

Flamborough Horticultural Society



September 2021 Newsletter

President's Message

Greetings Members

This is the time of year when we reap the harvest of any food we planted in our gardens while at the same time, we try and make sure there is consistent watering to avoid tomatoes and other vegetables from spitting. Garlic planted last fall is harvested and curing in a cool dark place ready to be stored for the winter. Dahlias and Zinnias are blooming in all their glory with all of this sun. Hard to believe it's time to think about fall blooming flowers.

A thankyou gift was purchased for Glenda Bergman, owner of Lotsa Hostas as a token of the Society's appreciation for her assistance in helping make the Plant sale a big success.

Glenda allowed us to keep a table at her store for an extended period after the official plant sale day. This additional revenue will fund the 2022 speakers.

For those of you who are not on email, note there is chance to see more gardens during the Carnegie Secret Garden tour on September 12, 10:00-4:00 pm. The Carnegie Gallery is at 10 King Street West, Dundas. You can phone for tickets at 905-627-4265 or pay in person including at 9 am the day of the tour. If paying with cash, you can purchase tickets at the Ogilvie Street door. Credit and debit cards will be accepted inside the Gallery during hours of operation. They are usually open at 10:00 am except on Monday. Email contact for other details is info@carnegiegallery.org

Since the church hall is still not open for meetings, we are working on the feasibility of having the October and November meetings at Connon Nursery and hope to start earlier. This will allow the Connon staff who assist us to be able to leave earlier. It is a very long day for them since many start at 7am. We hope to have the event broadcast simultaneously via Zoom for people unable to attend. Connon Nursery closes at 6pm so there will be time for members to arrive early to shop. For November, Paul Zammit will be providing the Christmas decoration demonstration.

Stay tuned for more details to follow.

Best wishes

Susan MacMillan

Meeting and Speaker Information

Our September meeting will be held on zoom.

Date: Wed., Sept. 15

Time: 7pm

Speaker: Larry Hodgson

Topic: Making the Most of Shade Gardening

Flower Show: "Celebrating the Pelargonium: Our Society Flower"

A bouquet tied in a ribbon with geraniums and flowers from your September garden.

Email photos of entries to flamhort@hotmail.com by Sept. 13

September Garden Tasks

This is the month when we see the transition from summer to fall and the full splendour of fall blooming plants bursts forth.

- Divide and transplant perennials
- Last fertilizing of lawns for the year
- Prepare and seed new lawns
- Renovate perennial borders
- Cover tender plants when frosts are forecast
- Start saving seeds for next year
- Stop watering tuberous begonias
- Plant spring-flowering perennials now
- Fertilize roses one last time
- Fertilize fruit trees after harvest
- Take cuttings from geraniums and coleus
- Raise height of mower blades.
- Plant spring flowering bulbs
- Soak the soil around evergreens and transplants
- Stop fertilizing trees and shrubs to permit this year's growth to harden off before winter
- Mark perennials or create a map showing their location so you will know where they are when they die back at

the end of the season.

- Plant evergreens now to give them a good start before winter. Use transplant fertilizer.

Autumn Care for Mums



As our summer blooms fade and mums appear on the market, it's hard to resist bringing home these colourful and prolific bloomers for a last burst of colour in our gardens or containers! While many treat these plants as annuals, it is possible to overwinter some of them. Unless you bring a pot indoors, mums will not likely survive the winter.

With a good microclimate, fall mums can do well in all but the most extreme environments, typically growing as perennials between planting zones four and eight. The key to achieving chrysanthemum success is to choose your cultivar wisely. Avoid buying potted fall mums at florist shops or department store garden centers. These mums may have been chosen for their lovely color or low price rather than their suitability for Northern gardens. Always check the cold hardiness zones. Our local zone is six.

Taking care of fall mums as perennials is a great way to extend your garden's peak well beyond the range of more tender flowers. Garden chrysanthemums, affectionately known as fall mums or hardy mums, continue to give your garden a splash of cheerful color

well into the cooler months at a time when the rest of your flowers are winding down. Caring for mums as perennials may be a bit more work than simply buying new potted plants each year, but it is far more rewarding. The best site for your mums is up against a south-facing wall of a house or other shelter. Choose a sunny location where they won't be crowded in years to come, as many chrysanthemum plants can become quite bushy over time.

Keep the soil around your mums moist at all times, never allowing them to dry out and wilt. Continue watering throughout the fall until all the foliage has died back for winter. Once the foliage has died back, trim the dead stems back to ground level with a pair of garden shears and mulch to a depth of three to four inches as part of your fall garden cleanup.

