

'Patriot' Hosta

History

Hostas are native to Japan, Korea and China. They were first imported and grown in Europe in the late 1700s. By the mid 1800s hostas were growing in the United States.

Today hundreds of species and thousands of cultivars are available to gardeners due to hybridizing and tissue-culture propagation. Common names for hosta still used in some garden centres are plantain lily and funkia, but the proper name is hosta.

Description

Hostas are easy-to-grow, shade-tolerant, herbaceous perennials. They are grown mainly for their beautiful foliage. Hosta leaves come in a range of shapes, colours, sizes and textures.

The 'Patriot' hosta is a highly recognized, top-selling, white-margined hosta and the American Hosta Growers' 1997 Hosta of the Year. As a Hosta Francée sport, it shares the same elegant form but with a wider, creamy-white margin.

It's a fast-growing hosta that forms a medium to large mound of foliage with above-average substance. 'Patriot' hostas have slightly wavy foliage and smooth texture. Lavender flowers appear in 30" scapes throughout July and August.

Culture

'Patriot' hostas require a well-aerated, well-drained soil with average water retention. For

best growing results, use an acidic soil with high amounts of organic matter. 'Patriot' hostas prefer shade but can tolerate partial sunlight. They are hardy to zone 3.

Though hostas are easy-to-grow, hassle-free plants, they are extremely susceptible to slug and snail damage. Place crushed eggshells at the base of each plant to discourage these foliage-feeding pests.

Seasonal Care

Regarding the removal of the flower, it is a matter of taste more than science. However, less energy is being stored for growth as long as the flower remains on the plant.

Once the 'Patriot' hosta becomes dormant, its leaves will decompose. As long as the appearance is not a problem, they may be left in place; however, leaving decaying leaves provides a home for slugs and other pests to over-winter. Many people choose to compost the leaves and in doing so recycle nutrients.

Landscape Value

An excellent choice for a shady spot in the garden, the 'Patriot' hosta is one of the most popular herbaceous perennials. Its vibrant variegated foliage, interesting flowers and easy care make it a winner with hosta enthusiasts and novice gardeners alike.

Matt DiFranco, Class of 2004

Niagara College Greenhouse & Nursery

Niagara-on-the-Lake Campus, 135 Taylor Road, Niagara-on-the-Lake, ON L0S 1J0
phone: (905) 641-2252, ext. 4082; fax: (905) 988-4307 e-mail: mnewell@niagaracollege.ca
Website: <http://greenhousenursery.niagaracollege.ca>