

Greetings:

Sure is looking and starting to feel like spring has arrived! Daffodils are blooming, the daylilies are up and getting taller every day, and even a few hosta pips are starting to make an appearance. With all of the cancellations due to covid-19, we should all have the best-looking gardens ever! Might be a good year to have a members' garden tour once everything gets back to being a little bit more like normal and people can start to visit each other!

Due to limitations in Ohio's Stay at Home Order which has been extended by Governor Mike DeWine until May 1, 2020, and the Metroparks cancelling all rental facilities to be closed through April, your Black Swamp officers have decided to cancel the April 25<sup>th</sup> Hosta Garden Work Day and meeting/tissue culture program. Likewise, we hope you are you sitting down – our May 16<sup>th</sup> Plant Sale at Churchill's Market has been CANCELLED. Due to the number of members required to pull off our sale, and the number of people from the community who show up for the sale, there is no way to realistically keep the number down to 10 at a time. Financially our society will weather this cancellation. We are looking forward to having a fantastic sale in 2021 with all of the extra care we'll be providing our plants this year!

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Wood County Master Gardeners Plant Exchange on April 25<sup>th</sup> and the Lucas County Master Gardeners Plant Exchange on May 2<sup>nd</sup> have also been canceled this year.

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### **Spring Hosta Tips By Don Rawson, Comstock Park, MI**

The snow is melting, and spring is on the way. You've been anxiously waiting for the chance to walk through your gardens and dream about the new plants you've ordered from your favorite mail order websites. And you can't wait to put your gloves on and get your gardens cleaned up. Hold on.

Tip #1: Don't remove that winter mulch until the last frost is gone. Early arrivals, like *Hosta montana* 'Aureomarginata', may require additional protection from that late season cold and wind. When all danger of frost is gone, then go for it. Get your rake and wheelbarrow.

Tip #2: Thoroughly clean your gardens. All debris should be raked and added to the compost bin to eliminate a breeding ground for slugs. Be careful not to rake or step on the shoots that are just popping up to avoid damaging the leaves which are about to unfold.

Tip #3: Look to see if the frost has heaved your plants out of the ground, especially young hostas which were planted last year. Are your plants in good shape? As the ground freezes and thaws, freezes and thaws, and freezes and thaws (get the idea?), those plants may need to be tucked in on several occasions.

Tip #4: Make sure all plants, including new arrivals, are accurately labeled and the tags are in good condition. Can your friends easily read those plant labels? Or has the name tag completely disappeared? Remember that large hostas will cover up name tags that are too close to the mound.

Tip #5: Spring is the best time to prune most trees, and shrubs after flowering. Perhaps you have trees and shrubs which need to be pruned. Those branches which are dead, or make it too shady, should be cut off cleanly, chipped up, and added to the compost bin or reserved for a woodchip path.

Tip #6: Turn over your compost pile. That pile of leaves, garden wastes and grass clippings from last fall should be flipped over now. You may want to add a little sand. The warm, rainy weather will turn all that debris into black gold. Then when those hot summer days reach 70 or 80 degrees, apply that free mulch around the base of your plants.

Tip #7: Take an inventory of your gardening supplies. How is your supply of fertilizers, herbicides, and pesticides? Take inventory of tools, gloves, hoses, sprinklers, wheelbarrows, fencing, tomato cages, etc. Shop and replace worn out items now so that you're not stuck in the middle of a job when summer arrives.

Tip #8: Spring is the best time to dig in your hosta bed. Spring is a great time to divide and transplant your hostas. Did you promise to give a hosta to a friend, or donate a plant for the hosta auction? You can create interest and educate others about gardening, and eventually turn your neighborhood into a hostaholic community. Review your garden records from last fall to see which ones need your attention. How wonderful to see those long awaited hostas shoot up, bigger and stronger than the year before!

Tip #9: Don't neglect to apply a slow-release fertilizer. But don't over fertilize and keep those granules off the crown and newly emerging of the plant. Above all, enjoy the fresh

spring breeze, the chirp of the robins, and the signs of life as they appear, knowing that Old Man Winter is giving way to a new season of gardening and fun everywhere!

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Eileen Hoffman has been busy posting to our FACEBOOK site and web page. Check them out in your free time – which we all seem to have a lot of these days! Stay home and if you have to go out, practice safe distancing and WASH YOUR HANDS!!

**If you have anything you would like to share,**

Eileen's email is: <[sailA33@accesstoledo.com](mailto:sailA33@accesstoledo.com)>

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Until we meet again.....Hopefully the July 19<sup>th</sup>  
Daylily Expo!!!!

**If you have any info for the next E-FLASH, be sure to send it to us.**

**Live life to its fullest!!!!**

*Frank and Charlene*



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