

# MIAMI VALLEY HOSTA SOCIETY

April 8, 2025,today's morning temp 22 F

Welcome to spring!!

Today's focus:

Clematis Best Practices





Hostas, Clematis and Hardwick Hall go way back, getting started about the same time.

My knowledge base was zero, the Hostas were free and easy compared to Clematis!

# Hosta  history at Hardwick Hall

My first garden is my current garden. The 2 acres,  mostly old native trees and invasive non-native honeysuckle, on steep slopes with one small lawn area installed by the contractor.

I enjoyed the first years of creating cottage garden areas but soon realized the constant work  of perennials ( digging and dividing ) was not rewarding me with any type of a look and feel that was pleasing.

In the mean-.time my Hubbie was busy with big hardscape initiatives that were very successful, plus ridding the property of some of the worst invasive offenders..

oh Yes the tree man …fast forward all these years and well over 80 mature native trees have removed due to death or design.

Conifers purchased for .25 cents from the county were a biggest success and are with me today as impressive elements.

I quickly grew to love Hostas because they were easy care and loved the shadier aspects of Hardwick Hall. For some reason they were a common gift that I treasured.

# Hosta history at Hardwick Hall

As I learned more and realized what a slug was and how they were damaging my Clematis, I also learned about Hosta leaves being slug cradles.



# Hosta  history at Hardwick Hall

I grew Hosta throughout most of the garden areas, loving the easy-care green foliage and even how it looked near climbing Clematis specimens.

At the same time, the on-going  tree removal  (MORE SUN!) had rendered many garden areas better for Clematis…but the Hostas were FRYING by July. BIG issue.

My solution was to begin moving every Hosta to what became known as and still is, as Hosta Hillside.  A shady slope, years before I was ready to " garden " in that area, offered an aspect that allowed me not to deal with fried Hosta.
Another big success.

Dividing them every few years helped fill the space and is a treasured easy-care feature at Hardwick Hall.
Self seeded and allowed to naturalize Ostrich fern helps anchor the space and plays counterpoint to the hundreds of Hosta.

# Hosta history at Hardwick Hall

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zone 6, central Ohio, USA

# Welcome to Hardwick Hall

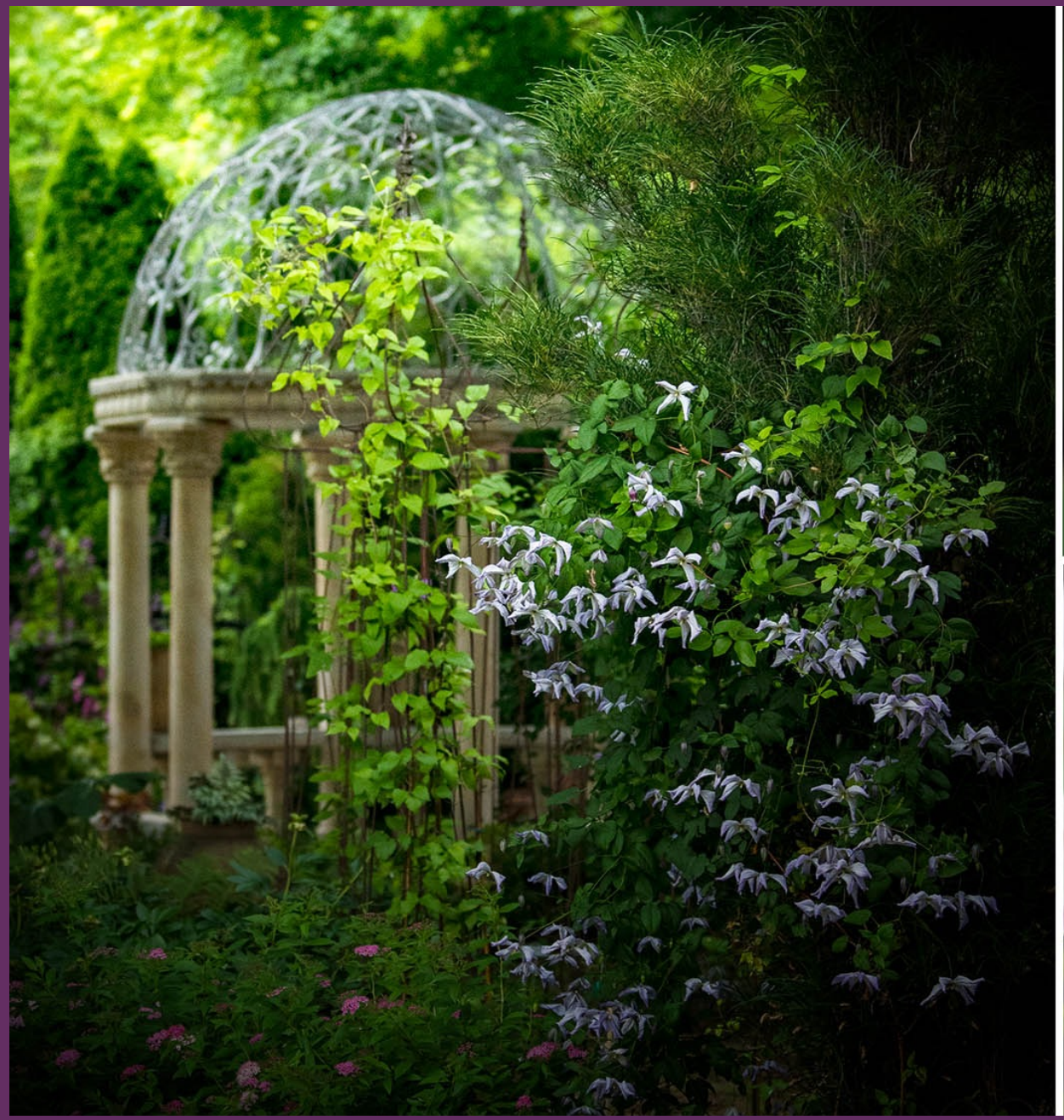
trialing Clematis  from UK, Poland, The Netherlands

