

## HOSTAS ARE THE SHADE GARDENER'S FRIEND

These natives of Japan, Korea and China have found a following in the United States. There are about 40 different species that have evolved into a large variety (thousands) of these mostly green cultivars. All sizes, color variations, and patterns have been produced through hybridization (seedlings) and the discovery of sports (mutations).

These beauties are totally dormant in the winter. They start to emerge as the weather becomes warmer. Some sleep in a little longer and all are in fine form in a period of 3 to 4 weeks. All will blossom, some earlier than others, and the bloom colors range from white to lavender to a deeper purple. Some are fragrant. Hosta foliage will turn a bright yellow and gold as leaves on the trees begin their fall color change. By first frost, most are dried up with only the spent flower scapes reminding us of where they thrived all summer.

Established hosta clumps can measure anywhere from a few inches across to several feet in diameter. Fortunately there are many varieties in all size ranges. They adapt to container growth which makes them easy to relocate at the whim of the gardener. Leaves range in size from one inch to eighteen.

The plant habits are generally one of three types. Upright or vase-shaped are usually more narrow at the base of the clump. A few hostas are rhizomatous, which means they spread by underground runners. Rounded mounds are the form that most hostas take with their leaves spreading from the center in layers.

Hostas are considered shade perennials, but some will tolerate sun part of the day. Thoughtful placement so that only early morning or late day sun touches them will result in fewer scorched leaves and better appearance all season.

Hostas love organic matter in the soil for their roots to thrive. They respond to regular watering and fertilization. They are prized as salad by deer and slugs. Voles like to dine on their roots. These pests are challenging, but you can easily thwart them by visiting your local garden center or consulting websites. Better yet – join the Delmarva Hosta Society where you can make new friends and draw on the collective knowledge of hosta aficionados!

Need more information?  
Contact Jan or Greg Thompson  
302-732-3216  
gathompson71@verizon.net



*Loyalist*

## DELMARVA HOSTA SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

**Name**

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**Address**

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**Phone**

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**Email**

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**Dues are \$8.00 per year to one household. Please complete this application and mail it with a check to:**

**Vickie Thompson  
Membership Chair  
9150 Middleford Road  
Seaford DE 19973**

**Our Club Activities include:**

- Three summer garden tours hosted by club members
- Lewes Garden Tour participation
- Plant exchanges and auctions
- Informal round table discussions
- Good food and fellowship, always