



# Hosta Happenings

---

**East Tennessee Hosta Society**

**September 2020**

---

## President's Message

Last Sunday the executive committee met via Zoom to discuss the current situation and activities going forward. Things are not very encouraging, and it looks like 2020 is completely written off.

We did decide however to waive the membership fees for next year so your current membership will take you through to the end of 2021. We did have the finances to do this - our only big expense is liability insurance which covers all members in case they get injured at an event.

**This year the annual general meeting, where the officer elections take place, will be via Zoom on the 15<sup>th</sup> November at 2:00 pm.** Please mark your calendar and be on the lookout for a link to connect to the meeting.

Most of the leadership is prepared to continue in their current roles if need be but would really like for others to step up and take on a role. It is not time consuming, but we value new input into the club's activities. Please talk to me if you are interested or want to know more. Our secretary Cheryl Ferrone is unable to be the secretary next year, so we really need someone to take over Cheryl's role. Our club doesn't generate a lot of paperwork so the job would not be arduous. I am certainly going to miss Cheryl's thought-provoking questions and input - she was a pleasure to work with.

## 2020 Officers

President Fred Anderson  
Vice President Bob Goeltz  
Treasurer Gina Buffum  
Secretary Cheryl Ferrone  
Communications Mary Albrecht  
(plantprof@gmail.com)  
Contact ETHS at  
easttennhostasociety@gmail.com

It won't be until February next year before we can decide on hosting the Dixie Regional Convention. It will all depend on the situation at the time and if a vaccine program has been implemented by then. We will start up club activities again as soon as it is safe to do so. So far, I haven't heard of any members who have contracted the virus.

Our sympathy goes out to Michelle Reimert who recently fell and broke her leg in four places. Unfortunately, she has more surgeries ahead and will certainly be taking it easy for a while (see page 3 for more). We wish Michelle a speedy recovery.

I hope this finds you in good health and virus free and I bet your garden looks great. Stay safe and we will keep in touch.

Warm Regards  
**Fred Anderson**  
2020 President  
**East Tennessee Hosta Society**

# Debunking Gardening Myths

## Myth #7: Landscape fabric solves your weed problem.

*Editor's Note:* This isn't really a myth. It's more a pet peeve! Read on to learn more!

Many people painstakingly remove sod, plant trees and shrubs, lay down landscape fabric and then mulch over the top. The goal is to eliminate weeds in the landscape bed. A year goes by and they decide to add some annuals or perennials. Now, they need to make a small hole through the fabric to plant each annual or perennial. And, then they mulch the bed again. In the third year they become dismayed because various weeds start showing up.

Well, let's think about this. The fabric will inhibit germination of weed seeds already in the ground. It won't affect weed seeds blown in or dropped by critters on the surface. A couple of layers of mulch decomposing into wonderful humus and several holes in the fabric, you have developed a good environment for weed seeds to sprout and grow. Birds perch in the trees above. Cardinals may even make a nest in the yew planted in the bed. They pass seeds through their digestive track. Then lo and behold, they germinate. And, before you know it, the homeowner-gardener is tearing out the landscape fabric only to find out that tree and shrub roots can weave their way through the fabric.

Alternatives to using commercial landscape fabrics is to simply mulch and be prepared to weed. If you don't want to weed, you can use a pre-emergent herbicide (think Preen) to prevent weed germination. Weeds are part of gardening.

A good source for the do's and don'ts and pros and cons of landscape fabric is <https://www.bobvila.com/articles/landscape-fabric/> (you remember Bob Vila from This Old House! on PBS).

# October-November Gardening Activities

According to the Tennessee Home Vegetable Garden 2020 Calendar (Publication W436, UT Extension), expect a first frost by October 17 in Knoxville, September 18 in Mountain City, October 21 in Chattanooga, and October 4 in Crossville.



Leaves will begin their shift to fall colors, if they haven't already, as a response to shortening daylengths. Leaves are constantly producing new chlorophyll, however, under the shortening days and cooler temperatures, they can't produce enough of the molecule, so the other plant pigments that give the trees their characteristic yellow, reds, oranges, and golds of autumn become the dominant pigments.