a very large Clematis collection

I am a certified CONE HEAD

collecting Hydrangea

collecting Arisaema







Clematis are colorful, fun, festive, large, small, amazing garden citizens…
…expanding space vertically and horizontally. But let’s be honest they can be unreliable in the garden and have a difficult reputation.

Hostas are multi season, easy-care gorgeous counterpoint in a busy landscape… they definitely pay the rent.

Best Practices can improve success rate and simplify your gardening routine!

# what is a ‘ best practice’?

a procedure that has been shown by research and experience to produce optimal results and that is established or proposed as a standard suitable for widespread adoption.

best practices are often thru the litmus of an experienced authority, or an organization’s methods…often not universal in scope or acceptance.

And with plants, can be influenced by latitude, longitude and micro influences.

20 years ago

my first Clematis …planted in heavy clay, in about 6 inches of space between a thick asphalt driveway and the wall of the garage… and it flourished

no wonder I was “all in” right from the start !

I started buying, planting and studying, and the mysteries and myths began to reveal themselves…



# Have I Bitten Off MoreThan I Can Chew?



**Deborah Hardwick,** USA

Winter is always a good time to reflect on where you are going and where you have been. From an impromptu initial interest starting in 2002, and my first disastrous results with about twenty clematis selected at random from descriptions (no photos, though that would not in itself have helped me select better!); somewhere along the garden path… I got hooked. Through trial and error (more error than anything else, I freely admit) I became a collector of *Clematis*.

I remember meeting someone who had eighty clematis, back in my early days, back when I spent more time thumbing through Leeds & Toomey's *Encyclopaedia (An Illustrated Encyclopedia of Clematis*) than actually gardening. And I thought they must be bonkers – speaking of which, I realised soon enough that *I* must be as well – as my early results and attrition of plants was alarmingly non-productive...my planting methods and choice of plants was a perfect storm of struggles and losses. Amazingly, in retrospect, my motivation did not wane. Failures were accepted and the momentum continued as my love of clematis grew in disproportion to my success rate.



