



# Hosta Happenings

**East Tennessee Hosta Society**

**September 2021**

## President's Message

It is important that we keep our spirits up during these difficult times. I have heard of clubs that are faltering because of inactivity. The executive and especially our communications director Mary Albrecht are doing our best to keep you informed, educated and safe. We all miss the club activities and the social connections. Hopefully it won't be long before we can all get back to normal.

I was hoping this month that we would have a meeting with Bob Solberg but that is not to be. I know my garden has never had so much attention to it and I presume that yours as well. I am looking forward to members sharing their gardens next year if things get back to normal. Start planning for this and don't be shy about showing your garden off - we need an excuse to get together and socialize and learn what is new in your garden.

As you know I am on the board of the Knoxville Botanical Gardens and we have had to struggle with the decision to conduct the major fundraiser for the year (Green Thumb Gala) as this is critical to keep the gardens open free to the public. After consulting with major

donors and community leaders, it was decided to proceed with precautions. It will be a downsized outdoor event but all the entertainment and trimmings will remain. I mention this as there is only a few tickets left if any club member wanted to support this event. Let me know if you have any interest.

The year is flying by and the month after next will be the elections meeting. I am thinking the remaining two meetings for the year will be zoom meetings. Next month we will have someone give a presentation. I know I put this appeal out every year - but please consider taking on an officer role. It is not a lot of work and can have some perks. Let me know by the end of next month if are willing to support the club with new blood and ideas.

Warm Regards,  
Fred Anderson  
President, 865-607-9240, braker01@att.net  
<http://www.easttnhostasociety.net>

### 2021 Officers

- President Fred Anderson
- Vice President Bob Goeltz
- Treasurer Gina Buffum
- Secretary Wanda Taylor
- Communications Mary Albrecht
- Contact ETHS at [easttnhostasociety@gmail.com](mailto:easttnhostasociety@gmail.com)

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## News from AHS



We are happy to announce that the 2021 AHS National Convention website has all the Zoom meetings, speakers, presentations and awards uploaded and ready for viewing. Please go to [www.ahs2021.org](http://www.ahs2021.org) and look around for the content.

The convention gift plant was H. 'Silly String'.

## Plants of the Year - Anderson Estate Gardens



Every year Fred and Sandra Anderson select a Hosta and a plant that totally wowed us and we call these our plants of the year. This year's Hosta of the year is 'Captain Kirk'. It gets lots of morning sun but afternoon shade. This photo is mid-September and it has still maintained its colors. Last year 'Irish Luck' was selected. As we are

pollinator focused, we tend to pick plants that attract a lot of pollinators. This year's plant of the year is Miss Huff Lantana. It was bought last year in a 3-inch pot and was the last one available. This is planted in gravel and clay beside a hot driveway and loves being neglected; now 5 feet tall and 12 feet across. It is the only perennial Lantana for our area that I know of.



## Companion Plant of the Month: Spring Flowering Bulbs

Mary L. Albrecht, Professor Emerita, Department of Plant Sciences, University of Tennessee

Autumn is the time to plant spring flowering bulbs. They make a great companion plants to hosta. Many emerge and flower long before trees have fully leafed out. Bulbs may be purchased locally at garden centers or through various online vendors.



General guideline for planting is dig holes to about 2 to 3 times the height of the bulbs. Spacing will be dependent on the species.

Another common questions is when can they be dug and replanted. Once the bulbs have finished flowering and

### Events

**September 24 and 25, 2021, UT Gardens Fall Plant Sale.** Yes, in person sale to members 9/24 from 4 to 7 pm and open to the public 9/25 from 9 am until 2 pm at the UT Gardens Plaza, as in the past.

Keep an eye out for events at the Greater Knoxville area public gardens:

[Knoxville Botanic Gardens](#)

[UT Gardens](#)

[UT Arboretum](#)



the foliage fades, then the bulbs can be dug, divided, extras shared with friends, and replanted. There is no need to store and replant in the fall, a common misconception.

