-21	National Convention		East Peoria, IL		AHS National Convention
28	Hosta Show	All Day	Soergel's Orchards		Soergel's
July					
11-12	Tailgate		Cincinnati, OH		
19	Regular Meeting	1-4PM			
28-30	Bus Trip				
August					
3	Picnic at DJ's Greenhouse	1-3PM	DJ's Greenhouse		Dj's
September					
19-20	Fall Forum				
October					
18	Regular Meeting	1-4PM			
18	Steering Committee Meeting	before or after			
November					
1	End of Season Banquet	12Noon	Luciano's		
December					
TBD	Christmas Breakfast		TBD		

Answer Key

- 1.False:** Hostas are native to China, South Korea, Japan, and Russia. (*The Genus Hosta*, p 236; *Mark Zilis' Field Guide to Hostas*, p 10)
- 2.True:** (http://www.hostalists.org/hosta_list_sph.php) *Mark Zilis' Field Guide to Hostas*, p 13.
- 3.False:** *Hosta clausa* is triploid, with three sets of chromosomes. *Hosta ventricosa* is tetraploid, with four sets of chromosomes. (*Mark Zilis' Field Guide to Hostas*, p 84, 306-307)
- 4.False:** Hosta flowers typically have six petals. (*The Genus Hosta*, p 33, 362; *The Hostapedia*, p 34-35.)
- 5.False:** Smaller varieties tend to grow fastest and can reach their mature size in three to five years; larger varieties and slower growers can take five to seven years. (<https://www.nhhostas.com/FAQ-Hostas/>)
- 6.False:** Hostas are edible and delicious. The North Coast Hosta Society of Ohio publishes a hosta cookbook titled, *A Garden of Hosta Recipes* (<http://northcoasthostasociety.weebly.com/cook-book.html>).
Also see the following links:
 - <https://www.ediblewildfood.com/hosta-rolls.aspx>
 - <https://foragerchef.com/eating-hosta-shoots/>
 - <https://myperfectplants.com/blogs/blog/are-hostas-edible>
 - <https://practicalselfreliance.com/edible-hostas/>
- 7.False:** The primary purpose of registration is to limit confusion among hosta cultivars by establishing a permanent record in a central location. By contrast a plant patent precludes others from asexually reproducing the patented plant in the United States.
- 8.True:** (*The Genus Hosta*, p 84; *Mark Zilis' Field Guide to Hostas*, p 224.)
- 9.False:** Once a plant is infected with a virus it has to be destroyed, as there are no cures or treatments. (*Mark Zilis' Field Guide to Hostas*, p 27-28; <https://www.hostalibrary.org/Disease/PestV.htm>)
- 10.False:** In spite of various sources which state otherwise, hosta seed needs no stratification for germination. Once the seed matures, it can be harvested and planted anytime. (<http://www.plantsgalore.com/care/hostas/Hosta-propagation-seeds.htm> and https://www.inthecountrygardenandgifts.com/articles/hybridizing_hosta_seeds.php)
- 11.False:** While using a knife or spade to cut apart a hosta clump maybe the simplest method, the best method is using two garden forks back-to-back. Hosta roots do not branch and continue to grow once they are severed. In addition, loose roots which are cut off without having a piece of the crown material attached

are generally unable to survive on their own. Pulling a hosta clump apart with garden forks is the best way to avoid unnecessary cutting of roots.

- 12.False:** Hostas are often thought of as shade-loving plants and while this is true of the great majority, it is by no means true of all. Given adequate moisture, some are quite sun-tolerant and need direct sunlight to bring out their best color. Factors that affect sun-tolerance include genetics, amount of water, how far north and influence of latitude, filtered shade/indirect sunlight vs. full sun, morning sun with afternoon shade vs. morning shade with afternoon sun, etc. (*The Gardener's Guide to Growing Hostas*, p 42; http://www.hostalists.org/hosta_list_sth.php)
- 13.True:** *The Genus Hosta*, p 243-244.
- 14.False:** The flowers of *Hosta plantaginea* are nocturnal: they open in the evening or during the night. (*The Genus Hosta*, p 84; *Mark Zilis' Field Guide to Hostas*, p 224.)
- 15.False:** Hosta flowers are open for less than 24 hours, then they wilt and die. (*Mark Zilis' Field Guide to Hostas*, p 328.)
- 16.False:** While Norway maple is a great shade producer, it is not recommended due to its highly invasive roots. Willows, in spite of being fast growers, are known to compete with other plants for water, so they may end up harming other plants around them. In addition, willows are highly prone to insects and diseases, and have a short life expectancy. Better choices are oaks, Japanese maples, katsura trees, serviceberry, witchhazel and Japanese andromeda. (*Mark Zilis' Field Guide to Hostas*, p 373-381)
- 17.False:** Hostas do not usually come true from seed (that is, the seedlings will NOT normally bear a close resemblance to the parent), apart from *H.ventricosa*, which is apomictic. (*The Gardener's Guide to Growing Hostas*, p 49.)
- 18.False:** The "Hosta of the Year" is selected by the American Hosta Growers Association. Award winners must be good garden plants in all regions of the country, must be widely available and in sufficient supply and retail for about \$15.00. The American Hosta Society, on the other hand, conducts a popularity poll each year to select the Top 20 Hostas.
- 19.True:** Miniature hostas such as 'Tiny Tears', 'Uzu-no-mai' and *H.venusta* are very small, while giants like 'Empress Wu' form massive clumps with individual leaves exceeding 22" in length. (*The Hostapedia*, p 952, 983, 991; *Mark Zilis' Field Guide to Hostas*, p 103-104.)
- 20.True:** Hostas are America's #1 favorite perennial!