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## ENVIRONMENTAL HORTICULTURE

Environmental Horticulture #EH408



### HOSTA

#### PRODUCTION AND CONSUMER CARE

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#### INTRODUCTION

- Common name: Hosta
- Scientific name: *Hosta spp.*
- Grows from 6-18'' in height
- Herbaceous perennial with broad leaves ranging from 1-15'' in length
- Leaves can be pale green, dark green, yellow-green, or blue
- Flowers appear on stems that arch above clumps of leaves
- Flowers are about 2'' long and are typically lavender
- Hardy in zones 3-9

#### GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

- Thrives in partial shade
- Tolerates a wide range of soil pH

- Prefers moist soil containing some organic matter; keep plants well-mulched
- The more sun the plant receives, the more watering will be necessary
- Plants growing in media with plenty of organic matter do not require fertilizer
- Spread an additional layer of mulch around plants for protection in winter

#### PROPAGATION

- Best propagated by division
- Division in spring when new shoots emerge is easiest, but plants can also be divided in summer or fall
- Keep newly divided plants well watered for two weeks

- May not stay true to the cultivar when grown from seed

## DISORDERS

- Slugs and snails
  - Chew holes in leaves
  - Handpick and remove
  - Use a slug trap
- Hosta virus X
  - Blue or green spots appear on lightly colored leaves
  - Remove and destroy infected plants
- Anthracnose (*Colletotrichum sp.*)
  - Black, sunken lesions appear on leaves and stems
  - Reduce humidity and improve air circulation
  - Remove infected plants
- Foliar nematode infection
  - Lesions bounded by major veins appear on leaves
  - Leaves turn brown and die
  - Remove and destroy infected plants
- Impatiens necrotic spot virus
  - Dark purple spots appear on leaves
  - Remove and destroy infected plants
- Crown rot (*Sclerotium rolfsii*)
  - Leaves turn yellow and wilt
  - Remove infected plants and nearby soil
- Leaf spot (*Alternaria sp.*)
  - Small leaf spots with reddish-brown margins form
  - Remove infected leaves
  - Remove and destroy badly infected plants

## CONSUMER CARE

- Flower stalks should be removed when green seed pods form
- Often used as border plants or ground cover in shady areas

- Can be used in cut flower arrangements
- A favorite food of deer

## CULTIVARS AND SPECIES

- *Hosta*
  - 'August Moon': gold corrugated leaves
  - 'Blue Angel': thick, blue-green leaves; white flowers
  - 'Blue Cadet': Dark lavender flowers; blue heart-shaped leaves
  - 'Francee': Green heart-shaped leaves
  - 'Gold Standard': gold leaves with green margins
  - 'Golden Tiara': apple green with gold borders
  - 'Great Expectations': thick leaves with blue-green margins and creamy white to yellow centers
  - 'Guacamole': large, apple green leaves with dark green margins
  - 'Hadspen Blue': steel blue leaves, lavender flowers
  - 'Honeybells': green leaves, fragrant lilac flowers
  - 'Loyalist': leaves with deep green margins and white centers
  - 'Moon River': blue-green leaves with wide, creamy white margins
  - 'Patriot': wide, pure white margin; good sun tolerance
  - 'Royal Standard': green leaves, fragrant white flowers
  - 'Shade Fanfare': mint green leaves with cream edges
  - 'Sum and Substance': large chartreuse leaves
  - 'Wide Brim': green leaves with cream margins

## References

- <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hosta>
- <http://www.yardener.com/Hosta.html>

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