



## Save the dates

2016 Hosta Forum

Sunday 17 April

OHS Bus Trip

Sunday 26 June

OHS BBQ/Picnic

Sunday 17 July

Annual General Meeting

Sunday 11 September



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## President's Musings

20 March 2016

Welcome to the first day of spring 2016. The last time I sat down to write a "President's Musings" it was January 1st and in most parts of Ontario we were still awaiting winter's arrival. It seems, as I sit looking out the same window I did last New Year's Day, that winter never did really arrive this year.

Thinking it safe to do so, I moved the snow blower this morning out of the garage and into the garden shed (with the winter tune-up invoice still attached to the handle) and replaced it with the rakes and garden shovels that I neatly stored away in November.

With the changing global weather patterns each new season seems to bring us conditions that are more adverse or severe than any we have previously encountered. Gardeners are not unlike the plants they nurture and we tend to adjust to what Mother Nature throws at us ... just not always happily.

With the lack of snow cover this winter, along with the fluctuating temperatures of just above and just below freezing, many of us were worried that we might have a repeat of the plant die off that we had in the spring of 2014. Although we are not out of danger yet it does appear, and the nursery owners are concurring, that there will not be the losses in residential gardens and commercial nurseries that we saw in

2014. As we move into a crucial period of plant "re-birth" we need to keep our collective gardening fingers crossed that temperatures don't rise too quickly or plummet below the freezing point and stay there for more than overnight.

Now is the time to make sure your frost blankets (or your family's old sweatshirts) are neatly piled where you can easily pull them out to the garden to protect against frost and/or freezing temperatures.

Whilst there is lots that can be done around the yard now you may want to rethink any plans to remove winter mulch or leaves off your garden beds ... at least for a couple more weeks.

Walk your gardens daily and keep an eye open for emerging plants and last year's newly planted gems that may have heaved and are now dangerously above the soil. Once you do get around to cleaning up your garden beds it is going to be crucial to use your favorite slug and snail elimination technique immediately ... one thing that we are certain of is that due to the mild winter there will be an increase in these garden menaces along with many other pests this year.

A big thank-you goes out to Trish Symons for putting together a wonderful slide show of members' photos at the January membership meeting in Campbellville. Trish's presentation highlighted our

... continued on page 3

## OHS 2016 Executive

President - **Glenn Wilson**  
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AHS Region 7 Director - **Cindy Deutekom**  
 cindydeutekom@gmail.com

# >Welcome!

## Our newest members

Lorie Dertinger	Nina Maskulka
Jeanne Huntley	Cecile McCaig
Marie Johns	Rita McPhail
Lianne Krane	Susan Nagy
Debbie Lang	Mary Rossiter
Judy Lewis	Anne Sikkema
	Holly Tallman

## ONTARIO HOSTA SOCIETY

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 RR #4, Appin, ON  
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519-289-5471

Email:  
 ontgmw@gmail.com

Website:  
 ontariohostasociety.com



## Membership

The membership year runs from January 1st to December 31st. Members joining after October 1st are deemed to be paid-up until December 31st of the following year.

\$15.00 for 1 year  
 \$40.00 for 3 years

<http://ontariohostasociety.com/index.php/membership>

Note: Printed newsletters are no longer being offered. Members with printed newsletter memberships will continue to receive them until their membership expires.

## OHS Newsletter

Newsletters are published 3-4 times a year. PDF copies of past issues of the OHS newsletter are available in the Members section of the OHS website.

## Article Submissions

We are always looking for hosta-related tips, articles, and photos. Do you have something to share? Send it to: [hostanews@gmail.com](mailto:hostanews@gmail.com)

## Advertising

**Hosta retailers:** Business card-sized ads are only \$100 per publication year.

... continued from page 1

## President's Musings

members' love for hostas and was a great precursor for our guest speaker Joseph Tychonievich from Ypsilanti, Michigan. Joseph's presentation, *Dealing with your addiction: a message from the Hosta Overdose Treatment Association (H.O.S.T.A.)*, gave the membership excellent insight on how to add a wide assortment of perennials into our hosta beds for added beauty ... especially during the early spring period when our hostas have yet to emerge. Both presentations were very well received as was the pizza, homemade Caesar salad and dessert just before the speakers.

