

# Flamborough Horticultural Society

## *November 2025 Newsletter*



### **President's Message**

Greetings FHS Members

I hope everyone had a great October. We are blessed with the beautiful Fall colours although the trees could still use more rain. As the masses of leaves drop, there is always the question of what to do with all of the leaves. Benefits of leaving them in garden beds include as mulch, they add nutrients when decomposed, provide food for insects, butterfly and moth chrysalises overwinter in leaves as do wood frogs plus insects and larva in leaves are food for overwintering birds to eat. Leaves also protect tender shallow root systems. Leaves on lawns can be chop-mowed and used as well. Too many leaves? It's OK to bag some, find a back corner or use a compost area to let them decompose into nutrient rich compost for garden beds. I have a corner where I let the excess decompose and last year's leaves are now ready to add to the garden beds. For additional information [see here](#) and [here](#).

Our new Membership Committee chairperson Harbir Hundal will be available to assist you at the meeting for renewal. We are also looking for a volunteer to help Harbir at this busy time of year. Please reach out to me to let me know if you can help.

Consider asking a friend to attend a meeting or join as a member. Members benefit through access to informative newsletters, workshop discounts, knowledgeable speakers, a Q & A opportunity at meetings, the OHA Trillium Newsletter, OHA conferences, access to the District 6 Dirt Newsletter plus hear speaker presentations at our District functions and share gardening expertise. You can e-transfer your \$17 to [fhs.treasurer@hotmail.com](mailto:fhs.treasurer@hotmail.com) or you can drop off cash or cheque to my place at 2 Flanders Dr. in Waterdown.

Our AGM and Awards night is approaching and we hope to add some fun activities at the meeting.

We are looking for volunteers to help on committees. Contact me for more information about a specific committee.

Please send in your volunteer hours to me so that I can get our annual report to the OHA and the Ministry (OMAFRA) in a timely manner.

Thank you and Best Wishes,

Susan MacMillan

## Upcoming Events

### Flamborough Horticultural Society Meeting

#### AGM and Awards

**Date:** Wed., Nov. 15

**Time:** 7:30pm

**Flower Show:** No flower show

Charcuterie, a Celebratory cake and refreshments will be available to members along with some fun games.

### October Flower Show

October's theme was to decorate a pumpkin using natural materials.

Congratulations to the winners:

First place - Trudy Bliedung (missing photo)

Second Place - Sabine Atkins

Third Place- Mary Blake.



## Reading Corner

### OHA News and Trillium Newsletter



### [Garden Ontario](#)

#### Why Our Plant Choices Matter, with Doug Tallamy.

Doug encourages gardeners to think of plants as integral parts of the ecosystem and foundational to the food chain. He studies the relationships between plants and insects, and between insects and the birds and other animals that rely on them.

Read more here:

[Plant Choices Make a Difference](#)

### Horticulture Books

#### A Tree Called Home: Tree Stories from the Golden Horseshoe - by Paul O'Hara

Local author Paul O'Hara is a field botanist, landscape designer, and native plant gardening expert. This is a captivating and hard to put down book once you start reading! It contains a mix of botany, history, and memoir, featuring the landscapes of Southern Ontario and the magnificent trees of the Golden Horseshoe.

Reading this book is like going for a walk through space and time with Paul as he recollects his explorations of local forests and connects those experiences with his studies. If you are passionate about trees this is a must read!

## District Six Fall Lunch

The District Six fall meeting and lunch was recently hosted in Waterdown on Saturday, October 4 by our own society and Garden Hamilton. Attendance was close to 100 members with Sean James giving an informative talk on creating a native garden for biodiversity.

Flamborough's hard working kitchen crew:



A full room- guests enjoying some socializing !



## November Garden Tasks

This is the month that we finally slow down in our outdoor gardens. But this does not mean that there is no work to be done!

As I complete this newsletter late in October, quite a few of my annuals are still in full bloom and a few tomato plants are still providing ripe fruit!