As leaves fall from the tree, remove, and dispose of those with foliar diseases to reduce the disease pressure next year. For example, leaves from dogwood with anthracnose or hackberry leaves with wooly aphids are great candidates for disposal. For clean leaves, consider raking into shrub beds to provide a winter mulch. After all, who goes out and rakes the forests. If you don't like the look, you can always compost the leaves. Raking leaves can be great exercise for the arms, back, and thighs. Uses lots of different muscle groups.

## Ouch!

Extending well wishes and a *full recovery* to member Michelle Reimert, who fell and broke her leg in several places. She posted to Facebook:

“I was really looking forward to this weekend after working seven days straight...”

“Took Spoon out for a potty break Friday morning and slid on the wet grass. So, now I’ll be spending my weekend at the hospital! Had surgery to install the wire “cage” last night and will have another one in about two weeks to install the actual pins and plates. Doctor says there’s four fractures and that it’s a doozie!”

She later posted:

“Thank you all for the thoughts, prayers, phone calls, texts, flowers and balloons in the last couple days, they have meant so much to me.

“I’m still in the hospital but hoping to be released tomorrow. The next two weeks, till the next surgery rolls around, are going to be the hardest, mainly because the pins are still extending externally from my foot/leg about 6”.

“I’m going to post the pics (even though they’re kind of gross), because it’s amazing to me how these things get repaired. Thanks again !”

Your editor has chosen not to share any of her very graphic photos!

## Verticillium Wilt

One of our members reported that she was having to replace trees in her landscape due to an infestation of verticillium wilt. According to the UT Extension publication Diseases of Shade and Ornamental Trees, Publication SP546 (page 3, found at <https://extension.tennessee.edu/publications/Documents/SP546.pdf>)

*Verticillium wilt is a fungal disease that can attack many trees, with maples being the most important hosts. Verticillium is soil-borne and may persist many years in the absence of a host. The fungus usually enters through wounds in the roots and then moves through the vascular system. Symptoms can*



Grind selector – from coarse to fine

Bird’s eye view with top funnel removed for easy cleaning.

You can also grind the leaves to make a finer mulch or for the compost pile. I use a Yard Force 8000 (large image above) that is nothing more than a device that holds a weed whip in place to feed leaves through to chop them up. Very handy unit. Mine came with a pair of leaf scoops (image to right) for ease of picking up the leaves and dumping them in top.



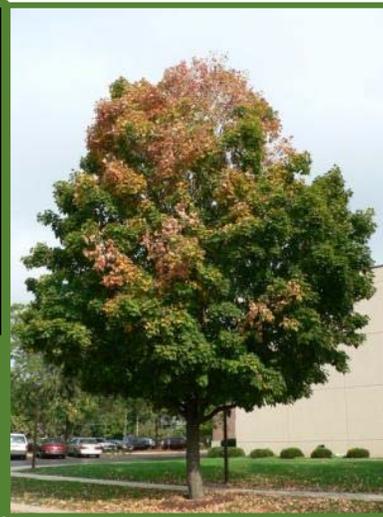
*Mary L. Albrecht, from her Gardening Calendar presentation.*

be quite variable, but yellow leaves are often followed by wilting and death of entire branches. Occasionally, the entire crown may wilt and die. Green-to-brown discoloration may be found in the outer sapwood of some tree species.

Management includes raking and disposing of leaves from host plants (most commonly maples) and plant resistant tree species such as most conifers, katsura dogwood, ginkgo, sweetgum, honey locust, crabapple, sycamore, oak, birch, hackberry, zelkova, hawthorne, walnut, and willow.



Maple leaf exhibiting signs of verticillium wilt. From <https://www.extension.iastate.edu/news/2005/jun/071602.htm>



From <https://web.extension.illinois.edu/hortanswers/detailproblem.cfm?PathogenID=26>

## From the Garden



© Fred Anderson

Above: Plumeria blooming on the patio.  
Below: Autumn Sedum



© Fred Anderson



© Mary Albrecht

Removing old foliage of *Acanthus* 'Summer Beauty,' bear's britches. New foliage emerges in late summer to early fall and is retained through the winter.



© Mary Albrecht

Red spider lily, *Lycoris radiata* flowers in the fall with foliage emerging after the flowers die.