

August 2025



Flower arranging with hostas

It occurred to me, whilst attending the East of England Regional gathering of NAFAS (National Association of Flower Arrangements Societies) a few weeks ago, that I haven't revisited the use of hostas in floral art for a while.

I was also planning to feature another Great Grower, [*H. 'Gold Standard'*](#) this month. I have one in my garden (on the right below) which is busy sporting a number of different offspring all in one pot:



The plant on the left is Yvonne's favourite, [*H. 'Moonlight'*](#), one of the many sports of *H. 'Gold Standard'*. Coincidentally, *H. 'Gold Standard'* features in the photos of floral art in this newsletter.

Floral art

I have always enjoyed viewing floral art arrangements at the many different events I have been involved in over the years.

The level of creativity is something that always inspired me to continue trying to display my hostas in imaginative ways.

When I met Helen Evans, East of England Area of NAFAS Media Coordinator, at the area event recently, she kindly shared a couple of her creations featuring hosta leaves.

If you look carefully at the image opposite you will see some *H. 'Gold Standard'* leaves emerging from the centre of the arrangement.

It was a pleasure to let Helen know that the hosta she has had in her garden for years, and routinely supplies her with glorious foliage to use in her creations, is indeed *H. 'Gold Standard'*.



Why use hostas in floral art?

Functionally hostas are extremely useful as cut leaf, surviving weeks if kept in water. I have staged a number of leaf displays at flower shows over the years and they always perform, even in the most challenging of situations. Indeed, it is seldom the leaves which look tired at the end of a shows. Our staging materials usually pick up layers of dust and the glassware can look dirty, but a quick dunk of the leaves in clean water and they look as good as when they were cut at the nursery. If only it were so easy to clean everything else during lengthy shows.

There are many ways in which hostas can add to the composition of a floral arrangement and their characteristics make them highly versatile:

- There are so many different colours, textures and shapes to choose from
- The leaves vary from highly glossy through to deliciously matte and there are few perennials that can deliver the intensity of blue hues you can find in hostas
- So many varieties have incredibly strong, and long, petioles
- Many varieties are prolific in their production of leaves

The beautiful arrangement below (and in the side column) was staged by Helen, once again using leaves from *H. 'Gold Standard'*. In this creation Helen has made use of the way in which this cultivar develops its colouring during the season:



The leaves emerge a subtle blend of greens and gradually the leaf centres become brighter providing more contrast. Fresh leaves also develop their colour in the same way, which means that at any one time there is a mix of leaves in different stages of lutescence. The leaves below look like they might have been from two different cultivars rather than just one.

Every time I attend the NAFAS regional event I take varieties with me that are quite striking but also varieties that are prolific leaf producers, many of which are older cultivars.

It is always interesting to hear the attendees talk about the different varieties they have and introduce others to their versatility, if they haven't tried them before.

I know several NAFAS members from my time exhibiting at the Suffolk Show, where the marquee was split into two sections. It always seemed to me the flower arrangers were having a really good time setting up their work – lots of laughter and chat coming from their section, whilst the nursery exhibit staging was usually a quieter, more subdued affair.



Although the Regional NAFAS event is for members only, there is an exciting event open to everyone happening tomorrow;

2nd August event

Dereham Memorial Hall,
Norfolk

Hosta 'Gold Standard'

I remembered featuring this lovely cultivar in an earlier newsletter but surprised myself to discover it was back in [April 2008](#), when I was still unsure how to use the 'H' prefix. I used the creation of these newsletters as a way of getting to grips with the genus but learned so much more along the way. Take a look at that newsletter for more vital statistics about this cultivar.

In that newsletter I listed some sports of *H. 'Gold Standard'* and I realise how that list has grown since then, especially sports from [H. 'Striptease'](#), perhaps the most striking of the offspring with variegations that look like a leaf within a leaf:



The sports from this cultivar often have white flashes between the margin and centre sections but so far none as splendid as those of [H. 'Snake Eyes'](#) (below) - a modern classic?



So much changes in the world of hostas but one thing remains the same – they are terrifically versatile plants with so much personality.

[Enjoy your hostas](#)

[Team Mickfield Hostas](#)

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[Gardening, Plants & Floral Art Day](#)

There are still tickets available for the [Gardeners' Question Time](#) at 11am and Jonathan Moseley's ["Styled for Summer" floral art demonstration](#) at 2pm. Entrance to the remainder of the event is free.

We will be there, alongside other nurseries behind the hall throughout the day, so why not come along.

Nursery still open

We may have finished our Open Weekends for 2025 but the nursery is still open by appointment

[If you wish to visit, please contact us at least a couple of days ahead of the planned date to ensure we can be there.](#)

We are planning to get some more hard landscaping done so will need advance notice of anyone wishing to visit, so please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Given the extreme temperatures the plants have experienced this season we may well need to close in early September rather than continue onto the end of the month. We will, of course, notify you via the website if this is the case.