The next OHS event for 2016 is our annual **Hosta Forum**, which is the premier event that truly ushers in spring for the hosta and gardening enthusiast. This year's event, scheduled for Sunday April 17th, is almost sold out and promises to be a memorable day of informative speakers and lively hosta auctioning. Our Hosta Forum coordinators, Lynne Limpert and Donna Hussey, have put together another wonderful day complete with a continental breakfast and BBQ lunch. If you haven't purchased your tickets for this year's event please consider doing so quickly to avoid disappointment as it will be a sell-out.

On behalf of the OHS Executive I want to thank all of you that have renewed your OHS membership for 2016 and beyond. We look forward to seeing as many of you as possible out at events and meetings. With an updated Constitution and Bylaws approved by the members at the winter meeting your Executive looks forward to focusing on making your OHS membership a great way to meet other gardeners and share your inner "hostaholic" with others.

On a final note... The Executive would like to send a special "shout-out" to member Margaret D. from Wellesley, Ontario who took the time to send us a beautifully written letter with her positive thoughts on the Constitution and Bylaw changes. Margaret also shared with us her daily gardening duties on her 100 acre farm... a tremendous chore for someone even half Margaret's age!!! We wish Margaret, and all our members, a successful gardening season full of amazement and good health.

Glenn Wilson  
OHS President

## Hosta Forum ticket deadline

The last day to order your tickets for the Hosta Forum is **Friday April 8th, 2016**.

Avoid disappointment by contacting [normlimpy@hotmail.com](mailto:normlimpy@hotmail.com) or calling Norm & Lynne Limpert at 905-878-3366 to be sure that tickets are still available. Don't worry about receiving your tickets on time - we can hold them for you at Registration as long as we have your payment by the April 8 deadline.

So don't delay if you intend to get a ticket to the Hosta Forum – Sunday April 17th is nearly here!



## Hosta Forum Donations

As a reminder, it is not too late for our OHS suppliers (and even our members!) to make a donation to the Hosta Forum. We would appreciate donations such as gift certificates, baskets, garden-related items, garden art, planters, or whatever you feel would best advertise you or your business and at the same time support the Ontario Hosta Society. Your contributions will be used for the draw and/or the silent auction. Ideally we would like to have your donations by Friday April 8.

Please contact [lynnelimpert@hotmail.com](mailto:lynnelimpert@hotmail.com).

If you have already contributed, THANK YOU for your continued support!



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## Meet the Hosta Forum Speakers



**Paul Zammit**

Paul Zammit is the Nancy Eaton Director of Horticulture at the Toronto Botanical Garden.

He is a graduate of the University of Guelph's Plant Agriculture program and was formerly the perennial department manager at Plant World, a large retail garden center in the Toronto area.

Paul is an active member of many Canadian and international gardening communities. He lectures on a wide array of subjects, including container gardening, perennials, ground covers, and tropicals. He has appeared in print and on television.



**Marion Jarvie**

Marion Jarvie is a passionate plantswoman who has been gardening in Thornhill for over 40 years. She loves plants and invites any and all to her garden, where you will find the hardiest of varieties side by side with plants from all over the world.

Marion has been involved with both the Toronto and international gardening communities. Marion is an accomplished photographer and enthusiastic educator. She teaches regularly at the Toronto Botanical Garden and has lectured all over North America and in the UK.



**Kathy and Mike Shadrack**

Mike Shadrack has been growing hostas since 1986. Mike gardens in Western New York where, with his wife Kathy, he maintains a large collection of modern cultivars and a garden devoted to small hostas. He is co-author and photographer of several books, including *The Color Encyclopedia of Hostas* (with Diana Grenfell).

Kathy Guest Shadrack has been gardening intensively for over 35 years. Kathy has always said that she is not a hosta person, she 'married into Hostas' but she recently wrote *The Book of Little Hostas* (2010), with Mike providing all the illustrations.

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Spotlight on...

**Blue Mouse Ears**



2008 Hosta of the Year. Slug-resistant, hardy, and a great bloomer! Parent of many adorable sports and progeny! My first mini.  
*Marta Cepek*

## A Word from your Speakers

Your newsletters are filled with stuff you've done and stuff you're going to do soon. The gardening season is filled with opportunities like garden visits, meetings....and then there's the bus trip in June, the BBQ in July the American Hosta Convention in St. Louis and the Hosta Forum coming up in April! And some of you are saying "what's this got to do with me??"

