

Flamborough Horticultural Society

February 2026 Newsletter



President's Message

Greetings FHS Members

While it has been very cold out lately with most days gray, it doesn't bother any jugs of seeds that we have outside receiving cold moist stratification. Alas I only managed to retrieve six of my 25 L jugs from the garage. The remainder are unavailable because the doors to my potting shed are frozen shut! The great advantage of winter sowing is when the plants burst forth, they require very little hardening off.

In this Newsletter, Liz offers some great tips and has shared details of the February 7th Seedy Saturday. We are still looking for volunteers for the table that we will have. See the link [HERE](#).

We will be giving away seeds, answering gardening questions and promoting membership to our society or a sister society depending on where the visitor lives. One or two hours at the table will be appreciated. See also the detailed list from Liz of the seminars offered on Feb 7.

In the spring, the Waterdown BIA will be looking to FHS volunteers again this year to help rejuvenate the Core gardens. Stay tuned for more details. Your volunteerism will be greatly appreciated.

This is a friendly reminder for membership renewal. Consider e-transferring your \$17 to fhs.treasurer@hotmail.com or you can drop off cash or cheque to my place at 2 Flanders Dr. in Waterdown. This is a great value. You have access to informative newsletters, knowledgeable speakers and a Q & A opportunity at meetings, access to the District 6 Dirt Newsletter and the OHA Trillium Newsletter plus hear speaker presentations at our District functions and share gardening expertise. A link has gone out for the April 25th District 6 AGM hosted by Paris HS, celebrating their 40th anniversary. I hope some of you can attend. It's a great way to meet fellow society members.

See you in March.

Best Wishes

Susan MacMillan

Upcoming Events

Flamborough Horticultural Society Meeting

No meeting in February. We will resume in person on Wednesday, March 18th with Nancy Colibaba speaking about vegetable gardens.

Seedy Saturday



Seedy Saturday is the go-to event for gardeners new and old to swap seeds and share ideas on backyard gardening, composting, supporting pollinators, heirloom and organic seeds, sustainability and biodiversity and more. Free Admission.

[Seedy Saturday](#)

Presented by [Green Venture](#).

Schedule:

Seed Swap - 10am-3pm

A free seed exchange. Donate and/or take seeds home to plant in your garden.

Documentary *In My Backyard* - 10am-3pm (on loop) - Filmmaker Jamie Day Fleck converts

her backyard into a vegetable garden and meets other Torontonians developing innovative solutions that utilize city spaces for hyper-local food production.

Workshops:

10:30-11:30am [Build a Rain-Ready Garden](#)

A casual discussion with successful Rain-Ready Rebate applicants and Green Venture staff about installing a rain garden, permeable paving, or rainwater harvesting system to help make your home stormwater-ready.

11:30am-12:30pm - [Garden Design Demystified](#)

Learn the basics of form and shape including plant pairings, colour theory and residential alternatives to commonly planted native plants.

12:30-1pm - [Habitat at Home](#)

Learn how lighting affects nocturnal wildlife, to make your windows bird-friendly, deal with garden waste and increase biodiversity while minimizing human impacts on your green space.

1-1:30pm - [Work with Weeds](#)

Learn how weeds improve soil ecology, create biomass, feed and attract beneficial insects and can be edible and nutritious.

1:30-2:30pm - [Native Plants Go Mainstream](#)

Learn how to incorporate native plants that support biodiversity indoors and outdoors.



[Purchase Tickets](#)

OHA News and Trillium Newsletter

The Winter 2025/26 Trillium is now online.
Link to latest newsletter and past editions.

[Winter Trillium](#)

February Gardening to do List:

Last full month of winter!

- Did you store tubers of gladiolas, dahlias or begonias? Time to give them a little misting.
- Put your gardening plans on paper. Remember to rotate crops in your vegetable garden to avoid issues with diseases
- If you see some early buds on your forsythias or pussy willows, place them into a vase.
- Start propagating stem cuttings of geraniums, coleus and fuschia by the end of the month.
- Plant slow germinating seeds inside, like impatiens, peppers, eggplants, begonias and geraniums and seeds for early spring blooms such as pansy, verbena, alyssum and dianthus.
- Mound snow over tender roses and other tender perennials plants to offer extra protection from freeze/thaw cycles. Ever since I have been doing this to my lavender plants, I have not lost any over winter.
- This is a good time to repot houseplants before they begin their spring burst of new growth! If new growth is appearing on plants, fertilize them very lightly.

