Hosta

Hosta sp. ‘Undulata Variegata’

Popular common names for hostas are Plantain Lily and Funkia. Hostas are a mainstay of shade gardens. They are easily grown in evenly moist, organically rich, well-drained soils. They often produce flowers but are grown mainly for the excellence of their foliage. They prefer climates with cold winters and warm summers. In zones 9 and 10 picking the right hosta can be a daunting task. Hostas have a winter dormancy requirement with a minimum number of hours at temperatures below 45 degrees F. The number of chill-hours required is variety dependent. While all hostas will emerge the following spring after a low-chill hour winter, they are usually quite weak and proceed to deteriorate during the subsequent season. The variety ‘Variegata’ may not do well in northwest Florida. The leaves are toxic to dogs, cats and horses. Symptoms include vomiting and diarrhea.

**Type:** perennial

**USDA hardiness zones:** 3 through 8

**Uses:** border; mass planting; container or above-ground planter; naturalizing; accent; shade garden; woodland garden

**Origin:** not native to Florida

**Height:** 1 to 2 feet  
**Spread:** 1 to 2 feet

**Plant spacing:** 24 to 36 inches

**Light requirement:** shade to part shade

**Soil tolerances:** acid to alkaline; clay; sand; loam

**Drought tolerance:** low - soil should never be allowed to dry out

**Soil salt tolerances:** moderate

**Invasive potential:** low

**Pest resistance:** susceptible to chewing pests and diseases

Photo: Missouri Botanical Garden

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