For detailed information about the various species, check out the [Pacific Bulb Society's website](#), specifically the link to their Wiki page [Photographs and Information A-Z listing](#) of bulbous plants.

The [Missouri Botanical Gardens Plant Finder](#) has very good planting and cultural information. Just search on the name of the plant your looking for information.

Here's a few that make good companions:

**Narcissus:** Whether you call them narcissus, jonquils, or daffodils, there's a plethora to chose from including the dwarfs, early, mid, and late season, doubles, yellow, pinks, whites, or bicolors. Of course, you can also learn more at the [American Daffodil Society's webpage](#). Any narcissus noted as being "good for naturalizing" may prove to be too aggressive for interplanting with hosta.



Above: 'Tete a tete' miniature daffodil.

Left: Yellow trumpet with white corona, unknown large-cup variety.



**Scilla and Chionodoxa:** There are a number of scillas or squills, but the most common one grown is *Scilla siberica*, Siberian squill. A dainty blue flower that emerges early in April. Some confuse it with grape hyacinths. The difference is really the looser inflorescence and much larger flowers. These are good



for naturalizing and are low maintenance. It is considered invasive in the northern states of Minnesota, Wisconsin, Illinois, Indiana, and Maine. And, taxonomists have now lumped the genus *Chionodoxa* ( ) into *Scilla*. Others consider *Scilla* a synonym for *Chionodoxa*. Regardless, you can say they are probably "kissing cousins". *Chionodoxa* come in blue, pink, and white; prefers full sun to part shade; and are harbingers of spring since they can bloom as early as February.



Note: I was taught that taxonomists are considered lumpers (combining genera or families) or dividers (dividing genera or families). In recent years, the use of DNA analysis has lead to more lumping or splitting. But that's a conversation for another column.

**Muscari:** Just like *Scilla*, taxonomists don't agree on the classification of the subspecies as subspecies or separate genera. The most commonly cultivated species is

*Muscari armeniacum*, grape hyacinth, common to woods and meadows from Greece into Turkey and the Caucasus. Another early spring flowering bulb, typically in March and April, is small and planted only about 3 inches deep.



Foliage dies back shortly after flowering and then reemerges in autumn. And the common name comes from the small clusters of deep violet blue flowers on a dense inflorescence resembling a upside-down grape cluster. Again, full sun to part shade.

**Lycoris:** There are a number of different species of *Lycoris*; however, the most common are *Lycoris radiata*, spider lily (below), and *Lycoris squamigera*, naked ladies, resurrection lily, or surprise lily (right). I first saw *L. squamigera* in Kansas. I never saw them in Ohio or New Jersey. Not sure why. I have *Lycoris radiata* in my yard and dearly love them. Their flowering signals the beginning of the end of summer. Both



flower in the late summer without any foliage. Resurrection lily emerges first then spider lily. Spider lily foliage emerges after the flowers and will be persistent throughout the winter, fading away by mid-spring. Resurrection lily grayish-green foliage doesn't emerge until spring and is commonly confused with that of daffodils. It dies back by summer with the flowers emerging in late summer.

**Allium:** The genus contains approximately 750 species. I won't get into the taxonomy because it changes on a regular basis as to which plant family it belongs. Of course, there are several that are edible like red, yellow, and white onions, garlic, leeks, and chives. Then there are as many, if not more, that are grown for the flowers in the garden. And, the weedy wild onion (*Allium canadense*) and wild garlic (*Allium vineale*). They come in a vary of heights and sizes of the inflorescence. The Missouri Botanical Garden lists 43 different species and varieties in their gardens. Flower color ranges from white to pink to blue to purple.



**Lilium:** A garden wouldn't be complete without lilies. And, again, there are many to chose from, with over 100 species, interspecific hybrids, and hybrids. Lilies are subdivided into Sections: American, Asiatic, Candidum, Dauricum, Martagon, Oriental, Trumpet, and Hybrids. More information is available through the Pacific Bulb Society [entry on Lilium](#).



