

Underappreciated Hostas – Bob Solberg

Do you have ‘Ruby Earrings’ available for mail order? What size is ‘Ruby Earrings’? H. ‘Rough Lemon’, is it available?

Yes, they are both available on our website, www.HostaHosta.com. ‘Ruby Earrings’ is a small to medium hosta and ‘Rough Lemon’ is a medium and grows faster.

What are the names of the two hostas after ‘Ruby Earrings’ in the talk? Do the hostas with red/purple veining/spots have names? Available in 2022/2023?

Sorry they do not have names as of yet. I do not name my hostas until they are ready to introduce. The one with the purple dots will be introduced in 2022 and hopefully the upright seedling will be ready in 2023. They will be our headliners each year.

What is a tetraploid?

A tetraploid hosta is just a hosta with four sets of chromosomes instead of the usual two sets, twice as many. Tetraploid sports usually have wider margins, thicker leaves, a more compact habit, larger, open flowers, but shorter roots and a slower growth rate than their parents. Totally tetraploid seedlings may vary in these traits.

How do you overwinter your bowls? What are your recommendations for an even more northern climate?

In the South in Zone 7 we can just leave our bowls of miniature hostas out in the garden. They do best if you keep them dry however, maybe under the eaves of the roof up against the house. They can be easily overwintered in the North in an unheated garage. Just do not let them get totally dry. A little snow on top will keep them moist enough.

Why do you keep bees off?

In hybridizing, I want to make controlled crosses. So I want to make the crosses and not the bees. We do our crossing in a hoop house because the bees are very busy at sunrise and I am not.

Why is the old hybrid H. ‘Ming Treasure’ not featured as a variegated H. plantaginea?

It certainly is a good hosta produced by Q & Z Nursery. Unfortunately it is not much in demand these days and we do not have it in tissue culture in the lab.

Think “deerout” would work on squirrels?

Sorry, I have no experience with this product.

Is lipstick blond hosta hard to grow in Michigan?

I have not grown this hosta but sometimes yellow hostas are less vigorous and need more sun but ironically will burn if not in the shade. Our 'Lemon Kiss' is like that, it was hybridized to be a bright yellow in the shade garden.

What hostas grow best in Fuquay Varina, NC? We're from the North and moved here, probably an hour away from you.

Most all hostas do well in North Carolina, especially if grown in pots. Fragrant-flowered hostas are especially good in the South.