



# Hosta Happenings

**East Tennessee Hosta Society**

**June 2020**

## President's Message

Usually the President's message is one where I can share information about all the upcoming activities. However, this one is more somber as I can't see any activities for the next couple of months.

Yet, wherever there are negatives, there are always positives. I was able to visit a couple of members' gardens that I have never visited before. I was blown away when I visited Hella & Pete's garden and was equally impressed by the gardens of Jean Hess Keller & Pam Reddock. These gardens are large and very intense with a great variety of plants. I have to wonder what other best kept secret gardens lurk among the members.

I've given some individual tours of our garden and members are very welcome to visit our garden. Sandra has the vegetable garden going great and should be overloaded with tomatoes in the coming weeks. The bees are really buzzing this year and will be the first year that we will get some honey.

When the public tour got cancelled in April, I switched gears and continued with projects that expanded the gardens. As all of my travel plans were cancelled this year and stayed home; we've accomplished a lot. We don't even go out to restaurants. I've been refurbishing gardens

and left the biggest ones to the last; yes, procrastinating over this as it is a big job – the Hosta gardens. With no frost damage, this year has been a particularly good year for Hostas. They are large and crowding each other out so I need to thin them a bit and move them to a different location more suitable for their size and color coordination. I find Hostas very easy to move – just like furniture. I use a heavy duty fork that lifts them out of the ground as a root ball very easily; a shovel can cut roots and may cause transplant shock. I rarely divide Hostas but when I do, I find it very easy to do with a special skiving tool I have. I'll be moving some of the older common Hostas out to remote garden beds that can be used as fillers. All this work is prompted by expanding my automatic irrigation – way better to install the irrigation system before you have planted in the bed.

This is Pollinator Week and we have dedicated certain areas of our garden to the pollinators. These get better with every year.

A lot has happened this week (apart from Sandra's birthday and our 47<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary). And, our night blooming cereus bloomed; a very interesting plant. A member of the cactus family that is found in the rainforest and easy to propagate; just not a very attractive plant. But, the flowers are amazing and very fragrant. It gets an alternate common name, the pajama party plant, because people organize parties around the blooming - starts to open about 9pm and is fully open by midnight. Come daylight, it's done; each flower opens once. Sandra got up at 4am to take photos. It does let you know when it is going to bloom. Let me know if you want a piece to propagate.

The other day I spent a few hours in the Hosta garden at the Knoxville Botanical Gardens tiding up all the

## 2020 Officers

President Fred Anderson  
Vice President Bob Goeltz  
Treasurer Gina Buffum  
Secretary Cheryl Ferrone  
Communications Mary Albrecht (plantprof@gmail.com)  
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labelling. This will be a great Hosta garden in the years to come. I am on the board at the KBGA and this week accepted the position of chairman of the Building & Grounds committee. I encourage you to get involved with this great community organization.

I have never got so much done in the garden before so this pandemic has been a positive for me so far – I hear similar stories so there is always a silver lining somewhere.

I hope you are staying safe and taking precautions and are looking forward to getting back together in the near future.

Warm Regards

**Fred Anderson**  
2020 President  
**East Tennessee Hosta Society**  
2723 Smallwood Drive  
Knoxville, TN, 37920

## ETHS Calendar

**CANCELLED** - June 27, Saturday, 10:30 am:  
Garden Tour, TBD

**STAY TUNED!** July 25, Saturday, 10:30 am:  
Garden Tour

**TO BE DETERMINED** - August 23, Sunday,  
10:30 am: Presentation by Bob Solberg at  
Anderson Estate

September 19, Saturday, time TBD: Plant  
Nursery Tour

October 25, Sunday, time TBD: Fall Garden  
Tour

November 22, Sunday, 2:00 pm: End of Year  
Meeting, annual general meeting and social

## Tennessee Urban Forestry Council Tree Sanctuary Certification Program is Back!

Good news! The TUFC Tree Sanctuary Certification Program is back with a slightly different application process. Contact them via email ([info@tufc.com](mailto:info@tufc.com).) if interested. You still need to

- \* Identify at least 10 different tree species on the property.
- \* List the trees with common and scientific names.
- \* Create a map (hand drawn is fine) showing the trees, gardens or other features.
- \* Take pictures of the trees and property.
- \* Commit to the *Healthy Yard Pledge*.
- \* Apply and submit materials at [TUFC.com](http://TUFC.com).

Certification fee - Current  
TUFC Members - \$75; Non-  
members - \$125.

Applications accepted twice  
each year - June 30th and  
October 31st. Applications  
processed month after the  
deadline.



**American Hosta Society  
National Convention  
Postponed to 2022  
Minneapolis MN**

For more info on 2022, go  
to <https://hostavision2020.com/>

**2021 will be in  
Kalamazoo, MI. Stay  
tuned for more info.**

# June-July– August Gardening

## To Do List

This is the time we should all sit back and relax; enjoy our work. Some maintenance items are all there is to do in the summer months.

### Irrigate during dry spells

Irrigation is important for plants to maintain healthy root system. Don't over or under water! And of course, the question always is, how do I know how much to give the garden?

