

# Flamborough Horticultural Society

## May 2026 Newsletter



### President's Message

Greetings FHS Members

As we approach our biggest fundraiser — the plant sale, if you have a plant to divide, that is on the sought-after plant list, wash off the roots, bag it and bring it to my house. We need to make sure any plants are over their transplant shock once divided, and that window is closing for the early bird plant sale. However there is still some time to pot up before our Farmers Market opening day sale on May 23rd.

Thank you to those who signed up for the May 9 (rain date Sun. May 24) Waterdown Core Community Revitalization event through the BIA website. Please bring extra tools with your name on them. If I hear that the rain date is the fall back date, I will send everyone an email notice.

Since many volunteers are working in their gardens dividing and potting up plants, there is no May meeting this year. We will reevaluate this for 2027 based on feedback from members. So please have your say. **On Sat. June 20** we will car pool to see the gardens tended by Robert Pavlis. I have seen these gardens several times when Robert lived there and they are well worth a visit. Robert will be there to answer soil, plant, and garden related questions so come prepared with some questions. I will send a link to a sign-up sheet for the car pool for those who can drive to this event.

As I rode my bike these spring days, I saw lawn signs that said dandelions are an important nectar source. Sadly this myth gets perpetuated across Facebook platforms and other social media. Do not be fooled. "Pollen is the honey bees important source of protein, lipids, minerals, and vitamins. These are essential for brood-rearing, worker bee longevity and development. Nectar is a source of carbohydrate that provides energy for bees. However, Dandelion pollen is low in valine, isoleucine, leucine and arginine, essential amino acids for honey bees." See other articles on the topic at this [myth-busting site](#). There are many other important pollen and nectar bearing plants that bloom earlier than dandelions, plus the earlier native flowers provide the necessary essential amino acids. **Spring Beauty** /*Claytonia virginica* is an example with its crucial nectar source for mining bees /*Andrena erigeniae*.

There are lots of other links provided by Liz in this newsletter for you to explore while its too cold to garden. Happy reading!

Best Wishes, Susan MacMillan

## Upcoming Events

### Flamborough Horticultural Society Meeting

Note that there will be no meeting in May.

### Plant Sale

Opening Day of the Waterdown Farmer's Market: Sat., May 23 - 8 am - 1 pm  
And Early Bird Sale – Fri. May 15, 4-8 pm, Sat. May 16, 9 -12:30 pm.  
Location: 2 Flanders Dr. Waterdown

### 2026 OHA Convention

Gardening for Life: 2026 OHA Convention & Annual Meeting



Hosted by Districts 4 and 17

Dates: July 24-26, 2026

Location: Durham College

[Convention Information](#)

### Monarch Awards

Curious about the Monarch Awards in the city of Hamilton? Join on ZOOM, Thursday, May 14th at 7pm to learn how your garden can support biodiversity — and be recognized for it. [Monarch Awards Zoom Meeting](#)

## Waterdown Community Renewal Event

“Spring into action as part of the 'Clean-up' crew, picking up litter and winter debris. Or dig in as part of our Green Thumb crew, preparing the Village garden beds for summer blooms. No gardening experience necessary - just a willingness to play in the 'dirt' and learn from our expert volunteers from our partners at the Flamborough Horticultural Society.”

Date: Sat., May 9 Raindate: Sun., May 24

More details here: [Renewal Event Project](#)

### Reading Corner

Garden Ontario: Latest OHA news, Spring Trillium Magazine, OHA 50/50 draw.

[Garden Ontario](#)

### Halton Region Master Gardeners:

Links to Master Gardener Sites, Horticultural Societies, Resources from Regional Organizations, Special Interest Sites, Gardening Sites, Native Plants and more [Master Gardener Links](#)

### Is it Too Late to Prune Hydrangeas?

The number one reason that most Hydrangeas fail to bloom is incorrect pruning. The time of year you prune makes a big difference. Knowing what type of Hydrangea you have will lessen the chance of removing the flower buds.

Panicle Hydrangeas and smooth Hydrangeas form their buds on the current season's growth so they can be pruned in the **late winter or early spring** before spring growth without sacrificing any future flowers.

