



Flamborough Horticultural Society

January 2021 Newsletter

Dear Members

Happy New Year! January is a great month to look out on our sleeping garden, identify the tracks from birds and animals that look for food in the garden. It is still important to keep our bird feeders filled during this stressful time for birds trying to survive. Wintering goldfinches and juncos continue to forage for seeds from our leftover perennial flower heads and grasses. Our evergreens that provide some winter interest, also help shelter smaller birds from large predators and from inclement weather.

It is a time that we can also daydream of how we might plan our next garden experiment. Leafing through a gardening book always highlights what we might have missed reading. Doug Tallamy's Living Landscape book has an interesting chapter on layering in the garden; one of my projects for the spring.

How many catalogues did you receive? Having received three seed, plant and bulb catalogues makes it hard to not be overzealous with the post-it notes. Where to plant next? Anna Leggatt's presentation on January 20th, should be very inspiring and help us kick-start some ideas. Jennifer Godyn has posted a short story in the Flamborough Review that includes the many accomplishments of Anna Leggatt.

What garden projects or changes do you have planned for the spring? It is not too early to begin putting your ideas to paper or onto your desktop. Will you mix in some vegetables with your perennials?

While Covid-19 prevented many of us from visiting other's gardens, Liz provided us with many virtual garden tours on the Facebook site that helped spark more ideas.

January is also an important time for the upcoming Annual General Meeting. We look to you to support the Society by joining the Zoom meeting and voting in your Executive.

Each of us are only a phone call away or even a Zoom meeting away. Let us stay connected.

Best Wishes,
Susan MacMillan

Meeting and Speaker Information

January Meeting and AGM:

Date: January 20, 2021

Time: 7pm

Speaker: Anna Leggatt

Topic: Now I've Got it, Where do I Put it?

Join us online on Zoom. Our November meeting went very smoothly! An email will be sent to members with the link to the zoom meeting.

Flower Show Theme:

A photograph of any garden or landscape feature taken outside while dormant. Email by Jan. 17 to

flamhort@hotmail.com

FHS News and Events

It's membership renewal time. Please support your Society and send us your \$15.00 renewal for 2021. Members were sent an email with renewal options. We continue to be mandated on Covid-19 Infection Control and thus, monthly meetings will continue online (for members) on Zoom until further notice. Buy a gift membership for a neighbour or friend!

Caring Committee

Sending warm thoughts to Jan Bignell who recently had cataract surgery.

FHS 40th Anniversary (Sept. 1979) Men's Flower Show Competition

Allan Chappel, President of the Flamborough Horticultural Society with Past-President, George Webster, and John Webb. The three men were among those who were entered in the Mens' Flower Arranging' competition, the first time in the 40-year history of the show that there had been such a classification.



Allan Chappel, president of the Flamborough Horticultural Society, with past-president George Webster and John Webb. The three men were among those who were entered in the Mens' Flower Arranging competition; the first time in the 40 year history of the show that there has been such a classification.

Did You Know?

The flower with the world's largest bloom is the *Rafflesia arnoldii* (commonly called the 'corpse flower'). This rare flower is found in the rainforests of Indonesia. It can grow to be 3 feet across and weigh up to 15 pounds! It is a parasitic plant, with no visible leaves, roots, or stem.

Have You Seen the World's Smallest Plant?



It's all around us! When walking along freshwater lakes, streams, and marshes, you may have noticed light green floating masses that cover the water. They are composed of plants which are the size of a grain of rice. *Wolffia* is the smallest genus of the aquatic plants known as duckweed, which are part of the family Lemnaceae. Found all over the planet, they are the smallest flowering plant on earth.

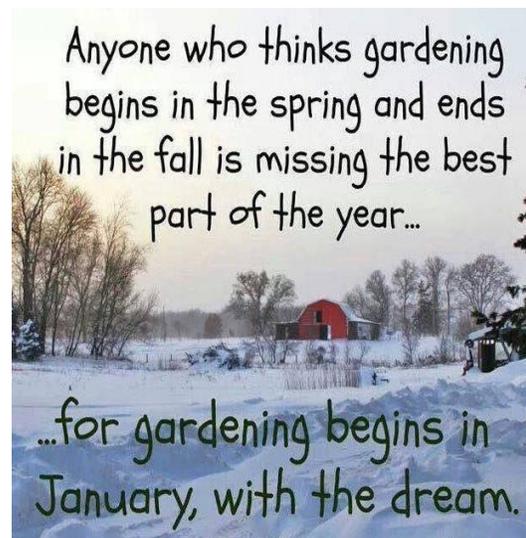
These tiny plants are rootless and mostly reproduce by growing a new segment or frond from one end. They also produce the world's smallest fruit. Duckweeds are eaten by ducks and other aquatic birds and some varieties of fish.

