



Volume 19, Issue 8

October, 2018



**President Diana Plahn**

## **A MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT**

Greetings Fellow Hosta Lovers:

Our last meeting was held on 9/16/18. Our speaker was Mark Crenshaw, also known as the Owl Man.

We had a meeting before the presentation as always. Since only 18 people showed up for the meeting, several topics were discussed. One was dissolving the society, as there appeared to be no interest in it based on the last two years attendance numbers at events.

Another was changing the time from a Sunday to a weeknight when more people could attend without interrupting their weekend. This might involve a change in location.

There are only so many Hosta Experts we can get to speak, as is true for many plant fields, so that is why the society has been reaching out to other speakers. The Hosta Society is financially sound and could afford one speaker with airfare, with a cap of \$1,000.00 approximately yearly, while getting other local speakers. But what is the point if no one attends? Planning and setting up for our events involves several members each meeting with supplies and extra time involved for them to get there.

Please think about these points as there will be discussion about it over the next several meetings. **YOU'LL BE INVOLVED IN THE DISCUSSION IF YOU BOTHER TO ATTEND.** The officers would all like to know what the problem is and why you feel the society meetings are no longer needed, whether there are too many, whether the meeting is bad for you, etc. We will work on getting a survey out to those that bother to respond and will use those results. Remember, if you have suggestions, please be prepared to offer concrete solutions to the problem. If you want speakers, give us names. Different date, give us options. Please don't plan to just criticize with no alternative offered. That is not a constructive suggestion we can use.

As it was, those who did not attend, missed a very good speaker with a very lively and entertaining presentation on Great Horned Owls in Forest Park. He also gave us info in general on these owls and how you can observe them in your backyard. They probably are in your neighborhood, as they are in mine.

Our next presentation is on Hydrangeas, which make great companions to Hosta.

***Diana***

## 2018 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

**October 21**

**Meeting with Speaker Anne Kirkpatrick: Hydrangea**  
**1:00 PM, Creve Coeur Government Center**

**November 18**

**Board Meeting**  
**5:00 PM, home of President Diana Plahn**

**December 2**

**Holiday Party**  
**At the home of Martha LaFata**



Anne Kirkpatrick, Master Gardener  
*Photo from www.stlmg.com*



Hydrangea 'Firelight'



Hydrangea 'Lady in Red'

### Growing Hydrangea in St. Louis Anne Kirkpatrick

**October 21, 1:00 PM**  
**Creve Coeur Government Center**

Hydrangeas are stunning plants and, because of their four season interest, a great addition to the landscape. They prefer some of the same light, water and soil needs as hostas, thus make excellent companion plants.

How should we care for this indispensable shrub? Do they really need lots of water as do hostas? Are there different varieties that require more or less sun? What should we be doing now to keep these plants healthy and in good form? Should they be deadheaded and pruned, if so when? How should we protect them during the coming winter? I have an 'Endless Summer' hydrangea; why, oh why, doesn't it bloom? The tag said it would.

So many questions. Anne will join us on October 21 with all the answers and many more facts and helpful hints. She has been a volunteer with Missouri Botanical Garden and St. Louis Master Gardeners since retiring from a 30 year career as a Parkway School District librarian-media specialist in 1999. Researching various aspects of plants and gardening are of special interest to her. As a Master Gardener volunteer at the Kemper Center for Home Gardening (MBG) and a member of the Plant Information Service Committee, she continues her learning process and enjoys sharing information with other gardening enthusiasts.



Mark Glenshaw, the Owl Man



Great Horned Owl camouflaged.



Caring for owlets

To learn more about the antics of Charlie, Sarah, Olivia and Samantha, the Great Horned Owls of Forest Park visit Mark's blog:  
**[Forestparkowls.blogspot.com/](http://Forestparkowls.blogspot.com/)**

## September meeting

### Mark Glenshaw The Owl Man

Members enjoyed a knowledgeable and humorous presentation about the Great Horned owls that call Forrest Park home. People walking through the park often report seeing red-tailed hawks, muskrat, blue herons and even coyotes. But few have seen owls. They are hard to spot. Mark listed several reasons for this. Owls are most active at night when people aren't, they fly fast and silently, their coloring as seen in the picture at right serves as great camouflage.

To learn about owls, one must do homework and fieldwork. Each augments the other. In 2017 Mark made 330 separate forays into the park observing what "his family" was doing. He looks for the same pair, named Charlie and Sarah, and their offspring. As for homework, Mark recommended **Owls** by Connie Toops. In a highly reader-friendly style, she discusses owl behavior, habitats and natural history.

Mark has observed that upon waking, owls spend time stretching, groom and fluffing-up their feathers. They are able to fly silently because of the construction of their feathers. Owls are also great hunters. Most of us welcome owls to our gardens because we have heard that they prey upon the small rodents we consider pests, such as mice, voles, bunnies and squirrels. But they will also tackle larger animals such as herons, raccoons, even cats and dogs.

If you don't have a small pet you might want to attract owls to your yard by erecting nesting boxes in the trees and making habitat improvements.

Mark also conducts "owl prowls". If interested contact him at: [mglenshaw@gmail.com](mailto:mglenshaw@gmail.com)

## Fall Chore – Get a Soil Test

I'm sure most of us have received calls from our doctor's office about scheduling an annual "wellness exam". This is encouraged regardless of the state of our health. Fall is a good time to perform a wellness exam on our garden beds. All gardeners should be intent on improving their soil. In addition to adding nutrients, adding organic matter can be equally important. Adding organic matter can improve the soil by increasing water holding capacity, fertility, tilth, and encouraging beneficial organisms. Healthy soil equals healthy plants.