However, the other Hydrangea varieties (showy big-leaf types including mopheads and many lace-cap varieties as well as oakleaf varieties) formed their buds in the previous year. You can safely remove dead canes but if you feel the need to prune them further, wait until **after they have bloomed in the summer** and then do not

delay pruning. If you prune in fall, winter, or early spring, that means no flowers this year.

Not sure which Hydrangea you have then peruse this link which also contains a pruning chart.

### [Hydrangea Pruning Guide](#)

## **Native Bees are Pollinating Heroes**



There are approximately 800 species of bees in Canada and roughly 400 in Ontario. Non-native honey bees do some of the pollinating work, but most of it is carried out by native pollinators — including flies, beetles, moths and butterflies. But native bees are the key to pollination.

What to plant to attract native bees — colour matters! Bees can't see red, which is more attractive to hummingbirds and butterflies. Bees are drawn to purple, blue, white, and yellow. Most pollinators prefer native over non-native plants. Natives are also usually lower maintenance plants in our gardens as they are adapted to our region. Perennials offer the highest quality nectar and pollen but there are exceptions. Some bees are specialists, like the squash bee that prefers only squash, pumpkin, and gourd blossoms.

Annuals have the advantage of blossoming all season long. Bees flock to Alyssum, Cleome, Zinnias, Sunflowers, Calendula and Verbena. Herbs, if they flower, will also attract the pollinators to vegetable gardens. Planting some of the above in vegetable gardens is beneficial for plants that require insect pollination.

Read more here about Ontario bees: [Native Bees](#)

## **Plant Dill to Attract/Feed Swallowtail Caterpillars**

Along with being a culinary herb, this plant is a popular host for Swallowtail butterflies. Last summer I planted a clump in my vegetable garden which was devoured by swallowtails. I netted another clump for my own use! This summer I am adding some plants to my perennial beds for the butterflies!

Dill and fennel are also favourites for the swallowtail caterpillars.

## **Trilliums: Spring Woodland Beauties**



One of my favourite spring woodland plants, this flower was adopted as Ontario's official flower in 1937. (The Couchiching Conservancy). There are five native Trilliums found in Ontario: White Trillium, Red Trillium, Painted Trillium, Drooping Trillium (an 'at risk' species due to habitat loss and degradation) and Nodding Trillium. White Trilliums are only found in Southern Ontario.

Because they are sheltered by trees, Trilliums must rely on insects rather than wind for pollination. Bees and wasps are the main pollinators of White Trilliums. Red Trilliums attract flies and beetles because the flower has no nectar and acts as a carrion-like trap. Ants play an important role in dispersing seeds. Read more here: [Trilliums: Flies and Ants](#)

See Creating a Trillium garden article by London Middlesex Master Gardeners [Trillium Gardens](#)

## May Garden Tasks

- Remove faded flower heads of spring bulbs. Let stems die down before removal.
- To prevent soil compaction and damage to plant roots, wait until the soil is dry enough to crumble in your hand before walking and working in your garden.
- Harden off seedlings before planting.
- Plant cold-sensitive vegetable seedlings like tomatoes, eggplant, peppers, zucchini, pumpkins, squash and cucumbers after the last frost and protect them if necessary.
- It's best to wait until the soil temperature is 60° F (20° C).
- Harden off before transplanting. As you plan your vegetable garden, include some flowering herbs and annuals in it to encourage the beneficial insects to visit your garden to help pollinate plants such as cucumbers and zucchini.
- Keep an eye on roses for blackspot and aphids and spray them accordingly. If you must spray, Safers insecticide soap is a better alternative than dish soap.
- Turn compost piles.
- Repair lawn damage with soil and overseeding Edge and mulch garden beds.

## Hummingbird Migration

According to the migration map, the first hummingbirds have arrived in the Lake Erie and the Niagara Regions and are moving north of those areas daily. It's time to put out the feeders! Putting out feeders early is important in attracting birds that will continue to feed in that location all season long.

Include some annuals such as Fuschia, Salvia, Lantana, Nicotiana, Zinnia, Calibrachoa, and Verbena in planters or flower beds. Note that hummingbirds are particularly attracted to red flowers, especially those with a tubular shape.