The International Lemna Association (ILA), is dedicated to promoting duckweed as a fast-growing, sustainable crop with a wide variety of uses. One of these is the use for it in the diets of chickens, pigs, and cattle. Duckweed

absorbs minerals and organic nutrients from the water making it a good food source. These plants quickly absorb the minerals they need for growth, as well as other organic nutrients, from the water they are floating in.

Duckweeds are also able to absorb phosphates and nitrogen out of water — two substances that need to be removed during sewage treatment and from farming runoff. Yet when grown on sewage or animal waste, duckweeds normally don't retain toxins, so they can safely be used as feed or to fertilize crops.

Duckweed has other potential commercial applications: it could be a source of renewable and sustainable fuel to replace fossil fuels. Also, because it contains around 44 percent protein, it can be used to make bioplastics. Genetic engineers are working to modify duckweeds to produce low-cost pharmaceuticals such as vaccines.



Growing Fruit Trees Indoors

Citrus trees like orange, lemon and lime have been the most common choice for an indoor fruit tree, but other dwarf fruit trees or bushes can also be successfully grown indoors. Some of these include fig, olive, peach, nectarine, apricot, and banana.

Fig Tree

Figs prefer a humid environment and are best grown in loamy soil and require full sun for 6-8 hours a day. The Brown Turkey fig which is self-pollinating is most suited to growing indoors.

Olive Tree

The Arbequina is well-suited for containers. Olive trees require well-drained soil and at least 6 hours of bright light a day. If you want fruit, they will need to experience a period of about two months of cooler temperatures. You can move them to a garage or shed that is cool in the fall or winter

Peaches, Nectarines and Apricots

For peaches and nectarines, dwarf varieties that are self-pollinating, such as Bonanza, Golden Glory, Nectarcrest or Dwarf Sweet China are good selections. The Moorpark is an excellent dwarf apricot, reaching only six feet high. As with most indoor trees, you can prune them to keep them smaller and more compact. They are best planted in loamy soil. Keeping the roots snug in pots will

encourage fruiting. Keep soil evenly moist, fertilize regularly and be sure they receive at least six hours of bright daily. South facing windows are preferable.

Banana

Bananas, while technically herbs, are often called 'trees'. Like most tropical plants, they need up to six to eight hours of bright sunlight, so a southern exposure window is ideal. These plants require a more humid environment which is best achieved during winter months by grouping plants and using a humidifier. A recommended dwarf variety is the Lady Finger banana which grows to about four feet and produces slim, tiny bananas. Other varieties can get very tall and outgrow their indoor spaces.

Weather Folklore for January

- *Fog in January brings a wet spring.*
- *A favorable January brings us a good year.*
- *If grass grows in January, it will grow badly the whole year.*
- *A summerish January will lead to a cold, winterish spring.*
- *When the summer months are unusually hot, January will be the coldest month of the year.*

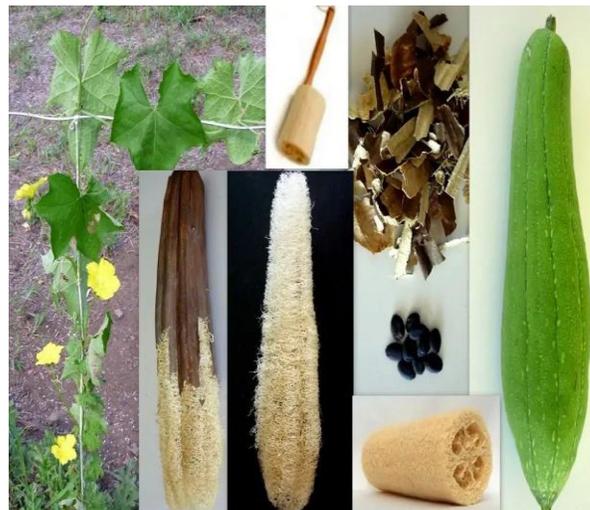
“A garden is half-made when it is well planned. The best gardener is the one who does the most gardening by the winter fire.”