- Empty, clean and store planters where they will be dry for the winter.
- If you are using a rain barrel, it should be emptied and turned over to keep it dry

during the winter months. Reconnect your downspout to direct the snow melt and winter rain away from your foundation.

- Crops like brussels sprouts, cabbage, broccoli, collards and kale are made sweeter by frost so don't pull them out yet. Harvest them as long as possible.
- Make sure that evergreens are well watered.
- Spread manure, rotted sawdust, rotted straw, and shredded leaves over the garden. You'll be surprised at the difference this organic matter will make in the fertility, physical structure and water-holding capacity of the soil.
- Continue to check houseplants for insects that may have come indoors as you brought the plants inside and treat them immediately, even if you hosed them down
- Apply a layer of protective mulch. This is where fallen leaves come in handy!
- Clean, sharpen and oil tools like shovels and hoes before putting them away for winter.

## Last Chance to Plant Bulbs!

It's not too late to plant tulips! They can be planted until the ground freezes. Plant at least 8 inches deep to deter squirrels. Tamp down!

## Perennial Seeds to Plant in Fall

These can be still planted before the soil freezes. The added bonus is that this will free up indoor space for other seedlings! Some of these also do not like to be transplanted so starting in the garden bed avoids issues.

- **Black-eyed Susan** *Rudbeckia fulgida*
- **Delphinium** *Delphinium elatum*
- **Lupine** *Lupinus* spp. and hybrids
- **Oriental poppy** *Papaver orientale*
- **Penstemon** *Penstemon* spp. and hybrids
- **Perennial geranium** *Geranium* spp. and hybrids
- **Perennial sunflower** *Helianthus* spp. and hybrids

- **Pincushion flower** *Scabiosa* spp. and hybrids
- **Purple Coneflower** *Echinacea purpurea*
- **Wild columbine** *Aquilegia canadensis*

Read more here:

[Native Perennials to Direct Seed in Fall](#)

## Did You Know?

Over 90% of backyard birds rely on butterfly and moth caterpillars to feed their young? Many butterflies and moths overwinter among fallen leaves. While it may not be practical to leave all leaves on the ground, do attempt to leave some either by making small piles along the edge of lawns and most certainly cover beds and gardens with leaves. This will also provide winter protection for plants as well as building the soil when the leaves decompose next spring. There is no need to rake leaves off beds in the spring!

## Are You Saving Your Tender Bulbs?

Plants with tender bulbs will require a period of winter dormancy. Expensive bulbs are worth the effort of overwintering. Some of these include:

- **Caladiums**
- **Calla lilies**
- **Cannas**
- **Dahlias**
- **Elephant ears**
- **Gladiolus**

For tender bulbs in pots, stop watering and allow foliage to die back. Store pots in a cool, dry location. For bulbs in the ground, dig them up and cut the foliage back. Brush off as much soil as possible and allow them to dry for about 4-7 days.

Pack them loosely in a cardboard box or open container, separated by shredded newspaper or dry peat moss. Keep in a cold, dark place. Pot them up in the spring about a month before they are to be planted outdoors.

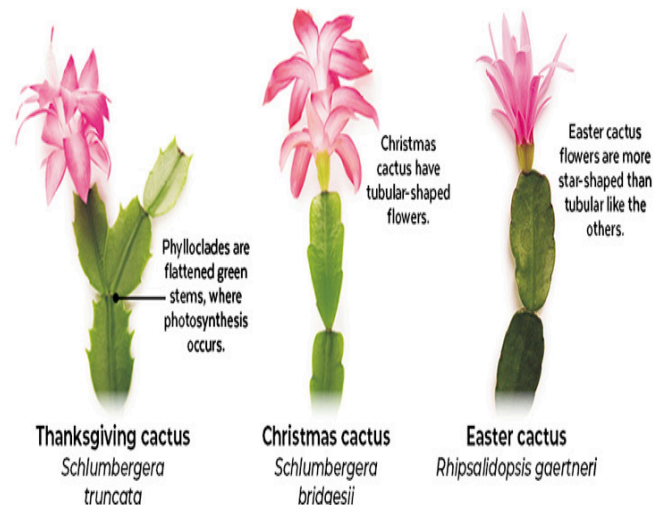
[See video on Storing Dahlias or here](#)

## Christmas Cactus

Despite its name, the Christmas Cactus is not a cactus. While it is a succulent and does store moisture in its leaves, members of the Schlumbergera family are not considered a true cactus. This means that they aren't as drought tolerant as a true cactus, so they need to be watered more often, and they can't take the heat of the direct sun. Christmas cactuses are tropical plants rather than desert-dwelling plants.