Top: Asiatic lilies

Bottom: Martagon lilies

## Bulb Planting Guide:

Bulb	Depth	Spacing
<i>Narcissus</i> Large bulb varieties Small bulb varieties	3 times the height of the bulb	5 to 6 inches 3 to 4 inches
<i>Scilla</i>	3 times the height of the bulb	3 inches
<i>Chionodoxa</i>	2 to 3 inches deep	2 to 3 inches apart
<i>Muscari</i> , grape hyacinth	2 to 3 inches deep	2 to 3 inches apart
<i>Lycoris</i> <i>L. radiata</i> <i>L. squamigera</i>	Neck of bulb just below ground surface for both types	5 to 6 inches
<i>Allium</i> <i>A. giganteum</i> <i>A. 'Millenium'</i> <i>A. cristophii</i>	1 to 2 times the height of the bulb	12 to 15 in. 12 inches 10 to 12 in.
<i>Lilium</i> Asiatics Martagons Orientals	6 inches 6 inches 6 inches	12 to 18 in. 12 to 15 in. 12 to 15 in.

For additional information see UTIA Extension Publication [Flowering Bulbs for Tennessee Gardens](#) (available in pdf format).

### Photo credits:

Mary L. Albrecht, collage of packaged bulbs; bulbs in box; *Narcissus* images; *Muscari*, grape hyacinth; *Lycoris radiata*, spider lily

K. van Bourgondien, Martagon lily <https://www.dutchbulbs.com/product/martagon-lily-mixture-89538> ; and Asiatic lily, [https://www.dutchbulbs.com/product/Asiatic\\_Lily\\_Mix](https://www.dutchbulbs.com/product/Asiatic_Lily_Mix)

Missouri Botanical Gardens: *Scilla siberica* 'Spring Beauty', <http://www.missouribotanicalgarden.org/PlantFinder/FullImageDisplay.aspx?documentid=3609> ; *Chionodoxa forbesii* 'Blue Giant', <http://www.missouribotanicalgarden.org/PlantFinder/PlantFinderDetails.aspx?taxonid=295720&isprofile=1&basic=chionodoxa> ; *Lycoris squamigera*, resurrection lily, <http://www.missouribotanicalgarden.org/PlantFinder/PlantFinderDetails.aspx?taxonid=275706&isprofile=1&basic=lycoris>

Proven Winners: *Allium* 'Millenium', <https://www.provenwinners.com/plants/allium/millenium-ornamental-onion-allium-hybrid> ; available locally from Brian White's Nursery, Maynardville, TN.

## Fall Garden Care

It's that time of year when many of our hosta start looking a little tired. Here's a few garden tasks to do in the fall.

1. **Apply pre-emergent herbicide** to prevent winter weeds. If you have no problem using something like Preen® (active ingredient is trifluralin), it's a good time to apply where winter annual weeds are common problems in your garden. The Missouri Botanical Garden has some really good information about winter annual weeds on their website - <https://www.missouribotanicalgarden.org/gardens-gardening/your-garden/help-for-the-home-gardener/advice-tips-resources/pests-and-problems/weeds/winter-annual.aspx> (from the right hand side bar menu you can also find information about specific plants and summer annuals). Also check out the UT Extension publication *Common Herbicides for Ornamental Weed Control*, Publication No. W244, available as a pdf file (<https://extension.tennessee.edu/publications/Documents/W244.pdf>)
2. **Stop fertilizing** since the plants are needing to go dormant for the winter. You don't want to be encouraging new growth.
3. **Hosta flower stalk removal** is optional depending upon your preference. You can let them naturally senesce and then simply pop them off the plants or prune off with pruners. Remember to **treat the pruners with alcohol between plants**. I use a small spray bottle of alcohol that I found at a pharmacy. Easily refillable, too. If you use bleach, you'll need several pruners as they should be soaked for a minimum of 30 minutes in a 1 part bleach to 9 parts water solution, then rinsed and dried before using again. Some people like to collect the seeds and grow them out. I don't have the proper facilities to do that and I'm not into breeding hosta.
4. **Weed!** Yes, there are still plenty of weeds to pull! There are fewer, but they are out there laughing at you! I swear they sprout the minute my back is turned. You should always walk the my

