

# Flamborough Horticultural Society

## *December 2025 Newsletter*



### **President's Message**

Greetings FHS Members

Well, winter is here! I had hoped for a couple of more nights of near zero to bury a few more potted plants for the plant sale but it was not to be.

I want to thank those of you who were able to attend the AGM to help us reach a quorum. Thankyou also to those who also sent in regrets. A few lucky ones were away on vacation. I will attach the AGM minutes even though in Draft form so that members can see our discussion. They will not be approved until next year's AGM.

I am deeply grateful for your generous gift certificate for Soul Metal. I will have a lot of fun choosing something wonderful from a creation by member Carol Nasvytis. The traffic has gotten busier on my street and Carol has lots of options.

Welcome new members Shirley Vaughn and Rachel Dailey! We are a pretty casual group of enthusiastic gardeners that I hope you will get to know soon. Let us know if you would like to be mentored with one of our more experienced members.

Feel free to reach out via email at [flamhort@hotmail.com](mailto:flamhort@hotmail.com) if you have a question or want to volunteer for a role. There are several openings to think about before spring and we always welcome help at our civic gardens.

This is a friendly reminder for membership renewal. Consider e-transferring 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. This fee is a great value. You have access to informative newsletters, knowledgeable speakers, a Q & A opportunity at meetings, workshops at reduced rates, access to the District 6 Dirt Newsletter and the OHA Trillium Newsletter. Plus hear speaker presentations at our District functions and share gardening expertise.

In this Newsletter, Liz has shared details of our AGM, winter worthy topics like forcing bulbs, a December to do list, information about poinsettias, bird baths and several links to further reading.

Best Wishes

Susan MacMillan

## Upcoming Events

### Flamborough Horticultural Society

No meeting on December

Flower Show: No flower show

### Reading Corner

OHA News and Trillium Newsletter



### [Garden Ontario](#)

### The Trellis

The Toronto Botanical Garden's award winning magazine, "Trellis" is available online. Filled with stunning photography and informative articles, it will provide a great pastime to replace the hours we used to spend in our gardens!

### [Trellis](#)

### Ontario Invasive Plant

**Council** Read the latest updates:

### [OIPC](#)

## Member Volunteer Activity

Erika Friesen and Trudy Bliedung enjoyed themselves at the October Mum Show, representing the OHA District's booth during one of the 10 days of the annual and very popular themed flower show. In past years I have also enjoyed manning this booth to share information especially with some of the young, beginner's gardeners!



## November AGM

The AGM was held at the November 19 monthly meeting. Directors were installed and awards were presented. Congratulations to all the recipients.

### OHA Horticultural Award - Gene Ditner



## President's Award - Ann Williams



## Appreciation Award from Members to our President - Susan MacMillan, presented by Trudy Bliedung



## Installed Officers



Left to right: President, Susan MacMillan, Treasurer, Trudy Bliedung, Directors: Harbir Handal, Sharon Hall, Christine Rowe, Connie Godyn (Committee chair), Anne Cochren  
Missing from Photo: Secretary, Tessa Morris, Directors Liz Visentin, Verna Scovell and Jan Bignell (Committee Chair)

## Social Time

Connie Godyn organized a 21 question interactive quiz that was done in teams. Each table shared their expertise and tallied up their points. Everyone had fun and it was very engaging. It was a good learning experience for all since not all the questions were easy. Connie also provided a fabulous charcuterie board with a selection of meat, cheese, and fruit. Thank you Connie! Thank you also to Erika who made a delicious Black Forest cake.

## December Garden Tasks

Gardeners NEVER stop gardening!

- Finish applying mulch to gardens
- Erect shelters over shrubs requiring protection from wind and ice and heavy snowfall
- Continue to water newly planted trees and shrubs
- It's not too late to plant shrubs and trees if the ground has not yet frozen.
- If cold stratifying seeds, remember to place them in the refrigerator, freezer or outside in containers of soil according to seed germination directions.
- Wrap the lower trunks of young trees to prevent animals like mice and voles from eating the bark.

## Snow in the Garden

While it's known that snow insulates and protects plants, there are many other benefits! In recent winters there has not been long periods of deep snow cover in our area, reducing some of the following benefits.