It's got EVERYTHING to do with you!! I can tell you right now that as much as Mr. Googles and Madame Siri seem to know, there is nothing like the things you learn simply by immersing yourself in the middle of a bunch of folks who like the same things YOU do. Not only do you learn the best places to get plants, the best way to manage your plants and the techniques to try when things go wrong, but you can begin to develop your own style and tastes in the process.

In case you worry that we're all a bunch of hosta scientists and you're going to feel inadequate or say something too basic, you should know that there are some of us who only come to these things for the snacks.

So do yourself a favor. Dip your toe in the shallow end of the hosta pool and come to the Forum. We really don't know any more than the rest of you – we've just been at it longer, Mike's got a fabulous accent and he doesn't mind standing up and talking to your about what he's learned. You'll have fun.... Promise.

And if you're REALLY smooth, you'll realize that there are OTHER great speakers who can inspire you as well, with various foliage plants for your garden, accents and design tips. PLUS, there's tons of plants to be auction, raffles and such, great food and good clean fun.

Your club is as good as you want it to be. No... we can't make you more handsome/beautiful or richer ... but we CAN make you a little smarter - at least where hosta things are concerned, and certainly happier.

That's all

*Kathy Shadrack*

*author of 'The Little Hosta Book' and long time club lady*

## Directions to the Forum

Date: **Sunday 17 April 2016**

Time: **8:30 am - 4:00 pm** (lunch will be provided)

Location:

### **Glencairn Golf Club**

9807 Regional Road 25

Halton Hills, ON L9T 2X7

905-876-3666



### Directions from Toronto

- Take Hwy 401 west to Hwy 25 (Exit 320 Milton).
- Take Hwy 25 north past Campbellville Road and before the 10th sideroad.
- Glencairn is on the east side of Hwy 25.

or

- Take Hwy 407 west to Hwy 401 exit.
- Take Hwy 25 north past Campbellville Road and before the 10th sideroad.
- Glencairn is on the east side of Hwy 25.

### Directions from Hamilton

- Take Highway 6 north to Highway 401
- Take Highway 401 east to Highway 25 (Exit 320 Milton)
- Take Highway 25 north past Campbellville Road and before the 10th sideroad
- Glencairn is on the east side of Highway 25

or

- Take 407 east to Highway 25 north exit
- Turn west (left) on to Steeles Road for approximately 1.7 kilometers
- Then turn right to continue north on Highway 25
- Take Highway 25 north past Campbellville Road and before the 10th sideroad
- Glencairn is on the east side of highway 25

### Directions from Oakville

- Take Highway 25 north from the QEW to Steeles Road
- Turn west (left) on to Steeles Road for approximately 1.7 kilometers
- Then turn right to continue north on Highway 25
- Take Highway 25 north past Campbellville Road and before the 10th sideroad
- Glencairn is on the east side of Highway 25

# Hosta Trees!

Article & photo by OHS member Jayne Christiani

Hosta Trees? Hosta Trees? HOSTA TREES!

As I am writing this, it is the middle of January, snowing lightly, and I am in severe hosta withdrawal. Truth be told, the withdrawal probably started at the beginning of November. When people were thinking Christmas, I was wondering how many months until spring and hoping it will be an early one. Most of my orders for the new hostas to add to my gardens were submitted by the end of December, to be delivered or picked up in the spring. New gardens have been designed on paper. I have checked out online hosta auctions, knowing I will never spend hundreds of dollars for one hosta (H.'Sharon Stone'; H.'Wally's Bullfrog'). I live in central Ontario... I can't risk that a truly expensive hosta may die over our harsh winters and even harsher springs.

I have checked out new and old hostas, looked at my own photos and sighed heavily when I realized that I won't see those "little noses" poking out of the ground for at least four months. FOUR MONTHS! What to do ... what to do?