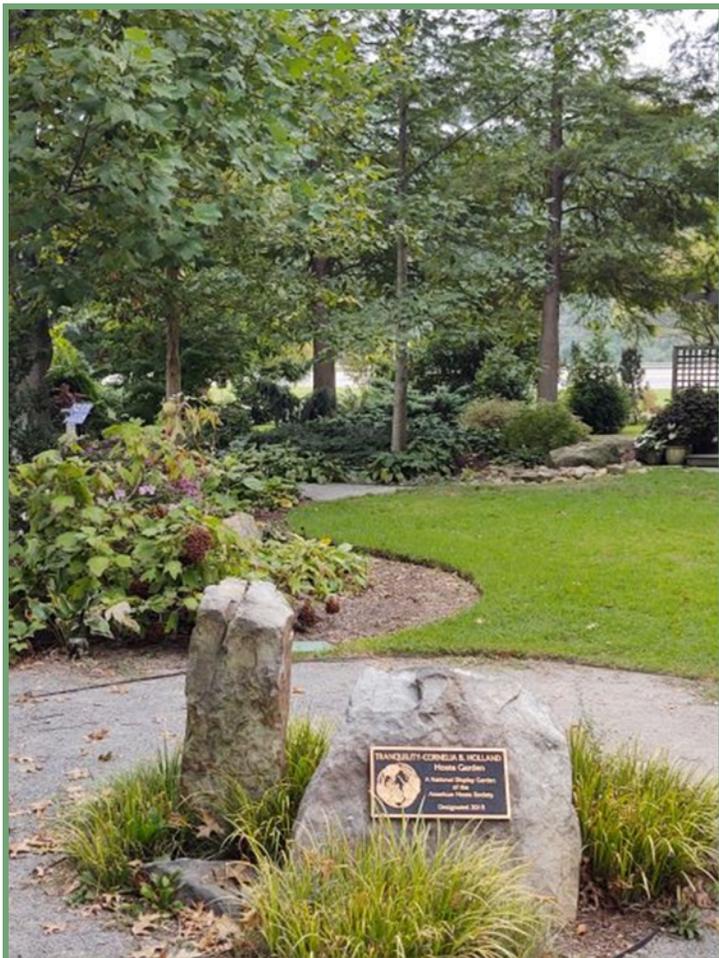


garden with a dandelion fork since it works so well to help get the roots on the more difficult weeds.

5. This is probably the last month to dig and **divide perennials**. The key to autumn division is replanting to have enough time with warm soil temperatures so roots can get established. Based on Syngenta data (<https://www.greencastonline.com/tools/soil-temperature>) - In the "Location Search:" field, enter your zip code to get data appropriate to your location. To select a specific range of dates, click in the field  next to the calendar icon), soil temperatures in the upper couple of inches of soil remain in the 70's for the month of September which is still warm enough for root growth.

## September in the Tranquility Garden, UT Gardens, Knoxville

Despite the heat and irregular rainfalls, the garden looks pretty good for September! Thanks to all the volunteers and UT Gardens staff.



## ETHS Membership

Name(s) (please print) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Area Code & Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

Are you a Hosta Beginner

Hosta Addict

Somewhere in-between

Approximately how many different Hostas do you have:

Fewer than 10

10-50

Over 50

Would you like your garden to be considered for an open garden tour by ETHS?

Yes

No

Maybe

Would you like to volunteer for an activity in our club?

Yes

No

Maybe

Annual dues for individual membership is \$12 and \$18 for a family. Membership is based on a calendar year.

Mail application and check payable to **East Tennessee Hosta Society** to:

Gina Buffum  
Treasurer, ETHS  
7334 Wheatfield Place  
Knoxville, TN 37919