What will a soil test tell you? It will give you the pH of the soil and recommend how much lime or sulfur to apply (some gardens don't need either) for the plants you have specified. It gives the amounts of phosphorus, potassium, calcium and magnesium that are currently in the soil as well as the organic matter of the soil. The higher the percentage of organic matter, the less fertilizer you are going to need. The test will then give specific recommendations on how much nitrogen, phosphorous and potassium to use to augment the chosen area. Most importantly, if you have any questions, the number of your local extension specialist is listed on the bottom of the soil test report.

Each fall my husband likes to rejuvenate one of his daylily beds. Rejuvenation begins with a soil test. He removed the first two inches of soil from an area, then dug a six to eight inch deep hole and put the soil in a pail. He sampled two or three different areas of the same bed. This soil was then mixed and allowed to dry. He put about two cups of the mix into a plastic bag and took it to the UM Extension office in Kirkwood. The sample was then sent to a lab for analysis. The cost for processing is \$25. Results are mailed or emailed to you within two weeks.

Below is a portion of the report he received on this fall's test:

SOIL TEST RESULTS		RATING					
		Very low	Low	Medium	High	Very high	Excess
pHs	7.1	*****					
Phosphorus (P)	357 lbs/a	*****					
Potassium (K)	380 lbs/a	*****					
Calcium (Ca)	6417 lbs/a	*****					
Magnesium (Mg)	680 lbs/a	*****					
Organic Matter:	12.7 %	Neutr. Acidity: 0.0 meq			CEC: 19.4 meq		
<b>Fertilizer &amp; Limestone Recommendations (lbs/1000 sq ft)</b>							
Crop		Nitrogen (N):	Phosphorus(P <sub>2</sub> O <sub>5</sub> )	Potash (K <sub>2</sub> O)	Zinc(Zn)	Sulfur(S)	LIME
9 DAYLILLY perennial bedding plants		0.0	0.0	0.0			0

The chart shows this bed is high or very high in all tested components and has 12.7 % organic matter. It recommends that nothing be added. Don't add fertilizer. My husband is now researching how to decrease the excessive amounts of Phosphorus present.

MU Extension Office  
St. Louis County  
132 E Monroe Ave  
Kirkwood, MO 63122

Brightside St. Louis  
4646 Shenandoah Ave.  
St. Louis, MO 63110

Gateway Greening  
2211 Washington Ave.  
St. Louis, MO 63103

## Welcome New Members

**Sherry and Perry Bishop of Harrisburg, IL**

Join us at our last meeting in October and give other Society members an opportunity to meet you.

## St. Louis Hosta Society Officials

**Diana Plahn** – President  
314-346-3007  
[dplahn@me.com](mailto:dplahn@me.com)

**Jolly Ann Whitener** – Secretary  
[jawhit6@gmail.com](mailto:jawhit6@gmail.com)

**Karen Frey** – Hospitality

**Martha LaFata** – Vice-President  
314-961-7163  
[mvelafata@gmail.com](mailto:mvelafata@gmail.com)

**Melissa Byrd** – Treasurer  
[mabyrd68@gmail.com](mailto:mabyrd68@gmail.com)

**Melissa Byrd** – Webmaster  
[mabyrd68@gmail.com](mailto:mabyrd68@gmail.com)

**Joan Poos** – Newsletter Editor  
314-821-1622  
[david.poos@att.net](mailto:david.poos@att.net)

## St. Louis Hosta Society Membership Information

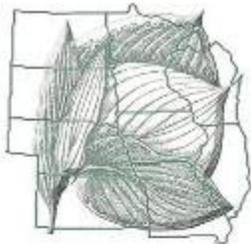
**Contact:** Melissa Byrd  
117 Gunston Hall Drive  
St. Charles, MO 63304  
[mabyrd68@gmail.com](mailto:mabyrd68@gmail.com)

**Dues:** \$7 per year, \$18 for three years  
Family or Individual

Meetings held at **1:00 PM** at the **Creve Coeur Government Center, 300 N. New Ballas, 63141** (between Ladue Road and Olive), unless otherwise noted.

**Visit our Web site:** [www.stlouishosta.org](http://www.stlouishosta.org)

**Visit us on Facebook, St. Louis Hosta Society**



### Midwest Regional Hosta Society

The Midwest Regional Hosta Society represents Region 5 of the American Hosta Society that includes 9 states.

Membership in the society is \$20.00 for 2 years, which includes two issues per year of the newsletter.

Please mail a check made payable to **MRHS** to:

Barbara Schroeder,  
Treasurer  
1819 Coventry Dr.  
Champaign, IL 61822

along with Name, Address, phone, and email (Most correspondence is by email). For questions email [MRHS.Hosta@gmail.com](mailto:MRHS.Hosta@gmail.com).



## AMERICAN HOSTA SOCIETY

Members receive three issues per year of The Hosta Journal, which includes color photographs of hostas, reports on national conventions, scientific information concerning current research pertaining to hostas, and advertisements of interest to hosta families.

Membership checks should be made out to "AHS," and mailed to:

Sandie Markland, AHS Membership Secretary  
P O Box 7539  
Kill Devil Hills, NC 27948

Dues for one year are \$30 for an individual and \$34 for a family. For more information, visit the AHS website: <http://www.americanhostasociety.org/>