Native Asters



One of my first harbingers of autumn has always been when the goldenrods and asters burst into bloom in meadows and along the open areas of our surrounding trail systems. A diverse group of hardy plants, asters are native to many regions and habitats across Canada. Commonly seen in fields and on roadsides, some species prefer wetlands, woodlands, or even alpine areas. They are also beneficial to wildlife, as well as a great addition to any garden for fall colour. As members of the Asteraceae or Compositae family (sometimes called the daisy, sunflower, composite, aster, or even thistle family) they

have composite flower heads. This means that each flower is actually a group of smaller flowers consisting of ray flowers (petals) surrounding disk flowers (the centre). Disk flowers are usually yellow or burgundy, which make a nice contrast with the blue, purple, violet, or white ray flowers. An added attraction is their sometimes striking purple stems. Read more here: [Native Asters for Ontario Gardens](#)

What to do with your Dahlias?



Dahlia (Tartan) grown by past president, Arie Vanspronsen

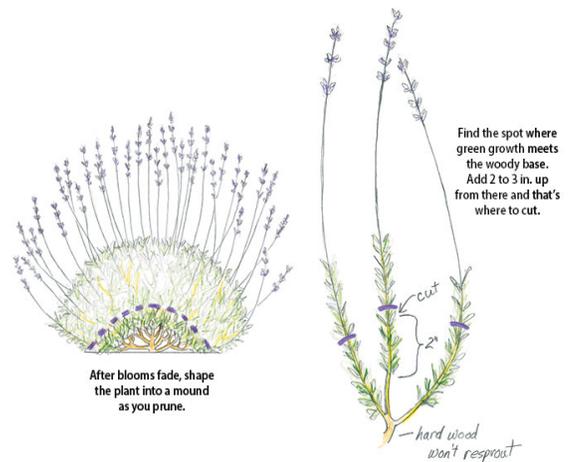
Dahlias are tender annuals, but you can overwinter them pretty easily. In fall, after the first frost has blackened the foliage, cut off all but 2 to 4 inches of top growth, and carefully dig tubers without damaging them. Allow tubers to dry for a few days in a frost-free location, out of direct sunlight. Once dried, remove any excess soil, leaving 1 to 2 inches of stem. Store each clump of tubers in a ventilated box or basket. Fill the box with slightly moistened sand, peat moss or vermiculite and place it in a cool, dry location with temperatures that remain between 45 and 55 degrees F. Check tubers periodically through winter for rotting and drying out. If the tubers appear shriveled, mist them lightly with water. Trim any rotted portions. The tubers are fragile, so be careful when handling them. Some have had success with dahlias grown in pots and overwintered in those same pots. They will need to be allowed to dry out and stored in a cool/dry location that is above freezing.

The Benefits of Ants Although some species, like the carpenter ant and the stinging fire ant, can be pests, generally ants are beneficial. Ants are among the most successful of insects, outnumbering all other individual animals combined. They have been around since the days of the dinosaurs and inhabit just about every corner of Earth. Their presence in nature is essential to the well-being of the garden and environment. The total ant population is estimated at one quadrillion (1,000,000,000,000,000). Wow!

- Most ants nest in the ground, digging a labyrinth of tunnels that aerate the soil and allow moisture to get to the roots of plants. They also till the soil by bringing pebbles and particles to the top
- The leaves that insects bring into the nest decay and fertilize the surrounding plants.
- Ants act as decomposers, feeding on organic waste, insects, or other dead animals.
- Even carpenter ants keep the environment clean. By making their nests in dead or diseased wood, they accelerate the decomposition process. After the ants leave, fungi and bacteria grow in the galleries and break down the lignin and cellulose on large surfaces.
- Many ants are predators and feed on insects that attack lawns and gardens, and in the process of gathering food, they often pollinate flowers and distribute seeds.
- Ants are also the source of food for many other insects, birds, and mammals, thus important to the ecosystem
- A sudden convergence of ants in the garden, or a line of ants moving up and

down a tree, usually indicates the presence of aphids, mealybugs, or other sap-sucking insects that attack plants. These insects produce a substance called honeydew: The ants stroke the insects with their antennas, causing the insects to excrete the sweet liquid. The ants swallow it and store it in a special holding stomach called the crop. The honeydew is brought back to the nest and shared with the queen and other workers. Some ants even keep aphids in their nest in exchange for honeydew.

When and How to Prune Lavender?



Lavender is a shrub that will do best if pruned every year. Do not be too frightened to cut back your lavender, especially if it is the English variety. This is a job to get on with in August, or early September, once the flowers are finished for the season. Always make sure some new green growth remains. You can remove most of the new, green growth, so long as you cut above the small buds and green shoots that are forming on the lower woody material. The important thing is simply to make sure that you do not cut right down to old wood or the lavender may not readily re-grow. **Watch this video:**

[When and How to Prune Lavender](#)

Propagating Lavender By Layering Longer Branches

Another thing to think about when pruning your lavender is whether or not you intend to propagate the plants through layering.

Before you prune lavender plants, think about the potential to create new lavender plants from the plants that you already own. One way to do so without the hassle of taking cuttings is to layer them. Layering is a technique which basically involves:

Taking a low, woody branch of your lavender plant.

Cutting a shallow notch in that branch.

