

# Flamborough Horticultural Society

## May 2025 Newsletter



### President's Message

Greetings FHS Members

Welcome new and returning members. We met Heather Troup at the April meeting and potting up. And Donna Fraser returns as a new "returning" member.

There are lots of links in this Newsletter for you to explore. Thank you Editor Liz Visentin.

As I write this, I am watching the birds drinking at our pond despite the lovely 3/4" of much needed rain we received today.

I managed to get protective covers on the few emerging Jacob's Ladder/Polemonium reptans that didn't get totally eaten by the bunnies. Jacob's ladder is larval host for the *Coleophora polemoniella* and *Scrobipalpula polemoniella* moths (important food sources for birds and their young). I have never had the caterpillars entirely strip the leaves as the wrens are too busy feeding their young with these and the Painted Lady caterpillars on the Pearly Everlasting/*Anaphalis margaritacea* that will emerge later in May.

Besides *Aquilegia canadensis* /Columbine which is a larval host to the Columbine Duskywing skipper, Jacob's Ladder is also an early shade tolerant spring bloomer with lovely blue bell-like flowers and delicate leaves. It's an important source of nectar for many early emerging bees. A mining bee (*Andrena polemonii*) is a Polemonium specialist, only visiting the flowers of Jacob's Ladder.

Despite having protective sleeves on a young serviceberry tree, a four year old Carolinian spice tree, a Saskatoon berry shrub and my largest New Jersey tea, those rascals managed to nudge the coiled sleeves aside to chew the young bark. All animals need to eat but these come from the Bruce Trail to forage indiscriminately. But enough of my grumbling!

Our biggest fundraiser, the plant sale is fast approaching. It's not too late to drop off bare roots to 2 Flanders Dr. The list was previously sent to members but I will attach it again with this newsletter. Thankyou to all of you who volunteered to help with the potting up, the upcoming plant sale and for this Saturday's (May 3rd ) Waterdown clean up and garden weeding. See you there!!

Thankyou to Trudy Bliedung and Jan Bignell for organizing the spring cleanup and garden assessment at the Carlisle Library, to Liz Henderson for overseeing the Freelton Library garden and Rosanne Waugh for overseeing the John St garden. If I missed anyone please let me know.

Best Wishes

Susan MacMillan

## Upcoming Events

### May Horticultural Society Meeting

**Date:** Wed. May 21

**Time:** 7:00pm

**Location:** St Thomas the Apostle Church: 715 Centre Rd, Waterdown

**Speaker:** Kevin Kavanagh

**Topic:** Plants in Jeopardy

**Flower Show:** An arrangement in a vase using spring blooms- be creative!



### Plant Sale Dates

EARLY BIRD at Susan MacMillan's  
(2 Flanders Dr, Waterdown) (Cash and e transfer)

**Fri., May 16 6 - 8 pm**

**Sat, May 17 8:30am - 1pm**

**Sat. May 25 8am - 1 pm**

Opening day of the Waterdown Farmers Market  
In the Legion Parking lot (cash and e transfer)  
70 Main St. N, Waterdown

### New Plant Sale Facebook Page

Click here to join [FHS Plant Sale](#)



[Purchase tickets here](#)

### 2025 OHA AGM



The 2025 OHA Annual General Meeting will be held on Saturday, July 19, 2025. It will be a virtual meeting, using WebEx (similar to Zoom, so you can participate using a computer, tablet, or smartphone). Registration is now open. Deadline is July 2nd.

[Registration link](#)

## Spring Flower Arrangement Workshop



Thank you to Gene Ditner for leading the workshop and to Connie Godyn for organizing and assisting. The arrangements all turned out looking very lovely. A raffle was held instead of our usual 50/50 draw with two lucky guests winning floral arrangements.

## Reading Corner:

### Carolinian Zone Plant Guide

Comprehensive list of native:

- 1) Flowering Plants
- 2) Shrubs
- 3) Trees
- 4) Ferns
- 5) Grasses
- 6) Vines
- 7) Water Plants

### [Plant Guide](#)

### Garden Ontario Spring Trillium Newsletter:

This edition contains lots of great information and tips for the 2025 gardening season.

### [Trillium Spring 2025](#)

## 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, pumpkins, zucchini and squash and cucumbers after the last frost and protect them if necessary. It's best to wait until the soil temperature is 60 degrees. 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.
- Turn compost piles.
- Repair lawn damage with soil and overseeding.
- Edge and mulch garden beds.

## Native Spring Flowering Perennials

Consider adding these native spring perennials to complement spring bulbs in the garden.

