

# Flamborough Horticultural Society



## September 2023 Newsletter

### President's Message

Greetings Members

The summer has flown by and children will soon be back at school. Flowers and trees have been happy with the 4" (10cm) of rain the Waterdown area received in August. The civic gardens look great thanks to the rain and the volunteers who tended them.

Several of us have donated plants to the Mary Hopkins Elementary School on Mill St N in Waterdown so that there will be bright cheery pollinators and ornamentals greeting the children and staff as they return to the school. One of the teachers also hopes to get another pollinator garden going next spring.

We need a volunteer who will represent FHS to help grow a youth program for gardening. This does not take a lot of time commitment as many of us are also happy to help. It just needs a point person who will be the contact person for staff at the school and to help direct any activities requested by the teaching staff. Please share some time for this and let me know if you can commit to this.

Please consider attending the District 6 Fall breakfast on Sept 9 to support Simcoe who is hosting this event. I am told there will be a hypertufa workshop following the meeting. Details to follow soon. Register with Deanna. See the attached poster.

Don't forget to start saving seeds as they mature. There might be some good projects for youth; to plant, learn about germination and watch seedlings grow.

Seed exchanges are also welcome at most of the Societies and we can also exchange at one of our future meetings.

It will be great to see everyone at our September meeting and because Paul Zammit is such a good draw, other Society members might attend as well.

We hope to see you there.

Best wishes Susan MacMillan (on behalf of the Board)

## September Garden Tasks

### Meeting and Speaker Information

**Date:** Wed., September 20

**Time:** 7:30pm (Refreshments served prior to meeting at 7pm)

**Speaker:** Paul Zammit

**Location:** The Need for Gardens

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

**Flower Show:** Pelargonium: Our Society  
Flower Celebration! A single cut geranium  
bloom in a container of your choice

- Divide and transplant perennials
- Last fertilizing of lawns for the year (use fall fertilizer)
- 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
- Adjust mower level lower
- Soak the soil around evergreens and transplants if drought conditions exist
- Stop fertilizing trees and shrubs to permit this year's growth to harden off before winter
- Dispose of diseased foliage. DO not compost
- 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, shrubs and trees now to give them at least six weeks to get established before hard frosts
- Plant garden mums into flower beds if overwintering them
- Check houseplants for pests before moving indoors
- Add compost to gardens
- Keep weeding. DO not let perennial weeds get established and do NOT let any weeds go to seed
- Begin planting fall bulbs towards the end of the month

### Upcoming Events

#### District 6 Fall Breakfast Meeting

**Date:** Sat., Sept. 9

**Time:** 9am- 12:30pm (doors open at 8am)

**Location:** Jr. Farmers Building Norfolk  
Fairgrounds

172 South Drive, Simcoe Ontario

**Guest Speaker:** Kevin Kavanaugh (South  
Coast Gardens)

**Cost:** Free (light refreshments provided)

#### District 6 Fall Dinner

**Date:** Sat., Nov. 4

**Time:** 6pm (doors open at 5:30pm)

**Location:** Royal Canadian Legion,  
223 Nichol St. West, Waterford Ontario

**Guest Speaker:** Bee Keeper, Kelly Moodie  
All About Bees

**Tickets:** \$40.00 [Sign Up Information](#)

## Prolonging Blooms of Fall Mums

Buy mums with buds rather than full blooms. Place in bright, indirect sun. Protect from rain and water from the bottom to decrease browning. Cool temperatures prolong the blooming period. This can be a challenge in our ever increasingly hot autumns! Move into a shady spot on hot days. Deadheading as soon as the blooms fade will encourage new blooms.

### OHA Garden Ontario 50/50 Raffle

Ticket sales help support education for youth and adults, environmental programs, awards and grants assisting with pollinators, tree planting and community beautification as well as post secondary scholarships. Deadline Sept. 16.

[Garden Ontario Raffle](#)

## Consider Smooth Blue Aster

(*Symphyotrichum laeve*)



This native aster is a good choice to extend late fall colour in the gardens as it is one of the later blooming asters. It is very adaptable and will thrive in sand, loam and clay soils. This aster grows to about four feet tall and unlike some other varieties, it maintains an upright form. It's also a good choice for boulevard planting as it is salt and drought tolerant. Full sun to light shade conditions are ideal for this aster.

Smooth Blue Aster is an important food source for late season pollinators especially bumblebees. The leaves are eaten by rabbits and deer so some protection may be required.

## Photograph Your Gardens Now!

November Flower Show's theme will be a photograph of your summer garden. This can be a photo of an entire bed or a close up of a particular area of interest. Entries will be emailed and shown in a powerpoint for voting.

## OHA news and Trillium Newsletter

Read the latest edition here:

[Garden Ontario](#)

## What to do with your Dahlias?

Dahlias are tender annuals, but you can overwinter them quite 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. I have simply wrapped them in newspaper to overwinter. 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.

## Dividing Irises

Late summer and early fall are the best times to dig up and to divide bearded iris clumps. Using a shovel, dig up the entire clump.

1. Shake the dirt off as much as possible.
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. In spring plant the rhizomes in pots into 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.

