



MSU Tollgate Gardens

THE HOSTA GARDEN

The Hosta Garden is a shady oasis under the shade of the mature spruce trees located north of the Farmhouse. There are now over fifty varieties of hosta and a collection of shade companion plantings displayed in this garden. This is the perfect place for a mid-afternoon visit in the height of summer. Recent loss of some of the mature spruce trees has opened up sunnier space for new additions. An obelisk was constructed to provide support to train a clematis as well as provide a vertical element where there was once a spruce tree. A new Paw-Paw tree



has been added in the south-east corner of this garden. This native tree has room to grow and eventually produce a tropical looking canopy that will offer increased shade to this area. Hosta are the feature plants in this garden but are slow to come up in the spring so companion



Asimina triloba-American Paw Paw Tree

plantings of spring bulbs, bleeding heart, hellebores and pulmonaria provide early color. Other shade tolerant perennials include heuchera, variegated Solomon seal, hydrangea, Japanese Forest grass, goatsbeard, sweet woodruff, ferns and lirioppe. Along with the boxwood shrubs these plants add dimension to the garden, accentuate the featured hosta and provide additional interest.

These plants thrive in well drained organic soils and consistent moisture. In our garden setting there is irrigation, compost and mulch available to provide for their growing needs. There are areas of part-shade to full shade in our garden



Hellebores- early blooming companion plants



Mid summer companion plants

which is ideal for most varieties, though some can tolerate more sun.

HOSTA GARDEN PESTS

The primary pests in our garden are deer and slugs. Since there are open spaces on the Tollgate Farm it is impossible to restrict the movements of wildlife. Deer repellent can be used to discourage browsing but will need to be repeatedly applied in areas that are irrigated for best results. Sometimes the choice of companion plants can also serve a purpose in pest control.



Hosta 'Halcyon' has blue, heart-shaped leaves with heavy ribbing and lavender flowers



Pulmonaria is a deer resistant companion plant

The pulmonaria have a texture that deer find undesirable and can help discourage deer browsing of the tender hosta shoots as they emerge in spring.

There are many varieties of hosta with thicker leaves are less desirable to slugs.

Consider these varieties: 'Halcyon', 'Sagae', 'August Moon', 'Frances Williams', 'Blue Angel', 'Love Pat' to name a few.

All hosta produce blooms, spikes of blue, lavender or white trumpet like flowers some of which are very fragrant. However, hosta are grown primarily for the interest of their foliage. There are thousands of varieties available with many textures, sizes, and leaf color variations.



Hosta 'Elegans' with corrugated blue foliage and large white fragrant blooms



Hosta 'Island Breeze' has a additional feature of reddish leaf stems that add to the color appeal



Hosta 'Krossa Regal' is a stately large hosta with a unique and distinctive upright mounding form with rigid blue leaves .



Hosta 'Francee' is a fast growing hosta and a favorite for a white margined hosta in the landscape



Hosta 'Rhino Hide' demonstrates the feature of thick, deeply cupped and seer-suckered leaves



Hosta 'Stained Glass' has bright golden leaves with

The selected hosta specimen in the Tollgate Hosta Garden are a sampling to best demonstrate these various features.

So come and enjoy this shady oasis and the wonderful plant variety it has to offer!

MSU Tollgate Farm and Education Center



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