

June 2024



The delights of summer

I can't believe just how much growth has happened over the past month since last we spoke. Tunnel 3 is especially verdant with the hostas jostling for space. More about this later...

First let's travel to Maine to hear from Lenore...



Greetings Hosta Gardeners,

Our growing season here in Maine begins later than in the UK, but our hostas are now bursting out in Maine! Soon they will be fully unfurled. We've made a huge change in our garden this spring. Over the years our deer problem has defied every deterrent we knew of, and our hostas suffered. We decided we could either give up gardening or install a fence, and we chose the latter.

This spring, while awaiting the fence installation, the deer began eating the tiny emerging hosta pips (as well as all of our tulips and daylilies). We tried one more deterrent recommended by friends, a fake coyote which we moved around the garden every day. It worked! Our hostas were protected temporarily, although we knew the deer would soon figure out the deception.



Our fence was installed last week. We live at the end of a one-block long street which ends at the Stillwater River, and our property sits

Rain, rain, go away.

Come again another day

Although the hostas love all this rain, they can have too much so don't forget to ensure they get the chance to drain, if the wet weather continues.

Apparently, we are due to have a drier period starting off June and the first 5-day stretch without rain since January. It isn't surprising and I'm sure you are all battling the rapid growth of everything, especially weeds. I think anyone following 'no-mow May' will need a machete to cut through their grass before trying to mow it. We simply couldn't do this around the nursery without killing the mower but there are large areas we leave

along the shore of the river. A land easement borders the side of our property. So everything felt large and open, and now we've created a boundary.

It feels strange to have a boundary. It creates an odd sense of enclosure, but also a sense of comfort, like a childhood fort. It changes the appearance of our land and our gardens in an interesting, but not unattractive, way.

We chose two kinds of fences, a metal fence near the house and driveway, and a mesh fence parallel to the river which is essentially invisible. We have a total of six gates in various places. A vast area near the river remains open and accessible to all. Neighbors have asked us whether they might fish at the shore, or walk through the gates, and we encourage this!

We're still doing some clean-up work and replanting the perennials we moved when the installers came. Our two sunny perennial beds were bisected by the fence, so we're re-creating them a bit. I view this as both a challenge and an opportunity.

Meanwhile, our hostas are protected and growing!

Best to all,

Lenore



Well done to Tom and Lenore for actually getting their fence done, most of ours is still sitting in a pile, but we are hoping to get cracking on this once the weather improves and we can strim the area first.

I think it looks very stylish and, as Lenore says, it does create a different view. I like the definition and the way it encourages you to look through it to what lies beyond in a very inviting way.

It is also interesting how the fake coyote acted as a deterrent to the deer, I wonder if it would have the same effect here? Deer are a much harder pest to deter and they can be so destructive, as can badgers although they are more likely to eat the molluscs than the hostas.

It is interesting to see how the season in Maine is unfolding (see the banner photo of Lenore's garden) and how much further ahead we are in the UK, but then we did have a very mild winter.

This year the UK hosta season started early following the mild winter and the large and giant varieties in our collection are jostling for space in Tunnel 3. I have managed to get around to creating a video tour of the the tunnels, which you can view by [clicking on this link](#) – it's just under 15 minutes long and I do apologise for my lack of finesse in its creation – I need to slow down a bit. The link will take you to the video on our YouTube channel, where you will find all the videos I have taken since starting the channel a few years ago – some of them include

for wild flowers and orchids to make an appearance – we have really had to hunt for them this year as the daisies and buttercups are crowding everything. It will be quite a problem to get into these areas and mow once the flowers have finished but it is important to maintain these parts of the nursery to ensure a rich diversity of wild flowers.

We were nervous about planting the trees in the north field back in the early spring but we needn't have worried as the regular rain has helped them establish beautifully. We have been rewarded with lots of spring colour and are keeping our fingers crossed for better ground conditions so we can continue this work.

Coming up...

This June we have a new event to look forward to but before then we are at **The Old Vicarage in East Ruston**
Saturday June 8th 10am – 3pm

The following day we are local at the annual **Lavenham Hidden Gardens** event
Sunday 9th June 10:30am - 4:30pm

LAVENHAM'S



HIDDEN GARDENS

It is a real treat to be able to find the hidden treasures behind the facades of one of the prettiest villages in the UK.

Robin, but they were rare sightings as he was never one to enjoy being in front of a camera, rather like me!

One thing Robin would have loved to see is how wonderful the hostas look in the collection this year – he always loved to see a cascade of leaves all intertwining with each other. It is a trend I have seen in hosta displays this year but was something which was always marked down by flower show judges in the past. It was always a fine balancing act to stage a display that wasn't too crowded, especially when no two years are the same when it comes to the amount of foliage and growth. Visitors to the nursery often remark on how lovely it is to see this effect, as the video shows.



The video was taken in between rain showers and so there are jewel-like drops glistening on many of the leaves. The droplets of water on [H. 'Frosted Jade'](#), above, and [H. 'Brother Stefan'](#), below.



The flowers are starting to make an appearance and in a few weeks they will be changing the view and creating a lavender haze sitting above the foliage. It is something to look forward to as we enter June, which is perhaps the best time of the season to enjoy the peak of the colours before the heat of summer starts to have an impact, if we have a summer of course!

Speak soon,

Team Mickfield Hostas

Copyright © Mickfield Hostas 2024, All rights reserved.

The new event is the
**Summer Garden & Outdoor
Living Fair at Holkham Hall**

Saturday 15th June

10am – 4pm



The team at Holkham stage an autumn event every year, which is just a little too late for us to attend so we are excited to be able to say yes to this new event. The plant stalls are in the walled garden – see you there.

Finally, this month we have the
Somerleyton Hall

Summer Plants and Crafts Fair

Saturday 22nd June

Set in a delightful location, you can wander through the collection of hostas in the walled garden, whilst you are there.

Nursery Open Dates

The nursery is open every weekend throughout June

Friday to Monday

10am – 4pm

Including dates when we are at plant fairs. Roy will be at the nursery to welcome you.