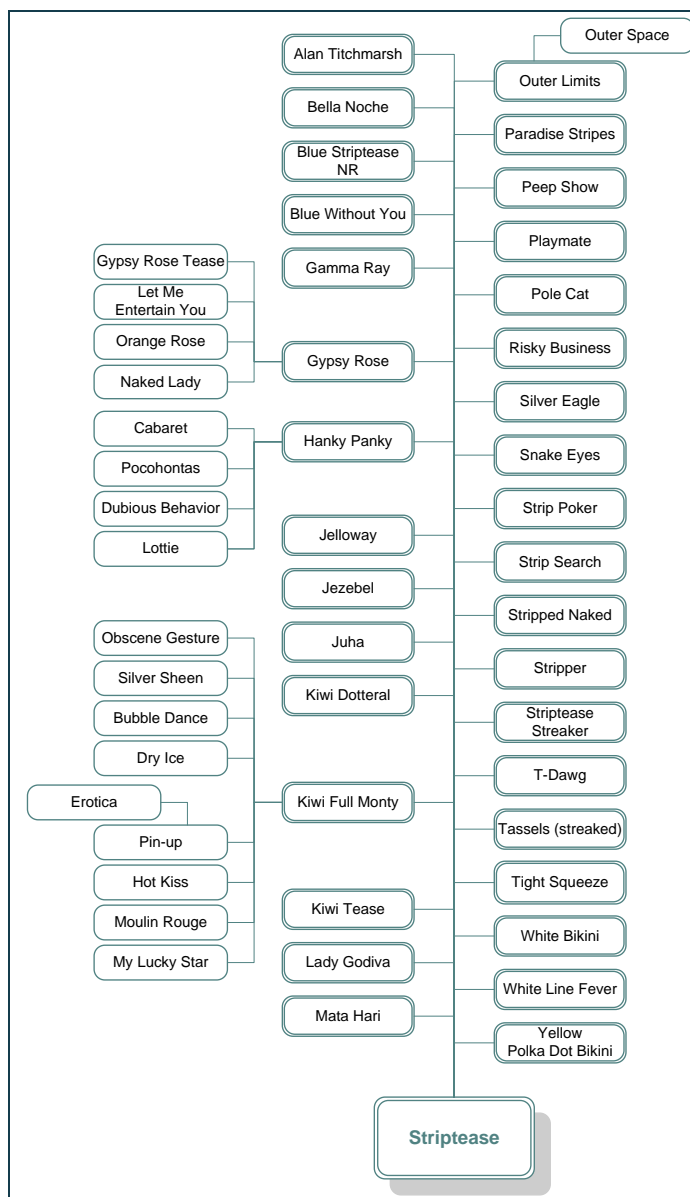
One of my favourite hostas out of the close to 800 in my gardens is H. 'Striptease'. I am blessed in owning originating stock. It always looks fresh, clean, big... just perfect! As a result of owning this treasure, I found something to do with several hours of my time this winter. Researching **family trees** is something in which I've had only a small amount of interest. **Hosta trees!** Now, this I can do!

Striptease is a sport of Gold Standard. Gold Standard has also sported, among others, H. 'String Bikini',

which has a similar look to Striptease.

One of these days I'll research the Gold Standard family tree, but for now, I have compiled the Striptease sports, seedlings, and hybridized babies, thanks largely to the [online Hosta Registry](#) and by Mark Zilis' *Hostapedia*. This research has given me my buying focus for this year.

On my Striptease hosta tree, there are a handful of hostas that I have owned for several years; some are only a year or two old and others will arrive in the spring. By no means do I own them all, but it gives my collecting some direction.



When I was new to gardening and plant collecting, I would read a detailed description of the plant and totally overlook or disregard where it originated, parentage, etc. It was not until I'd been collecting for

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several years that the proverbial light bulb went on and I realized how much information is hidden away there. Why do I care if a hosta flowers in August in South Carolina? Because it ain't gonna flower in August in Ontario - duh! And if it doesn't flower until October here, I shouldn't be splitting it until spring. Little gems like that!

I love the hardiness, fast growth rate, and beauty of Striptease, so why wouldn't I want more hostas with those characteristics?

But maybe the Striptease hosta tree holds no interest to you. That's okay. How about a Theme Garden? What other interests do you have?

