Hostas and Companion Plants
Hosta Origins

- Japan, Korea, China
  - 40 species in Asia
- Japanese name Giboshi, Chinese name Yu-san, Hosta is named for Dr. Nicholas Thomas Host, an Austrian botanist
- Family Liliaceae
- Most popular perennial today in U.S.
  - About 7000 cultivars
Hosta Terms

- **Crown** = base of plant
- **Scape** = flower stalk
- **Petiole** = leaf stalk
- **Margin** = edge of leaf
- **Substance** = thickness of waxy coating on the leaves

Rugose = quilted or seer-sucker texture

Glaucous = white waxy film on the surface of a leaf
Watering and Fertilization

- In their native range, hostas get a lot of moisture from mist and fog as well as rain; their leaves are designed to let it run off.
- Hostas shouldn’t get too dry. Those in more sun may burn. They also don’t like heat.
- Heavy clay may slow the growth rate of some plants.
- Annual fertilization is beneficial! A slow release product in spring works well.

Hosta ‘The King’
www.perennials.com

Hosta ‘Blue Ivory’

- 16” tall, 30” wide
- Leaves 7”x5”
- Pale lavender flowers in July
- Good substance

Meyer/Klinkhamer 2009
**Hosta ‘Blue Mouse Ears’**

- Blue green to blue-grey, rounded leaves, very thick substance
- 6-12” diam, 4-6” tall
- Leaves 2.75” x 2.0”
- Good spreader

E. Deckert 2000

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**Hosta ‘Candy Dish’**

- Medium size, 12” tall x 24” wide
- Thick leaf, thick substance
- Glossy
- Slow grower
- Purple petioles

Summers, Wrede 2003
**Hosta ‘Fragrant Bouquet’**

- 20” tall, 36” wide
- Leaves 8” x 6”, takes ½ day sun
- White fragrant flowers

Paul Aden 1982

**Hosta ‘Great Expectations’**

- 22” tall, 36” wide
- Leaves 8” x 5”
- Slow grower!
- Whitish pink fls close to tops of leaves

Paul Aden 1988
**Hosta ‘Gypsy Rose’**

- 14” tall, 30" wide
- Lavender flowers
- Dense grower, fast increaser
- Good groundcover, or for borders

J. Anderson NR

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**Hosta ‘Hanky Panky’**

- 16” tall x 30” wide
- Margin lightens to cream by end of summer
- Slow grower

Mid-summer to fall color

Hans Hansen 2004

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plantdelights.com

Spring to early summer color
**Hosta ‘June’**

- Medium, 15” tall, 28” wide
- Leaves 6”x4”
- Center color varies with sun
- Heavy substance
- Takes up to ½ day sun
- Looks very different in more sun vs shade

*NEO Plants Ltd 1991*

**Hosta ‘On Stage’**

- 16” tall, 24” wide
- Leaves 8” x 5”, cordate, rugose
- Prominent streaking
- Flower lavender 24” scape
- Up to ½ day morning sun

*Paul Aden 1986*
**Hosta ‘Pandora’s Box’**

- One of the tiniest variegated hostas
- 3” tall, 4-6” wide

H. Hansen/Shady Oaks 1998

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**Hosta ‘Revolution’**

- 18” tall, 2' wide,
- 20" scapes of light lavender flowers
- Thick, creamy-centered leaves are speckled green, wide dark green streaky border, shiny, with acute tips
- Mound-like habit
- Vigorous grower
- Has some reversion issues

Walters Gardens, G. Van Eijk-Bos/Dirk Van Erven ‘00
Hosta ‘Fire Island’

- 16” tall, 24” wide
- Red petioles that bleed into blade
- Foliage becomes chartreuse later in season
- Lavender flowers

Bill Brinka 1998

Hosta ‘Sum and Substance’

- 3-4’ tall, 5-7’ wide
- Leaves 20” x 15”
- Glossy leaves rugose, with ‘embossed’ veins, chartreuse, more gold in more sun.
- Whitish or pale lavender flowers, scape 72”
- Good slug resistance and sun tolerance.

Aden 1980
Rieger Begonias need part shade or light shade, fertile soil and moist but not wet conditions. Full shade will cause them to stop blooming.

Caladiums grow from bulbs. They prefer light to medium shade, and moist but not wet soils. Thinner-leaved varieties may have issues with slugs or earwigs. All plant parts are toxic.
• There are ‘sun’ and ‘shade’ coleus varieties—if a ‘sun’ coleus is in deep shade, it may be less colorful. Usually part shade is fine.
Impatiens Issues

- Due to impatiens downy mildew, the common impatiens is sold less often
- Breeding for resistance is in full swing and new releases will be introduced soon!
- In the meantime, New Guinea Impatiens and Bounce™ series impatiens are resistant

‘Paradise Mango Orange’, bgh.com

‘Sonic Magic Pink’, bgh.com
Hosta Companions (Perennials)

**Aruncus aethusifolius** Dwarf Goatsbeard

**Asarum europaeum** European Wild Ginger

**Hakonechloa macra** ‘Aureola’
Astilbe needs moisture to perform well and likes high organic matter soils. It can even be in full sun if it has sufficient water. Not for medium or deep shade—doesn’t bloom.

Brunnera macrophylla ‘Jack Frost’
*Dicentra eximia or D. formosa*

*Ferns*
These gentians (‘True Blue’ and ‘Zuki Rindo’) like partial shade or light shade and moist (but not wet) soils with high organic matter content.

Coralbells prefer some afternoon shade, soils that are not overly moist (but also not too dry) and vary in height and width though most are 12-18” tall.
Heucherella is a hybrid (Heuchera x Tiarella) They prefer moist, part-shade or light shade sites & soils high in organic-matter They usually are wider than tall, (± 15” wide) and grown mostly for foliage

Lamium maculatum cultivars
**Pulmonaria**

Early-flowering, pulmonaria like light to medium shade, medium moisture and good air circulation.

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**Tiarella spp. (Foamflowers)**

Need moist but not wet soil and light to medium shade. Can take part sun (morning).
Tricyrtis (Toadlily)

Hosta Companions
(Smaller-scale Woody Plants)

- Acer shirasawanum ‘Aureum’
- Acer japonicum ‘Aconitifolium’
- Acer japonicum ‘Vitifolium’
False Cypress (*Chamaecyparis*)

*Chamaecyparis pisifera* ‘White Pygmy’

*Chamaecyparis pisifera* ‘Golden Sprite’

Brokenarrownursery.com

Hydrangeas
Rhododendrons need an acid soil, medium moisture and good drainage. Protection from winter sun and wind is needed. Need light shade or part sun (morning).

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Thank you!