

Flamborough Horticultural Society



February 2021 Newsletter

Dear Members,

I want to thank everyone who signed in to the Zoom meeting to help us reach a quorum and allow the Society to host our Annual General Meeting.

Some of our members are not able to access Zoom technology but your Board also appreciates their volunteerism and support you provide in other ways throughout the year.

Annual general meetings can be a bit dry, what with electing and swearing in a new Board, and addressing bylaw changes. However, they are also an important opportunity for outgoing Co-Presidents to express their gratitude for all the past work members accomplished to keep the Society strong — despite the Covid-19 restrictions. These included all the behind-the-scenes work that was performed by the Bus Tour committee. Several member gardeners had separated plants in preparation for the spring plant sale. Garden Walk committee members had already been out exploring potential gardens for the Garden Walk. Standardized signs were developed to replace worn-out patched signs. Flamborough has a high proportion of Trillium Award judges; another activity that had to go “virtual.” Our chance to have the members-only garden tour was a great success last summer. We were able to visit while maintaining our distance and get creative tending civic gardens as a team. While events had to be cancelled, Society members carried on and for that, your Board appreciates your efforts. We are fortunate to have such a strong group of members.

While we cannot meet in person, the Board is happy to welcome January’s five new members. They are Kirsten McCarthy, Linda Obermeyer, Dominique Pennett, Michelle Lokun and Judy Skelton who joined in January. We look forward to seeing you again on Zoom.

Our February winter blanket of snow is now here and Liz Visentin has filled this newsletter with great reading for you on a cold winter day.

The February 17 meeting includes our own member Susan Chater presenting photos of the flora and fauna of New Zealand. If you have never been to New Zealand her photos might entice you to think of a trip there; once the pandemic is declared over.

Stay warm and happy reading.

Susan MacMillan

Next Meeting and Speaker Information

Date: February 17, 2021

Time: 7pm

Speaker: Susan Chater

Topic: Travelogue of New Zealand

Join us online. An email will be sent to members with the link to the zoom meeting. Non-members can join the link for \$5. Contact flamhort@hotmail.com

February Flower Show Theme

“AN INTERESTING GARDEN”

Please submit a photograph of a single plant in your winter garden.

email to: flamhort@hotmail.com

by February 15.

FHS News and Events

If you have not yet renewed your membership, please support your Society and send us your \$15.00 renewal for 2021. Members were sent an email with renewal options. Why not gift a membership to a friend?

We continue to be mandated on Covid-19 Infection Control and thus, monthly meetings will continue online (for members) on zoom until further notice.

“Every gardener knows that under the cloak of winter lies a miracle.... A seed waiting to sprout, a bulb opening to the light, a bud straining to unfurl. And the anticipation nurtures our dream.” -Barbara Winkle

January Flower Show

“A photograph of any winter garden or landscape”. Thank you to all who entered the competition last month.

We had 11 entries for our members to view.

Voting for the winners was done online.

Consider entering our February contest!

January Winners

First Place: Connie Godyn



Second Place: Liz Visentin



Third Place: Heather Cochren



Winter Indoor Gardening: Forcing Bulbs



Although we usually think of forcing Daffodils, Hyacinths, and Tulips, many of the smaller bulbs such as Crocus, Muscari (Grape Hyacinth), Scilla, Dwarf Irises, and Anemones are also easy to force. Many bulbs require lengthy chilling periods. If you do not have prechilled bulbs, it is possible to purchase them. Some bulbs that do not require chilling include: paperwhites, narcissus, amaryllis and freesias.

Planting Methods

Growing in water: Nothing could be easier than forcing bulbs in water, but the container shape is the key to success. Traditionally, clear glass containers with an hourglass shape are used with this method. A narrow jar works well, too. Fill the bottom of the glass container with fresh water, then place the bulb on top with the roots facing downward. The hourglass shape or a narrow container allows the bulb's roots to grow into the water while holding the bulb itself above the water. Simple and dramatic! Hyacinth, amaryllis, and narcissus are examples of bulbs that respond well to forcing.

Growing in soil:

Most other bulbs prefer this planting method. Plant the bulbs about an inch apart, the tip end pointing upwards, leaving about one third to one half of the bulb exposed above the soil. Planting too deeply or completely covering them up can easily lead to rot. Water after planting.

Growing in pebbles/gravel:

Take a shallow bowl without a drainage hole, and fill it with natural gravel, aquarium pebbles, or glass pebbles. Nestle the bulb into the gravel so the bulb is stabilized, then fill the bowl with water until it reaches the bottom of the bulb. Remember, just as with the water method, you don't want the bulb submerged in water — your goal is for the roots to have access to the water while keeping the rest of the bulb above the water. Top off the water every couple of days to maintain that level.