- Trillium. Trillium species
- Jack-in-the-pulpit. *Arisaema triphyllum*.
- Mayapple. *Podophyllum peltatum*. ...
- Hepatica. *Anemone americana* and *Anemone acutiloba*. ...
- Bloodroot. *Sanguinaria canadensis*. ...
- Trout lily. *Erythronium americanum*. ...
- Columbine. *Aquilegia canadensis*.  
[Ontario Spring Native Blooms](#)

## Hummingbird Migration

According to the migration map they are approaching Lake Erie and the Niagara Region and should arrive early in May. Time to put out the feeders! 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*)  
Scarlet Bee Balm (*Monarda didyma*)  
Cup Plant (yellow) (*Silphium perfoliatum*)  
Joe Pye Weed (pink/purple) (*Eupatorium purpureum*)

## Did You Know?

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. Trillium seeds are primarily dispersed by ants.

The Trillium is a fragile perennial. It blooms for a few weeks before the trees grow leaves as it requires sunlight in order to collect adequate nutrients. Contrary to popular belief, it is not illegal to pick blooms but it is not advisable as the plant will take years to recover or it may die.

[Trilliums](#)

## Should Potting Mix be Replaced Annually?

The answer is probably "NO"!

Begin by checking the condition of last year's mix looking for compaction, moisture retention, drainage, and the presence of mineral salts. Over time, the potting soil decomposes, compacts, and loses its structure. Nutrients are depleted or washed away.

Use a small hand trowel and insert it into the soil. If the trowel resists, it's a sign that the soil has become compacted. In this case, you'll need to dig it over thoroughly, add compost or some new soil, and remove 10 to 30% of the old soil if necessary to lighten it. Work in compost and slow release fertilizer. The soil that has been removed can be composted or spread in garden beds.

Water normally and observe. If water remains on the surface for a long time or takes a long time to drain through the pot, drainage is insufficient. Following the steps above should alleviate this issue.

There may be a whitish or gray crust on the surface of the soil, which indicates an accumulation of mineral salts. Scrape and remove the top layer (about 2 to 3 cm or 1"), then rinse thoroughly with water to remove any remaining residue. This also holds true for potted houseplants. Scrape away the whitish layer. If you grow perennials or shrubs in pots if necessary, remove about 5 to 10 cm (2 to 4 inches) of soil from the surface (without disturbing the deep roots), replace it with a mixture of compost and new potting soil, and add a slow-release organic fertilizer. Repot with new soil every 3 to 5 years. Add slow release fertilizer and mulch.

## Create a Moon Garden for Moths

A Moon Meadow is a garden or even a pot which contains plants that benefit our night-time pollinators like moths - along with the moon.

Moths are an important part of our ecosystem as they are nighttime pollinators as well as being part of the food web. Note that they require darkness to thrive. Artificial nighttime lights draw them away from food sources and make them more vulnerable to predation as well as exhausting them, making breeding more difficult. Moth larvae can also be drawn to light away from their food sources. Use timers for lights and warm coloured or yellow bulbs which are less likely to attract moths if you must have outdoor lighting. I no longer put solar lights in my garden beds.

Add moth-pollinated plants whose blooms stay open and become fragrant late in the day and into the night. These flowers are usually pale coloured or white and ideally trumpet shaped that bloom in late afternoon to evening. One such native flower is the Common Evening Primrose (*Oenothera biennis*), a drought tolerant biennial that will self seed, with fragment lemon scented yellow flowers that are also edible. I grew some from seed last year and am looking forward to their blooms this season! If you are looking for annuals to attract moths, Four O'Clocks are an ideal choice as they bloom late in the day and are easy to grow from seed. Some other common native host plants to add to your garden include: Big Bluestem grass (*Andropogon gerardii*), Black-eyed Susan (*Rudbeckia hirta*), Joe Pye Weed (*now Eutrochium sp.*), Lance-leaved Coreopsis (*Coreopsis lanceolata*), and Showy Tick-trefoil (*Desmodium canadense*). Read more about these plants [Host Plants for Moths](#)

[Ontario Butterflies and Moths](#)

## Need a Replacement for Boxwood?



Source: iNaturalist attribution to Ryan Watson

As I walk in my surrounding neighborhoods, I notice more boxwoods dying due to infestation by the non native Box Tree Moth. While some lament the loss of these shrubs, this is an opportunity to replace them with a native shrub that contributes much more to the local biodiversity.

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. You need male and female plants for a spring bloom of small white flowers. The female 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.

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:

[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 April 22nd**)

**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 and Trillium Judging  
Liaison- 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 – Janet Waterfall  
OHA Website Monitor – Phil Longstaff  
Spring Plant Sale Co-chairs – Connie Godyn and Sharon Hall  
Speakers and Programs – Connie Godyn & Roxanne Riley

*May, the month of blooming flowers and endless possibility*

*author unknown*