Many use the term, "Christmas Cactus" for their house plant which may actually be a Thanksgiving Cactus. This explains why it always blooms BEFORE Christmas! You can tell the Thanksgiving cactus apart from the Christmas cactus by the shape of its leaves.

## IDENTIFYING HOLIDAY CACTI



## Christmas Cactus Bloom Tips

For about six weeks prior to blooming, the holiday cactus requires between 12-14 hours of dark to set buds. That means cool temperatures around 50-65 degrees, and no light (not even artificial). You may consider covering it or moving it to a room where it won't be exposed to nighttime lights. Feed your holiday cactus monthly with a diluted water-soluble fertilizer during the spring and summer months.

## How to Prune Your Thanksgiving/Christmas Cactus



It's a good idea to trim off extra growth each year to maintain a shape or to keep a plant from becoming too "leggy". Trim off longer segments or pinch the first segment if you don't need to shorten a stem, but want a bushier plant with more blooms.

All schlumbergera should be pruned within a month after they have finished blooming. They go into a period of growth shortly after they have flowered, so you want to make cuts before they start putting out new growth. The plant will redirect energy into producing new segments where it has been trimmed. If you miss this one month window, you can still trim the plant, but it may affect new growth and possibly blooms for that year. For young tender growth, grasp both segments close to the joint where they meet, then gently twist until they separate. If you're taking off some length near older and thicker stems, you'll need to use a clean and sterilized knife or scissors.

## No Room to Bring in Geraniums? Take Cuttings!



You want to end up with a stem that is approximately 4 to 6 inches long with two healthy leaves up top. Choose a new stem that

is green (not old and woody). Cut just below a leaf node. Remove any flower stems, flowers, or buds and all leaves from the bottom 2 or 3 inches.

Dip the base in rooting hormone (optional). Make a hole in the potting mix and insert the stem gently so as to leave the rooting hormone on the stem. Bury the stem deep enough that any bare leaf nodes (where you removed leaves) are submerged. Multiple cuttings can be placed into one pot, saving space! Moisten the potting mix and then cover with a clear plastic bag or dome. Loosen if too much condensation or mold appears.

Keep in a warm location near a bright window, but not in full sun until roots have formed. Keep the potting mix evenly moist, but not soaking wet. Roots will form within four to eight weeks. Remove plastic cover and place the plant in a sunny location. and away from drafts.

## Time to Plant Your Amaryllis!

Amaryllis bulbs usually take six to eight weeks to bloom after planting. I time mine so that I get blooms later in January rather than during Christmas as I already have poinsettias during that time.

## Plant this Native Tree for Winter

**Interest: Showy Mountain Ash**



(*Sorbus decora*)

This is an ideal small tree with four season interest. In the spring it has clumps of white flowers. Late summer, bright red berries appear. Fall brings a yellow hue to the leaves. After the leaves drop the orange berries persist, providing a burst of colour against the snow. It also provides winter food for birds such as robins and blue jays, as well as squirrels who eat the berries.

## 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. **(Closes Oct. 31, 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](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 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

Director at large - Christine Rowe Director at large - Verna Scovell

### Committee Chairpersons

Caring - Susan MacMillan

Nominating Committee - Trudy Bliedung

Civic Improvement – Jan Bignell

Communications Copywriter – Jennifer Godyn

Garden Walk – Open

Meeting Hospitality – Ann Williams

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

*We want it to stay, but  
Autumn always leaves.  
Beautifully.*

*Terri Guillemets*