Maintaining Bulbs and Prolonging Blooms

1. Keep plants out of direct sunlight.
2. Keep plants away from drafts and heating vents.
3. Keep the soil moist but not soggy for potted bulbs.
4. Refresh or add water to just below the bottom of the bulb for water-grown bulbs.
5. Do not fertilize.
6. Tie floppy stems together if they are leaning or falling over.

Plant Wild Geranium (Geranium maculatum) Instead of Periwinkle



Periwinkle was often planted as ground cover, but this is an invasive plant that poses a threat to native biodiversity. It thrives in different habitats and spreads over large areas smothering native ground vegetation.

If you are looking for a ground cover particularly for a shaded garden, consider wild geraniums. This is a perennial plant native to woodlands of eastern North America. They are very hardy and grow well in both sun and shade, sand or clay-based soils and moderate to dry conditions.

These clump forming plants can reach a height of 30 to 60cm. They can form small colonies, but are not invasive. Pink blooms appear in late spring to early summer, attracting hummingbirds and bumble bees.

Starting seeds in February

Plant these seeds in zone 6:
Celery, leek onions, petunias begonias, broccoli, cauliflower, cabbage and brussel sprouts

Follow this link for more Winter Ideas:
[February Tips](#)

How to Grow Ginger

Who says we can't garden in February? This is a great indoor project for winter. As well as growing a new houseplant, there will be a 'crop' of ginger to harvest at the end!

- Take a planter that is at least 12-inch deep with drainage holes at the bottom. Plastic containers are better than clay garden pots.
- Now, fill the container to about two to three inches from the top with sand based or well-draining potting soil and compost.
- Using organic ginger will ensure that it has not been treated to resist sprouting.
- Slice off the fingers, making sure each rhizome piece is 1 to 2 inches long with at least one bud.
- Allow the pieces to dry for 24-48 hours before planting, as this helps to control for possible root rot.
- Plant cut sections about six inches apart no deeper than 1 inch with the eye buds pointing upwards.
- Water well after planting. Place a clear dome or clear plastic bag over the pot until it sprouts.
- Leaves will emerge after about one to three weeks.
- Water sparingly but deeply after you see growth.
- Fertilize your plants monthly with an all-purpose fertilizer.
- Harvest small pieces of ginger 3-4 months after growth begins, move aside some soil and slice off pieces of the rhizome roots. Replace soil and more growth will occur.

Horticulture History

- The earliest gardens were used to grow food and medicinal herbs.
- The first greenhouses in history were built in Rome in A.D. 30 under the orders of Emperor Tiberius who wanted to eat a cucumber every day.
- Andrew Faneuil built the first greenhouse in North America in 1737 in Boston.
- Around 1500 B.C. in Egypt, the first decorative gardens appeared.
- While ancient Romans and Assyrians were renowned for their beautiful gardens, the value of gardens as an aesthetic place declined during the Middle Ages. Monasteries, however, served to continue the tradition of garden design and the improvement of gardening techniques.
- More than half of the world's food crops, including turnips, onions, carrots, lettuce, apples, pears, quince, bananas, peach and citrus fruits originated in Asia.
- There is a garden in England called "The Poison Garden". It is home to 100 murderous plants. Visitors to this dangerous garden are prohibited from smelling, touching, or tasting any of the plants! (I wonder what can be purchased in the gift shop?)

Read more about the Poison Garden:
[Poison Garden](#)

Meet the 2021 Proven Winners "Perennial of the Year" Cat's pajamas - NEPETA



The Perfect Perennial for a Hot, Sunny Landscape

- Showy, easy care perennial for landscapes
- Vibrant blue flowers from top to bottom
- Attracts loads of pollinators
- Deer and rabbit resistant
- Thrives in all-day sunshine
- 12-14" tall x 18-20" spread
- Perennial in Zones 3-8

'Cat's Pajamas' is a greatly improved catmint. Its shape is neatly rounded and covered from top to bottom in blue blossoms for most of the summer. It also blooms earlier than other varieties. This plant is ideal as a colourful border around a vegetable garden where it will attract bees to increase pollination of plants. It also attracts butterflies and hummingbirds. In flower beds, it also makes a lovely blue border.