Bending the branch downwards, pressing that notch to the ground and making sure that it stays there, covered in soil.

Using a peg, or a heavy rock to hold the branch down. (Using rooting hormone increases the chances of success, but is not essential to the process.)

Best ways to preserve herbs

Whether you dry, freeze or make a paste depends on the herb, although some are fine with all three methods.

HERB	DRY	FREEZE	PASTE
Basil		⊙	⊙
Bay	⊙	⊙	
Chives		⊙	⊙
Dill	⊙	⊙	⊙
Lavender	⊙		
Lemon verbena	⊙		
Lovage		⊙	
Marjoram	⊙	⊙	⊙
Mint	⊙	⊙	⊙
Oregano	⊙	⊙	⊙
Parsley		⊙	⊙
Rosemary	⊙	⊙	⊙
Sage	⊙	⊙	⊙
Savory (winter and summer)	⊙	⊙	
Tarragon		⊙	⊙
Thyme	⊙	⊙	⊙

Attracting Goldfinches



Goldfinches are primarily seed eating birds that regularly visit bird feeders for Nyger (thistle) and sunflower seed. However, you can also attract these birds by planting their favorite plants in your yard. Goldfinches mate late in summer so these late season blooms are ideal to attract them to your yard.

Watching their acrobatics and hearing their young fledglings clamouring for food is a delight! Plant these flower for the goldfinches: (*annuals)

- Sunflowers*
- Zinnias*
- Purple Coneflowers (*Echinacea purpurea*)
- Mexican sunflower (Tithonia)*
- Anise Hyssop (*Agastache foeniculum*)
- Cup Plant (*Silphium perfoliatum*)

Steps to Dividing Irises

Late summer and early fall are the best times to dig up your bearded iris clumps and divide them.

Using a shovel, dig up the entire clump.

1. Shake the dirt off as much as you can.
2. Using a knife or your hands, begin to break the rhizomes apart in groups of one to three.
3. Identify any diseased rhizomes, and lay those out separately. Cut off the

diseased areas of rhizomes using a saw or soil knife, and spray the healthy cuts with the bleach/water solution.

4. Using pruners, cut the foliage down by half.
5. Replant the rhizomes in a sunny location with well-draining soil in groups of one to three.
6. Water the divisions well. Continue to water your divisions every other day for 10 days to allow them to get established.
7. Divide bearded irises every three to five years for optimum health.

Try Growing Goji Berries!

Lycium barbarum

Family: Solanaceae



'Sweet Lifeberry' goji berry is an antioxidant-packed ancient berry from China that thrives in Zones 5 to 9. Dubbed the "superfruit" because of the multitude of vitamins, minerals, and amino acids they contain, goji berries can be eaten out of hand, made into smoothies. The fruit is very sweet.

Though they sound exotic and are most often found with a high price tag in health food stores, Goji berries are actually easy to grow hardy plants. Goji will do great in a container. Just be sure to choose one large enough (at least 18" in diameter) with a drainage hole. For container cultivation, stake three to five strong canes and cut off the remainders. Purple flowers cover creeping vines in the spring, before brilliant red berries blanket the plants. The plants are disease resistant.

Difficulty: Moderately difficult

Exposure: Full sun

Zone: Hardy to Zone 4 — Goji dislikes extreme cold or heat. Sow indoors about 6 to 8 weeks before the last frost. It's important to cultivate strong seedlings, so once the seeds sprout, use generous artificial light.

Starting Seeds

Sow 2 to 3 seeds in each pot, about 5mm (1/4") deep. Use a sterilized seed starting mix, and do not add fertilizer. Keep soil moist until seeds germinate, and then place under bright lights. After the third true leaf emerges, transplant each seedling onto its own individual pot. Gentle hardening off of seedlings is essential in order to avoid transplant shock.

Goji is a shrubby plant that can, in time, grow 1-3m (3-10') tall. When in a pot, they can easily be pruned to keep the size in check. Growers space Goji plants 60cm (24") apart in rows that are 2m (6') apart. Spaced this way, 15 plants in a 30 foot row can produce up to 100 lbs of berries in a year. Goji is self pollinating, so even a single plant will produce fruit.

Goji is unusual in that it prefers relatively infertile, slightly alkaline soil with a pH range of 6.8 to 8.1. Goji reacts poorly to fertilizer and manure, so if growing in a large container, use simple top soil with some perlite mixed in for drainage. Avoid peat-based soils. If severe winter weather is expected, it is wise to mulch around the bases of Goji plants, or move container plants into a cool but frost free area such as a garage.

Dill Trivia Dill (*Anethum graveolens*), a member of the parsley or carrot family (Umbelliferae), is native to southern Europe. Did you know that dill seeds are so light that it takes more than 10 000 seeds to make up an ounce of dill. One tablespoon of dill seeds contains more calcium than a glass of milk?

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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.

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I am more myself in a garden than anywhere else on earth Doug Greene