Viability of Old seeds

If I have a question about the viability of some seeds—such as those beans that someone gave me back in 2012—I will test a few. This is as easy as placing ten seeds on a damp paper towel, folding it up, and placing it in a plastic bag. Put the bag in a warm spot and check after a week or so to see if any of the seeds have sprouted. The water float/sink test is unreliable.

Here is a detailed analysis of when and why it mostly does not work. [See Robert Pavlis](#)

More Info: [How Long Do Seeds Last](#)

Members Garden Walk

With the extended cold snap and snow in the second half of January it's all the more pleasurable to view some colourful photos of last summer's gardens. Once again this month we will revisit one of our West Flamborough country gardens:





Seed Starting Guide/Calendar for Ontario

In February: start your first seeds indoors for broccoli, onions, cauliflower, celery, eggplant, head lettuce, onions, cabbage and cabbage family plants, parsley and other hardy herbs. Most perennial flowers should be started inside by the end of the month as well. You can also start annual flowers and herbs that have a long germination period like rosemary, snapdragons, and begonias. For more information: [Ontario Seed Starting Calendar](#)

Horticultural Terms

“Adaptable as a Houseplant”

This means the plant can be grown indoors at least through the winter, but likely all year. Common annuals that are adaptable include: Coleus, Impatiens, Geraniums, Bougainvillea and Lantana. Read more about how To grow indoor annual plants:

Best Annual Flowers To Grow Indoors:

<https://www.gardeningknowhow.com/ornamental/flowers/fgen/indoor-annuals.htm>

Ontario Invasive Plant Council



Grow Me Instead has big plans for 2026 and it starts with you!

Help them to better understand current trends across Ontario's native plant market. Your feedback will help support native plant availability in your region.

Fill out their short survey [Ontario Survey](#)

January Winter Gardens

The theme of the January monthly meeting “Flower Show” was a photo of a winter scene in the garden. Thank you to those who submitted a photograph. Our winners this month were:

First Place: Carol Nasvytis



Winter Gardens

Second Place: Marianne Kampf



While our winter garden appears dormant with no sign of “life” as we experience in the summer when bees, butterflies and a myriad of other insects are visible, it’s actually hosting an important ‘survival season’ both below and above the ground.

Here is What Lies Beneath the Soil

- Beetles, moths, butterflies, and native bees overwinter in the top few inches of soil.
- Roots conserve energy and begin slow underground growth.
- Earthworms move deeper but stay active in warm pockets.

Under the Leaves

- Ladybugs, fireflies, lacewings, and spiders shelter inside leaf layers.
- Leaf mold becomes a winter blanket that keeps soil life alive.
- Many moth and butterfly cocoons cling to the underside of leaves.

In Logs and Brush Piles

- Wrens, rabbits, chipmunks, and small mammals shelter from wind.
- Predatory insects control pests by overwintering in wood crevices.
- Fungi continue recycling nutrients even in freezing temperatures.

In Evergreens

- Birds hide inside dense foliage for warmth and safety.
- Juniper, holly, and pine offer berries, shelter, and windblock.
- Evergreens are living hotels in winter storms.

Under the Snow

- Snow acts as insulation, keeping the soil warmer than the air.
- Voles, mice, and insects move through tiny snow tunnels.
- Many plant crowns survive because snow protects them from wind burn.

Master Gardener Helen Battersby was our January speaker. Follow Helen here: [Helen Battersby](#)

Third Place: Trudy Bleidung



Winter Sowing

Winter sowing is a method to germinate seeds outdoors in mini greenhouses made from recycled containers and bottles. It’s a controlled way to imitate nature when seeds drop in autumn, spend winter outdoors, and germinate naturally in the spring. The technical term for this process is [“cold moist stratification.”](#) With winter sowing, there’s no need for extra space, growlights, trays, shelving, bottom heat, and space that comes with starting seeds indoors. All you need is easy and regular access to an outdoor space.

Read more here: [winter sowing](#)

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, weather depending)**

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

PO Box 902 Waterdown L0R 2H0

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[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 Co-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
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Director at large - Verna Scovell
Director at large - Sharon Hall
Director at large - Harbir Hundal

Committee Chairpersons

Caring - Susan MacMillan
Nominating Committee - Trudy Bliedung
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Garden Walk – Open
Meeting Hospitality – OPEN
Director of Membership – Harbir Hundal
OHA Website Monitor – Phil Longstaff
Spring Plant Sale Co-chairs – Connie Godyn and 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](#)