'Cat's Pajamas' is a very durable perennial that can be planted in either spring or fall, full sun to part shade. If you have heavy clay soil, choose a higher part of your garden or a raised bed. This plant does not tolerate wet, heavy soil. Amending your clay soil with soil conditioner or finely

shredded bark will help to improve the drainage.

Once established, it requires very little watering or maintenance. No fertilizer is necessary unless it is planted in very sandy soil. A small amount of slow-release plant food can be applied in spring once the plant begins to grow. Both overwatering and overfeeding are detrimental to Nepeta.

First blooms will appear in late spring to early summer, typically 2-3 weeks earlier than other catmints. Once those flowers are spent, likely sometime around midsummer, shear the entire plant back by about half. This will stimulate fresh new growth and new blooms that can last until fall.

Tips for New Gardeners or New Members:

Make friends with other gardeners! Gardeners are preoccupied with plant life, and beauty. Fellow gardeners have an inherent generosity to share plants with you.

Once the pandemic is over, on a nice day, if you see a garden you like, try knocking on the front door. Many gardeners will be happy to show you their garden, what grows well and particulars of the plant location. You might just end up with the gardener asking you if you want a few divided plants.

You do not need a lot of tools (a good trowel, garden fork, shovel, and rake). Buy the best quality you can afford. Don't get

caught up in trends. Your garden is primarily for **you**.

More people are learning and understanding the importance of biodiversity of trees, shrubs, and flowers; Add enough native flowers to your ornamentals to help our animals and insects.

Never apologize just because your garden might have a few weeds. For areas you do not want to mulch, you can create small pocket holes at the back of your beds for the "pull and drop method" of weeds that have not gone to seed. These will decompose, add nutrients back into the soil and augment the other compost you add.

The Lost World of Socotra

This tiny island in the Arabian Sea is one of the Most Alien-Looking Places on Earth. It is home to the endangered Dragon Blood tree (*Dracaena cinnabari*) which gets its name from the red sap it bleeds when cut.



Distinct from almost anywhere else on earth, Yemen's Socotra island is full of unique nature – with over 700 species that are exclusive to the island, making it a UNESCO world heritage site.

Plant Trivia:

• **Saffron:** used as a flavoring in Mediterranean cooking, is harvested from the stigmas of a type of fall-blooming crocus, *Crocus sativus*.

Read more about saffron here: [Saffron](#)

• **Vanilla:** flavoring comes from the pod of an orchid, *Vanilla planifolia*. Though the pods are called vanilla beans, they're more closely related to corn.

Read more about Vanilla here: [Vanilla](#)

• **Pineapple:** was named by European explorers who thought the fruit combined the look of a pinecone with flesh like that of an apple. Pineapples are the only edible members of the bromeliad family.

Read more about pineapple here: [Pineapple](#)

Our two Past Presidents, Tina and Trudy: digging water lilies last fall.



Carolinian Zone

Rare Species

The most unique feature of the Carolinian zone is the number of rare species found here. The region boasts fully one-third of the rare, threatened and endangered species found in all of Canada. Sixty-five percent of Ontario's rare plants are found in the region, and 40% are restricted to the Carolinian zone. Included in these are trees such as the Pawpaw, Blue Ash, Tulip, and the Kentucky Coffee Tree, herbaceous plants such as Green Dragon, Harbinger-of-Spring, Yellow Mandarin and Swamp Rose Mallow, shrubs such as the native Burning Bush (not Winged tip Burning bush), the Rough-leaved Dogwood, and our only cactus, the Eastern Prickly Pear.

Eastern Prickly Pear Cactus

Have you ever considered growing a cactus in your garden? It is possible to have this plant in our local gardens!

In Canada, the Eastern Prickly Pear Cactus is found only in southern Ontario. There are two known locations, which are on sand spits along the shore of Lake Erie. It is an endangered species due to loss of habitat. The Eastern Prickly Pear Cactus is a perennial succulent cactus with jointed, rounded, but flattened, green stems, the segments of which are called "pads". It may be horizontal or upright, growing up to 0.5 metres in height. It is hardy to zone 4 and requires full sun and a light or sandy, well-drained soil. Prickly pears are also easy to propagate. Wearing heavy gloves, cut off one of the pads and

lay it (unburied) on the ground where you want it to grow.

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.
Address: PO Box 902, Waterdown, ON L0R 2H

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MISSION

The mission of the 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 agriculture.

We are dedicated to the sharing of garden knowledge.

Directors for 2020- 2021

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
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Garden Walk – **Open**
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Spring Plant Sale – Connie Godyn & Roxanne Riley
Speakers and Programs – Connie Godyn & Roxanne Riley