Best technique is to place several cans, saucers, or some other shallow container in the beds. Irrigate and then check the containers. You should give plants 1 to 2 inches of irrigation each week. You want the water to go deeply into the soil profile. Underwatering encourages surface roots that will be more susceptible to heat damage in the summer and freeze in the winter. Deeper watering encourages deep root growth needed to help plants make it through adverse temperatures.

### Fertilization

Regardless of whether or not you follow organic gardening methods, fertilizer is important to garden plants. The general rule of thumb is to apply dilute liquid fertilizer (about half-strength) through flowering and then stop. Flowers take a lot of resources from the plant. You want to make sure the foliage and the roots are not negatively impacted by the amount of nutrients the flowers, and any subsequent seeds, take from the plant.

Organic fertilizers tend to have lower levels of the essential elements (N-P-K, calcium, magnesium, sulfur, and the micronutrients), so these need to be applied multiple times throughout the growing season in order to make sure enough is delivered to the plants. The fertilizers typically undergo microbial breakdown before the plants can absorb the nutrients. They are slow delivery system of nutrients.

Remember, East Tennessee has a long growing season from last frost to first frost. In the lower valley, it can be as long as 180 days. Obviously, the northern valley and the higher elevations have shorter growing seasons. The dates in the following table come from Tennessee Home Vegetable Garden 2020 Calendar, UT Institute of

Location	Last frost date in	First frost date in
Bristol	May 3	Oct 6
Chattanooga	April 17	Oct 21
Crossville	May 10	Oct 4
Knoxville	April 22	Oct 17
Mountain City	May 26	Sept 18

Agriculture, Extension Publication W436.

### Scout for Diseases and Pests

This is the time of the year when you keep an eye out for southern blight, (a soil borne fungal disease), rabbits, and of course deer!

Southern blight spores survive in the soil, spread by flowing water, contaminated soil, transplants and tools. Sanitation and good water management are keys to control. Good information is available online; see

Missouri Botanical Garden

<https://www.missouribotanicalgarden.org/gardens-gardening/your-garden/help-for-the-home-gardener/advice-tips-resources/pests-and-problems/diseases/rot/crown-rot.aspx>

Hosta Library

<http://www.hostalibrary.org/Disease/PestSB.htm>

Rabbits are best controlled by having dogs and/or cats in the yard. Without either, you want to encourage predators such as hawks. Having a fox or coyote roaming the neighborhood also helps keep the population down! Repellants require frequent application:

Repels All (widely available)

Coyote Urine (Tractor Supply or online sources; it smells so be careful applying!)

Liquid Fence (widely available)

Good luck controlling deer! It's rumored that Irish Spring offers some deterrence to deer.

And, this is the time of year to start planning any new garden rooms, removing/killing turf to make way, and prepare ground for fall planting.



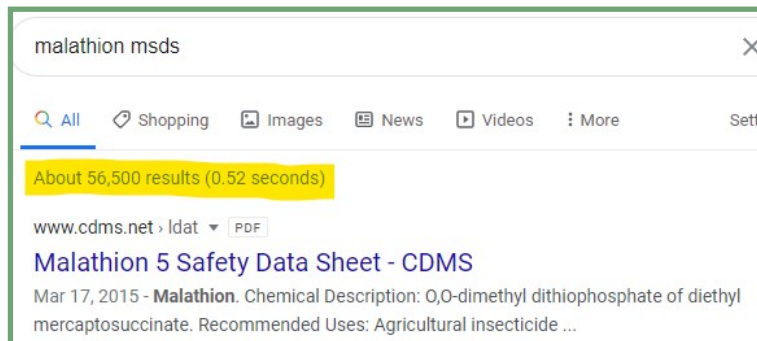
# Debunking Gardening Myths

## Myth #4: Organic pesticides are safer to use than synthetic ones.

Some people believe that if it's synthetic, it's bad for you and the environment. Others recognize that both synthetic and organic pesticides have their advantages and disadvantages. The biggest mistake people make is thinking that if it's organic, it's much safer.

The table is compiled from information from the Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) for different commonly used products. The higher the LD50 (the lethal dosage when 50% of the test animals are killed; typically mice, unless specified.), the more toxic the product.

It pays to learn how to read MSDS reports for products you are using. You can easily conduct an internet search on the name of the product and include MSDS in the search, "malathion msds". In the below image, you can see the search yield 56,500 results (highlighted text)! It's that easy.



Product	LD50		
	Acute oral mg/kg	Dermal mg/kg	Inhaled mg/liter/4 hrs
Pyrethrum	3,500	19,000	
Nicotine Sulfate (40% aqueous)	8,550 mouse 50 rat	50 to 285	22
Copper sulfate	1,502	2,000	1.06
Malathion 5 EC	5,500	1,000	5.2
Imidacloprid (BioAdvanced Tree and Shrub Protect & Feed)	4,143 female 4,870 male	2,000	5.3
Insecticidal Soap	5,000	2,000	50



From left to right - 'Blue Umbrellas', 'Thunderbolt' (was labeled at the garden center as 'Great Expectations' however, by comparing at The Hosta Library - [http://www.pwk.resteddoginn.ca/compare\\_hl.php](http://www.pwk.resteddoginn.ca/compare_hl.php), it does appear to be 'Thunderbolt'), 'Fragrant Queen', 'Hudson Bay', and 'Fragrant Bouquet'.