- Science Fiction?
  - Captain Kirk, Battle Star, Captain's Adventure
- Food?
  - Curly Fries, Pineapple Upside Down Cake, Golden Waffles
- Alcohol?
  - Martini, Whiskey Sour, Mojito
- Are you American?
  - Abraham Lincoln, American Hero, Liberty

The names of hostas are varied and diverse, as are the hostas themselves. We all have a certain look or two that appeals to our senses. Do you like the fragrant ones? Ones with sexy red legs (petioles)? Vase shaped? Cupped Leaves? Blue? Yellow? Frills? With over 8,000 registered hostas to choose from, you'll have a tough time restricting yourself. (Do I have to?)

If my husband had not cut down the money tree (he thought it was firewood), and my resources were limitless, I would have maids and gardeners and would sit upon a perch directing landscapers. I would transform our property into a grand estate such as found in Great Britain and Europe. Paths and fountains and quiet nooks. Acres and acres and acres of hostas. (Irises, daylilies, and lilies, too... I love 'em all!)

By the time you read this, it will be glorious springtime, but right now I will somehow brave the rest of the winter, continue to add to my collection, and come spring, enjoy the beauty found in each and every hosta in my garden.

Jayne Christiani

***Hosta Vista, Baby!***

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## To Divide or Not to Divide

by **Bob Solberg**

*Reprinted courtesy of the AHS Newsletter exchange.*

*Photos Marta Cepek*

One of the most often asked hosta questions is, "When do I divide my hostas". Traditionally the answer has been, "In the spring, just as they are coming out the ground".



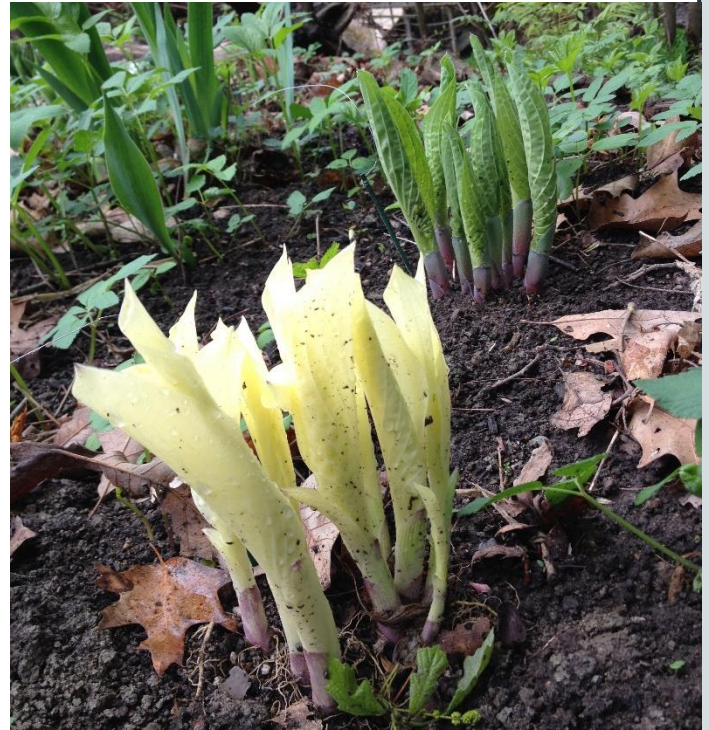
Spring may be the easiest time to divide hostas with all their foliage out of the way. And spring is the time of year that we are all in the mood to clean up the garden and envision the way we want it to look in summer. It is only natural to want to dig those hosta clumps and spread them out all over the garden especially when we see how many more divisions there will be in each clump this year than last.

Hostas sleep all winter, they are dormant. They do not make new roots like other perennials do. In the spring their buds swell and the leaves emerge first. If the hosta was mature, these will be large mature leaves. If the hosta was grown in the sun, these will be narrowed leaves adapted for sun. A hosta grown in deep shade will have larger more rounded leaves adapted for shade. These leaves will emerge, expand and harden off in about three or so weeks depending on whether the spring weather is cool or warm.



As the first leaves harden off and a second flush of leaves begins to appear, the hosta will be making new roots from the base of the new shoot. Thus hostas do

not make new roots until the first foliage hardens off or about three weeks after they emerge. Cool spring soil temperatures may slow or delay this root formation even longer.