## Native Flowers For Hummingbirds:

### Early Season Blooms (May to June)

Native (red) Columbine (*Aquilegia canadensis*)  
Hairy Beardtongue (purple) (*Penstemon hirsutus*)

### Mid Season Blooms (June-July/August)

Fireweed (purple) (*Epilobium Angustifolium*)  
Michigan lily (orange/red) (*Lilium michiganense*)

### Late Summer/Fall Blooms (July- Sept/Oct.)

Cardinal Flower (red) (*Lobelia cardinalis*)  
Red Bee Balm (*Monarda Didyma*)  
Cup Plant (yellow) (*Silphium perfoliatum*)  
Joe Pye Weed (pink/purple) (*Eupatorium purpureum*)

Annuals for hummingbirds include scarlet runner beans, fuchsia, lantana, petunias, salvia and Cuphea/firecracker plant.

## Need a Replacement for Boxwood?

Have you lost your boxwood? The closest native alternative is Inkberry Holly (*Ilex glabra*) which closely resembles Boxwood and is also an evergreen with the same rounded habit. It can easily be pruned to keep desired shape and size. An added bonus is that it blooms in the spring with small white flowers and is covered with berries late in the season to provide birds with food.

This shrub thrives in full sun and moist soil, but is adaptable once established. Note that at least **one male plant** is required in order to cross pollinate female plants if berries are desired. One male per 50 feet of beds is usually sufficient.

### [Growing and Caring for Inkberry Holly](#)

Other natives to consider include: Winterberry (*Ilex verticillata*), New Jersey Tea (*Ceanothus americanus*), Common Snowberry (*Symphoricarpos albus*), and Kalm's St. John's Wort (*Hypericum kalmianum*) which is deer and rabbit resistant. Read more information about these shrubs and other alternatives in this Halton Master Gardeners article:

**Spring Butterflies** [Ontario Nature Blog](#)

[Sustainable Solutions for the Boxwood Blues](#)

## Northland Nursery :

Family run nursery in Millgrove Ontario (722 Concession 5 W [Northland](#) Let them know you are an FHS member for our Society year-end rebate for any online orders. (**Opens late April**)

**Wild Birds Unlimited** offers a 10% discount when you mention that you are a Horticultural Society member.

[Wild Birds Unlimited](#)

**How to Reach Us:** Please email your comments, suggestions, corrections or submissions. If you wish to submit an article, questions or tips, contact:

[flamhort@hotmail.com](mailto:flamhort@hotmail.com)

PO Box 902 Waterdown L0R 2H0

## Join Facebook

[Flamborough Horticultural Society Group](#)

[Garden Ontario Group District Six](#)

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## MISSION

*The mission of the Flamborough Horticultural Society is to encourage interest and involvement in horticulture through civic improvement, preservation, exhibitions, the distribution of plant materials and regular instruction pertaining to the theory and practice of horticulture.*

## Directors for 2024/25

President – Susan MacMillan

Past President - Trudy Bliedung

Vice President - Open

Treasurer - Trudy Bliedung

Recording Secretary - Tessa Morris Publicity - Shared by VP and President

Facebook Admin. - Liz Visentin

Newsletter Editor - Liz Visentin

Flower Show - Ann Cochren

Director at large - Christine Rowe

Director at large - Verna Scovell

Director at large - Sharon Hall

Director at large - Harbir Hundal

## Committee Chairpersons

Caring - Susan MacMillan

Nominating Committee - Trudy Bliedung

Civic Improvement – Jan Bignell

Communications Copywriter – Jennifer Godyn

Garden Walk – Open

Meeting Hospitality – Verna Scovell & Mary Blake

Director of Membership – Harbir Hundal OHA

Website Monitor – Phil Longstaff

Plant Sale Co-chairs – Connie Godyn & Sharon Hall

Speakers and Programs – Connie Godyn & Roxanne Riley

Our Society is one of 21 Societies/ Clubs that make up District 6 of the Ontario Horticultural Association (OHA). Each society has a representative in the District (Assistant District Director who represents the District Director), The ADD attends the Society AGM, installs officers and brings news from the OHA and the District. The ADD (or District Secretary) is also the contact between the District and the Society for questions that may arise: [Events Link](#)