1. Snow as a Water Reserve: In spring thaw snow acts as water reserve slowly releasing moisture into the ground which is particularly beneficial to shrubs and trees as they emerge from dormancy.
2. Source of Nitrogen: Snow captures nitrogen from the atmosphere during its formation.

As the snow melts, this nitrogen is slowly released into the soil, providing a natural fertilizer that boosts early spring growth.

3. **Soil Aeration Benefits:** The freeze-thaw cycles that occur under a snowpack can naturally aerate the soil by causing it to expand and contract. This process improves soil structure and allows roots to grow more effectively in the spring.
4. **Temperature Stabilization:** If snow cover is consistent and deep enough it allows the underlying soil to respond to temperature fluctuations protecting roots systems from the freeze thaw cycles.
5. **The Pukak Layer:** This is the loose, porous layer of snow that forms at the base of the snowpack, right where it meets the ground. This layer creates a unique microhabitat that offers warmth, shelter, and protection for small animals like mice, voles, and shrews during the winter.
6. **Salt Damage Prevention:** A thick snow layer can temporarily shield garden soil from absorbing harmful road salts until spring runoff dilutes the contamination.
7. **Snow and Soil Microbes:** Under a snow cover, the soil's microbial life can remain active even in winter. These microbes continue breaking down organic material, enriching the soil and preparing it for spring planting.
8. **Chemical Cleaning:** Snowflakes can trap and remove pollutants like sulphur dioxide and nitrogen oxides from the atmosphere. When the snow melts, these compounds are deposited into the soil in small amounts, often with negligible harm and potential benefit for soil nutrients.

## Choosing a Poinsettia

No more pollen, no more colorful bracts! The plant loses its bracts and leaves soon after the tiny little flowers in the middle shed their pollen.

For the longest-lasting Poinsettias, pick ones that are not showing signs of pollen in the tiny flowers. Those held in sleeves will deteriorate quickly as it results in poor drainage if overwatered. Use a drainage pan under the pot to catch watering run off.

## Forcing Bulbs

In order to have bulbs bloom indoors during the winter all bulbs except for amaryllis and paperwhites need to be kept chilled from 6 to 15 weeks prior to potting up indoors.

Read more here:

### [Beginner's Guide to Forcing Bulbs](#)

- Choose a pot that is at least twice as tall, and as wide, as your bulb. Fill the pot with light potting soil and plant the bulb, pointed side facing up, just below the surface.
- If you are planting tulips, the flat side of the bulb should be placed next to the rim of the pot since the largest leaf will always emerge and grow on that side, producing a more desirable looking pot. I never knew this!!!
- If you are planting multiple bulbs in one pot (which will give you a beautiful, full display) make sure to plant the bulbs close together, but never touching one another.
- Most bulb types are going to need a chilling period before they will flower with the length of time varying by type of bulb. If in doubt, a basic rule to remember is to leave your bulbs in their cooling spot until they are showing signs of growth, such as roots coming out of the drainage holes in the bottom of the pot or a fresh stem sprouting about two inches out of the top of the bulb.

## Benefits of a Heated Bird Bath

A heated bird bath provides a reliable source of water for birds during the cold winter months. Having access to this water source not only keeps them hydrated, but also keeps their feathers in good condition for insulation against the cold.

Bird baths also attract birds to your yard sometimes as much as the feeders!

## 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](#)

We respect your right to not receive this newsletter. In the subject line, please type "unsubscribe me from the newsletter" if you wish to be removed from the mailing list.

[remove me](#)

## 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

Director of Membership - Harbir Hundal

Flower Show - Ann Cochren

Director at large - Christine Rowe

Director at large - Verna Scovell

Director at large - Sharon Hall

## Committee Chairpersons

Caring - Susan MacMillan

Nominating Committee - Trudy Bliedung

Civic Improvement – Jan Bignell

Communications Copywriter – Jennifer Godyn

Garden Walk – Open

Meeting Hospitality – Open

OHA Website Monitor – Phil

Longstaff

Spring Plant Sale Co-chairs –

Connie Godyn and Sharon Hall

Speakers and Programs – Connie Godyn & Roxanne Riley

*The garden in winter is the absolute true test of the gardener.*

*- Rosemary Verey*

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. See <https://gardenontario.org/events/>