So what is the danger of dividing hostas in the spring? Timing. In the spring when the weather is cool and the soil is slow to warm, your newly divided hostas will have large mature leaves and no new roots for weeks. What we call beautiful spring days, those of bright sun, cool breezes and low humidity, are very stressful for new hosta leaves. On those days the desiccation rate is very high and the new hosta divisions with their reduced and possibly damaged root systems, dry out rapidly. If the weather turns suddenly hot for even a day or two, the hosta leaves will burn. While this damage may not prove permanent, the clumps will certainly be reduced in size.

So, if you must divide your hostas in the spring, do not over divide them. Split the clumps in half or at most quarters. Divide only fast growing cultivars in spring that can recover quickly, avoid H. sieboldianas and 'Tokudamas'. Dig them with a fork not a shovel so as to damage their long roots as little as possible. Hosta roots only grow at the tip, if you cut the roots they rarely branch and will not get any longer. New roots will have to come to take their place.



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When then do I prefer to divide my hostas? I like to do it in August or early September, at least 30 days before the first frost date. The conditions then are more favorable to rapid root growth. The soil is warm and the air is more humid than in the spring. While people prefer the cool, sunny days of spring, hostas grow well on 85-90 degree days with high humidity.

Also, hostas usually put on a little growth spurt in August. Frequently, they will throw up a small flush of leaves as the temperatures moderate from the heat of July, especially if there has been rain. Many hostas at this time of year begin to actively grow again after their summer heat dormancy. Thus, hostas divided in late summer will make new roots quickly. Many fast growing hostas will make all new foliage before frost and hold it well into fall. Some may even bloom again.

The only danger in dividing hostas in August is excessive heat or extended drought. Keep newly divided hostas wet. Do not let them dry out for the first two weeks. Removing some of the older, larger leaves or cutting the foliage back at the time of dividing will reduce water loss. Any leaves that suffer burned edges will be taken by the frost in a few weeks anyway.



One other aesthetic point. I would rather have my hosta garden look "divided" as it goes into fall when hostas are usually past their peak anyway than to see it that way all season long. Hostas divided in August will come up next spring in their new homes with more divisions, better proportioned leaves and established root systems. They will look better too. So save your heavy hosta dividing for those humid late summer days. It will be tougher on you, but your hostas will thank you in the spring.

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## Spotlight on... Pure Heart



One of the many adorable sports of Blue Mouse Ears. A happy little hosta that brightens up any shady nook.

*Marta Cepek*

## Spotlight on... Great Expectations



Mainly for the size and huge impact it makes in my garden. The substance is one of the best - so nasties tend to leave it alone.

*Trish Symons*

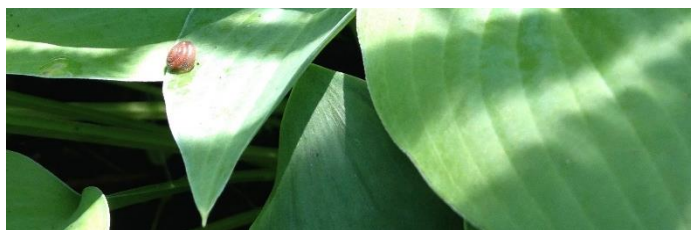
## Slugs Prefer Decaf

by Rob Mortko

Reprinted courtesy of the AHS Newsletter exchange.

Working at a snail's pace has become a well known adage. One would think that caffeine and coffee might be the best answer to picking up the pace. However it turns out what might work for humans has the reverse effect on slugs. In fact, caffeine has recently been found to be fatal to slugs which may open the door for new more environmentally friendly pesticides.

Recent studies have found that slugs and snails are killed when sprayed with a caffeine solution, and that spraying plants with this solution also serves as a repellent.



Scientists in Hawaii came upon these results almost by accident since they were originally looking for a solution to control coqui frogs when they noticed snails and slugs were also affected by caffeine.

Researchers found that when they sprayed an area of soil with a 2 percent caffeine solution, slugs and snails would either crawl away from the treated ground or die.

Further research showed that slugs preferred to eat plain cabbage leaves rather than leaves treated with a caffeinated spray. Similar studies found that more snails left planted areas treated with caffeine when compared to areas treated with a standard snail repellent.