## 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                      | ⊙   | ⊙      | ⊙     |

**Air Drying** – a great way to store herbs from the summer for your culinary creations. To do this, simply snip the herbs at the stems and tie them with a small piece of twine. My favourite herbs to dry this way are oregano, thyme, and rosemary. Hang the bundle upside down and once dried remove the leaves from the stems and store in an air-tight container.

**Reading Corner: Ontario Fall Wildflowers** [Ontario Wildflower Species List](#)

## Planning on Planting Garlic?

The Ideal time to plant garlic is in the fall (mid autumn). Select large, healthy cloves, free of disease. The larger the clove, the bigger and healthier the bulb you will get the following summer. Plant in a sunny location with rich, well-drained soil. Amend soil with compost or rotted manure and 10-10-10 fertilizer. Set cloves pointed side up, 4-6" apart in rows 1-1/2 to 2' apart, and cover with 1-2" of soil. Pat down the soil and water well. Adding some protective mulch will help to prevent the cloves from being heaved out of the ground during freeze thaw cycles. I pile dried leaves on my garlic rows late fall. Raised beds are ideal for garlic. In the spring, remove the mulch when danger of frost has passed and fertilize again as garlic is a very heavy feeder. A side dressing using blood meal will add additional nutrients. This can be done when planting the bulbs or in the spring.

## Garlic Trivia

Garlic is a type of bulbous plant that belongs to the family of lilies and grows wild in France and in Italy. It is native to Central Asia and most likely Iran. Cultivation of garlic started about 4000 years ago in Asia. There are more than 450 varieties of garlic. Food experts recommend keeping garlic unpeeled in a cool, dark and dry place. DO not store garlic in plastic bags. Also keep away from pets as it is toxic to dogs and cats.

## Horticultural Terms: Air Drainage

This is the flow of cold air down a hill or slope. Plant crops that are sensitive to late spring and early fall frost on slopes, preferably south-facing, so that cold air will drain downhill and settle in the low spots below the planted area



## Native Grasses for Fall Gardens

Grasses are usually their best this time of year. In recent years some long popular non native grasses such as miscanthus have become invasive in Ontario. Consider replacing them with native grasses. Last year I dug up and disposed of all my old clumps of miscanthus. The added bonus was that I freed up space for new plants!

Planting native grasses is a way of restoring some of the lost tallgrass prairie which is now one of the rarest ecosystems in Ontario with only about 1% remaining. The most dominant grasses of tallgrass prairies were Big Bluestem, Little Bluestem, Indian Grass, Switchgrass and Canadian Wild Rye. They are also host plants for butterflies and food for birds and thus are a good addition to pollinator gardens.

This is a photo I took at the RBG near the Kippax Native Plants Garden of a lovely clump of Prairie Dropseed grass (*Sporobolus heterolepis*) which is a short, slow growing and fragrant grass. Being very drought resistant, it's ideal for rock gardens and makes a nice accent plant with perennials such as asters and coneflowers. They are resistant to deer and to self seeding.



Read More Here: [Ontario Native Grasses](#)

## Pelargonium

The Pelargonium is the floral symbol of our Horticultural Society and the feature for our September Flower Show. The name “geranium” is often given to two members of the geranium family (Geraniaceae). However, a true “geranium” is the perennial one known as *cranesbill* (*Geranium*). What we also call “geraniums” are the flowers that are not hardy in our zone which are usually sold for containers or as annuals in flower beds. When these plants were first introduced from South Africa, they were misclassified as being in the same genus as the perennial geranium. When you buy “geraniums” to plant in your window boxes you are actually planting “Pelargoniums”!

Types of “geraniums” [Geranium vs Pelargonium](#)

## Overwintering Pelargonium

The method with the least work is to simply bring pots indoors. If left in a sunny window they will bloom throughout the winter. However be prepared for a strong scent nearby and to have to clean up leaf drop! Last winter I put a large pot into my insulated garage, basically neglected it and it survived and has thrived in my flower bed. However it was a mild winter and this method is very risky! To save space, take cuttings in the fall, remove lower leaves, dip into rooting hormone and plant in potting soil. Many cuttings can be grown in a single pot, saving space. Water well and place a plastic dome over the cuttings and keep out of direct sunlight. After six to eight weeks, return to a sunny window. Another method is to overwinter them as bare-root plants. Dig up plants, remove soil from roots, place into a paper bag or hang upside down in a cool (45-50degreesF) dry place. In March prune back to green tissue and pot up.

## Connon Nurseries

Please show your appreciation by shopping at Connon Nurseries 905-689-7433

[Connon Nurseries](#)

**Northland Nursery** : A family run nursery in Millgrove Ontario (722 Concession 5 W) Open (9am to 5pm 7 days a week)

[Northland](#) Let them know you are an FHS member for our Society year-end rebate.

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

[Wild Birds Unlimited](#)

To learn more about District 6 see [OHA Garden Clubs and Societies in Ontario » GardenOntario](#).

**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 ON L0R 2H0

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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 2022/23

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 - OPEN

## Committee Chairpersons

Bus Tour – Open

Caring - Open

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 an open position

Sign Standardization – Ann Cochren

Speakers and Programs – Connie Godyn & Roxanne Riley

*There is a harmony in autumn,  
and a luster in its sky, which  
through the summer is not  
heard or seen, as if it could not  
be, as if it had not been.*

*Percy Bysshe Shelley*