— Liberty Hyde Bailey

What to Prune in Winter

- In general, deciduous trees and shrubs should be pruned when they are dormant, in **late winter** and **early spring** unless they flower in early spring or already have buds.
- Plants that flower in the summer (after May) may be pruned during late winter because they typically bloom on new growth. However, there are exceptions to this rule such as oakleaf hydrangea and magnolia
- Exceptions to the dormant pruning rule are maple, birch and elm which should be pruned when actively growing in mid-summer. When pruned in early spring, these species may lose excessive amounts of sap. Pruning of Maple and Birch should not be done too late in the fall either, as wounds will not have a chance to heal before winter.
- In general, winter fruit tree pruning spurs vigorous growth while summer pruning slows growth. Late winter is preferred by some arborists because less time will elapse before the tree can heal the wounds.
- There is some benefit to waiting until spring to prune tender fruit trees such as peach or apricot as branches that did not survive winter will be exposed. However, spring pruning will not encourage as much growth as winter pruning.

How to Grow and Make Your Own Sponges



What is Luffa?

Luffa (sometimes written as loofah or loofa), is a popular fruit to grow sometimes for food, but more often for making sponges. It grows on vines that can reach 10m in length. When luffa is still young and tender, it can be cooked and eaten like squash, with a taste similar to zucchini, or sliced up into a salad. As luffa grows older, it becomes woody, with the flesh melting away, leaving an abrasive, fibrous skeleton that makes a great sponge.

Growing Luffa

Luffas also have an extremely long growing season, requiring 150 to 200 warm days to ripen. This means that in zones 6 or lower seeds should be

started indoors about six weeks before the last frost.

Soak seeds in water for 24 hours to encourage germination. Plant seeds about a half- to three-quarters of an inch-deep and water well. Plant outdoors in full sun and well-drained, but moist clay soil after all danger of frost has passed. Plants should be at least a foot long.

Plant Care

Adding lots of compost or manure is important to provide them with the nutrients they need. Keep plants evenly watered and water deeply during dry spells. If an unexpected cold snap threatens your plants, you can cover the seedlings using a vented cloche, or a plastic soda bottle cut in half, with lots of air holes punched in.

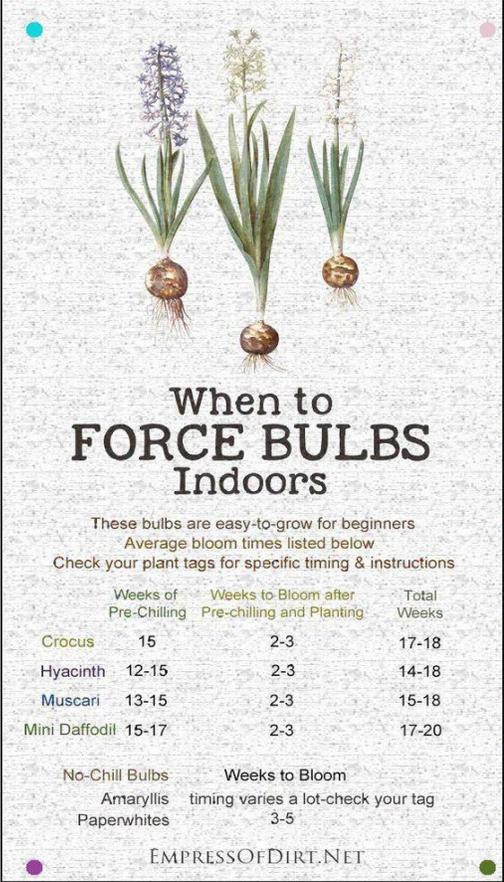
These gourds have both male and female flowers. It's the female flowers that develop tiny gourds if they're pollinated. Luffas will grow into a large gourd, about a foot long.

Harvesting

Once the luffas begin to turn yellow, they are ready to pick. The longer mature luffas stay on the vine, the more fibers will develop and the tougher the fibers will be. If they get hit by frost, they will need to be harvested immediately.