But don't go pouring coffee (or coffee grounds) on your garden since the average cup of coffee contains only about 0.05 percent caffeine -- much less than the 1 to 2 percent solution that proved fatal to the snails. In addition, the jury is still out regarding the related effects on earthworms.

Caffeine offers promise for snail and slug control, the researchers said, because it is labeled "generally recognized as safe" by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration. Commercially available slug sprays contain strong chemicals that are regulated by the FDA and are not allowed in food products.

# Oh, Deer!

*Article & photos by OHS member Marta Cepek*

I used to adore deer. I would run for my camera whenever I caught a glimpse of one... But that was before I got serious about hostas. Now when I see a deer, I rush towards it waving my arms like a crazy person to shoo it out of my yard. That's because one fine spring day, early in my hosta addiction, I found my hostas razed to the ground...

This meant war! Fencing my large, sloped, irregular property isn't a practical option, nor are commercial repellents, predator urine, putrid egg concoctions, or hanging Irish Spring soaps-on-ropes. I am planting companion plants that deer don't like, but that's not a quick fix.



*A deer's been munching here!*



*This deer must think I've laid out a salad bar for her!*



*"Vicks sticks" protecting my hostas*

A couple of years ago on the GardenWeb (now Houzz) **Hosta Forum**, I read about using Vicks Vaporub to deter deer. Apparently the smell is overwhelming to their sensitive noses. This was doable!

Simply smear a dab of the mentholated rub (the dollar store stuff is half the price) on a stick. I used bamboo tomato tutors for the tall hostas and BBQ skewers for the little ones. Even if a deer decides to try a nibble, she'll get a nice poke in the nose from the stick! That'll teach her to eat my hostas!

The "Vicks sticks" don't deter deer from passing through my yard, but in the two summers that I've used them, I have had very little deer damage to protected hostas... Unprotected hostas were promptly found and nibbled.

The rub does not wash away with rain, but its effectiveness fades over time and it should be reapplied every 3-4 weeks.

It's a good idea to use a second deterrent (such as Bobbex, Deer Off, Plantskydd) as a backup on specific beds, the perimeter, or near paths that deer are known to use often.

How do you protect your garden from deer? What about voles? Slugs? Nematodes? Other hosta pests? Send your tips, success stories, and cautionary tales to [hostanews@gmail.com](mailto:hostanews@gmail.com) and we would be happy to share with them other OHS members in an upcoming newsletter!

# 6TH ANNUAL HOSTA FORUM



*Come out and enjoy a day with your fellow Hostaholics!  
Don't come alone, bring a friend...everyone is welcome!*

**Sunday, April 17, 2016**

**Glencairn Golf Club  
9807 Regional Road 25, Halton Hills, ON L9T 2X7**

**9:00 a.m. to 4 p.m. - (Registration Begins at 8:30 a.m.)**

**Register Now & Take Advantage of our Early Bird Rates...**

**Members - \$55.00 until March 1st - \$60.00 after March 1st  
Non-Members - \$60.00 until March 1st - \$65.00 after March 1st**

**Featuring Spectacular Speakers**

<b>PAUL ZAMMIT</b> <i>Director of Horticulture, Toronto Botanical Gardens</i>	<b>MARION JARVIE</b> <i>Passionate Plantswoman</i>	<b>MIKE &amp; KATHY SHADRACK</b> <i>Authors/ Plant "geeks" Extraordinaire</i>
<i>"Gardening Without Flowers: Fantastic Foliage, Garden Ornaments &amp; Creative Containers"</i>	<i>"Designing Your Garden With Hostas &amp; Other Treasures "</i>	<i>"Big Hostas, Little Hostas &amp; Other Shady Characters"</i>

**~ Live & Silent Auctions ~ Draws/Prizes ~  
~ Continental Breakfast ~ Delicious BBQ Lunch ~ Refreshments ~**

**Cheques payable: Ontario Hosta Society  
c/o Norm Limpert, 11174 Sixth Line, Acton, ON L7J 2L7  
905-878-3366 - [normlimpy@hotmail.com](mailto:normlimpy@hotmail.com)**

**To pay by credit card:**

**Contact Glenn Wilson at 519-859-5701**

***Please include your mailing address, email address &  
telephone # so tickets can be mailed to you.***

**Tickets  
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