WISLEY ('Evipo001')





**by 2011 I was wondering if I had bitten off too much, but I was loving every minute of it!**

**along the journey I was astounded at the myths and that there seemed to be ' no right way', and a lot of confusing information.**



- …let’s get right to what I discovered by luck, trial and error and constant study…

- starting with a few constants we all deal with in the garden…

# Clematis “wilt” is just one thing to problem solve…but it is not one thing…

Clematis can be a host to clematidina or phythophtora (and other pathogens), overhead watering and excess rain create likely conditions… BACTERIAL BOUNCE

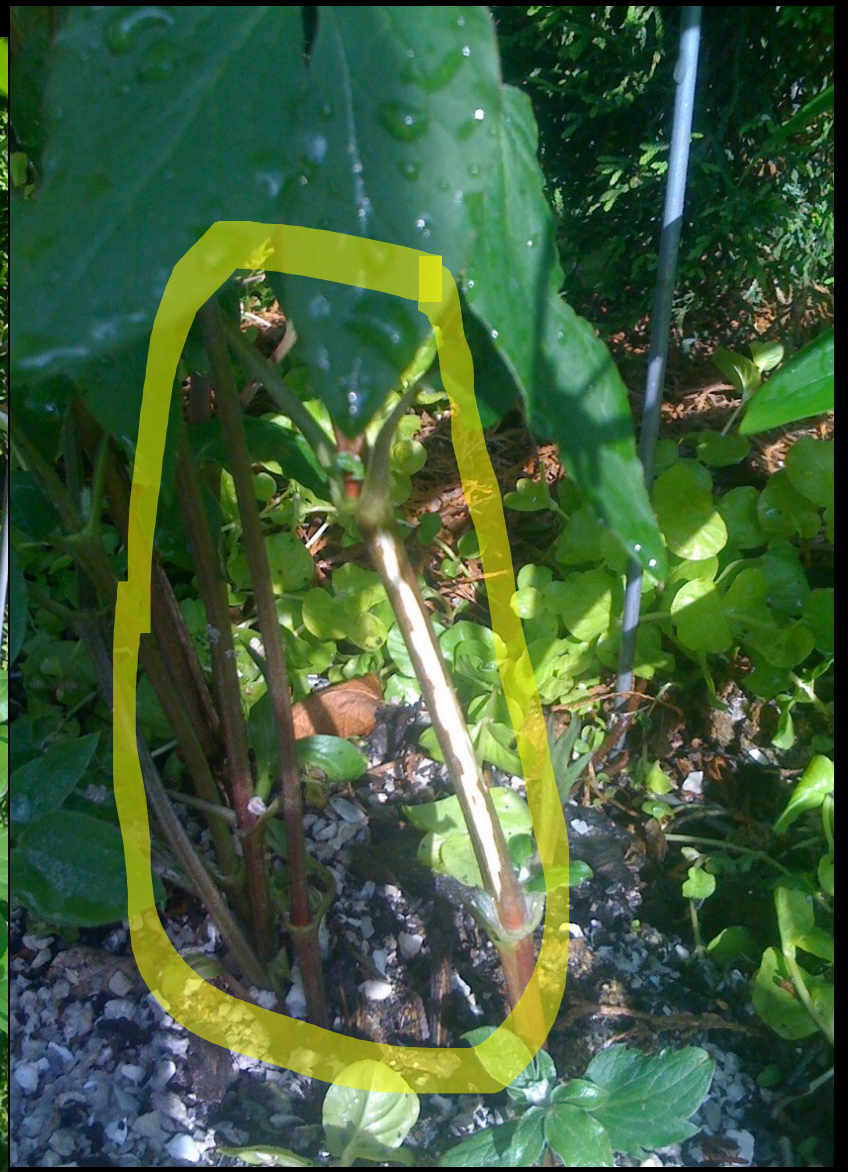
cut thru a stem lengthwise and the node is brown inside…the plant will not die but regrow from the base, or even the lower part of the stem may be growing normally

spores may penetrate the leaves rendering them spotted , but if the plant is growing and flowering, It has blocked the infection

cut thru a dead branch and the inside of the node is green, it is possibly phythophthora and the plant will probably die

I propose that the term wilt be used less generically and only after we have deduced the reason …here are the top 5 reasons that your stems have withered…





collapse of top growth

best practice is to deal with the slugs as your beliefs allow or grow them in different garden areas.

see the slug damage at the bottom of the stem.





wind damage…your stems are wilted because of wind damage

best practice for windy gardens is to grow low, use fences with deer grid for walled garden protection, or let them mound and sprawl

best practice for our area for ‘Sweet Autumn’ is to cut the plant down hard before the seeds ripen, fly and germinate.

this is an invasive non native plant that many states have banned from sales and distribution.



# Paul Farges (syn. Summer Snow) is the best practice non-invasive alternative to ‘Sweet Autumn’ clones, or C. *terniflora*




bigger flower

earlier flower

sterile

will layer

but is not

invasive