Revealing the Sponge

Peel off the tough outer skin. Once the skin has been removed, you can shake out the seeds by pulling off the end of the gourd. Next, wash the sap out using a strong jet of water or place them into a bucket of water with some dish soap. Dry the washed sponges in the sun, turning them frequently and then store them inside of a cloth bag which will prevent them from getting dusty and keep them usable for years.



When to FORCE BULBS Indoors

These bulbs are easy-to-grow for beginners
Average bloom times listed below
Check your plant tags for specific timing & instructions

	Weeks of Pre-Chilling	Weeks to Bloom after Pre-chilling and Planting	Total Weeks
Crocus	15	2-3	17-18
Hyacinth	12-15	2-3	14-18
Muscari	13-15	2-3	15-18
Mini Daffodil	15-17	2-3	17-20

No-Chill Bulbs

	Weeks to Bloom
Amaryllis	timing varies a lot-check your tag
Paperwhites	3-5

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January Gardening “to do” List

- Consider placing a live, cut Christmas tree outdoors to provide shelter for birds and protection near feeders
- Potted Christmas trees should be planted outdoors in pre dug holes
- Order and begin to browse seed catalogues
- While it may be too early to start seeds indoors, it’s not too early to purchase or to order seeds (last year some places ran out of stocks)
- Check indoor plants for insects such as mealy bugs, scale, and spider mites
- Mites and scale can also live on ledges and windowsills, so
- wipe them down with soapy water
- Look for bud swell on early spring flowering shrubs such as forsythia, willow, and cherries. These branches can be cut and brought indoors to force blooms

DID YOU KNOW

The Carolinian zone found in Southern Ontario makes up only 1% of Canada’s total land area, but it contains a greater number of both flora and fauna species than any other ecosystem in Canada. It is estimated that some 2,200 species of herbaceous plants are found here including 70 species of trees!

Winterberry Holly (*Ilex verticillata*)



Sometimes called the “Canadian Holly”, this is a stand-out, native plant that holds its berries throughout the winter season. Many wild animals depend on these berries to survive Canadian winters, including early spring arrivals. Birds such as robins, cardinals, grouse, bluebirds, thrushes, waxwings, white-throated sparrows, northern flickers, and grey catbirds feast on winterberries. The plant thrives in full sun to partly shady areas. It’s slow growing, in medium to wet conditions and tolerates wet soil, clay soil and air pollution. This is a great native plant to consider for our gardens. To get berries, though, both a male and a female plant are necessary. However, one male plant is sufficient to pollinate up to 20 female plants when planted within 40 feet.

Have You Heard of These Odd Hybrid Fruits and Vegetables?

See link [Hybrid Fruits and Vegetables](#)

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Links to Remember

Connon Nursery and Terry Vanderkruk have been wonderful supporters of our Society. Please show your appreciation by shopping at Connon Nursery.

905-689-7433 <https://connon.ca>

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

[Wild Birds Unlimited](#)

How to Reach Us

Please email your comments, suggestions, or corrections. If you wish to submit an article, questions or tips, contact:
flamhort@hotmail.com.

PO Box 902, Waterdown, On. L0R 2H0

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Mission

The Mission of the Society is to encourage interest and involvement in preservation, exhibitions, the distribution of plant materials and regular instruction pertaining to the theory and practice of agriculture. through civic improvement.

We are dedicated to the sharing of garden knowledge.

Directors for 2020/21, Appointed as of Nov. 26, 2020

President – Susan MacMillan
Past Co-President - Tina Coverly
Past Co-President - Trudy Bliedung
Vice President – **Open**
Treasurer - Trudy Bliedung
Recording Secretary - Tessa Morris
Director - Ann Cochren (Flower Show)
Director Publicity - Shared by VP and President
Director & Facebook Adm. - Liz Visentin
Newsletter Editor – Liz Visentin
Director - Rosanne Waugh (on leave)

Committee Chairpersons

Bus Tour– Tina Coverly
Caring – Annamary Kilham
Nominating Committee – Tina Coverly & Trudy Bliedung
Civic Improvement– Jan Bignell
Communications Copywriter- Jennifer Godyn
Flower Show & Trillium Judging Liaison– Ann Cochren
Garden Walk – Open
Meeting Hospitality – Ann Williams
Membership – Janet Waterfall
OHA Website Monitor – Phil Longstaff
Spring Plant Sale – Connie Godyn & Roxanne Riley
Speakers and Programs – Connie Godyn & Roxanne Riley