

Flamborough Horticultural Society



December 2023 Newsletter

President's Message

Greetings FHS Members

Our December 6 Christmas potluck is fast approaching and it will be great to share some festive time with fellow gardeners. We will be having the Awards at the dinner since we shortened the AGM so that lots of time was available for the festive centrepiece workshop. If you have a gift item (or gently used item) you would like to contribute to the prize draw table, it will always be appreciated by someone.

A few members suggested that for next year, we hold the AGM, Awards and possibly the potluck together in November and have the festive centrepiece workshop in December so that the centrepiece is fresher towards Christmas. So please let us know how you feel about this suggestion. Your input is important for this decision. Please drop me an email or mention it at the potluck to myself or one of the Board members.

We were blessed with a mild sunny day today (November 30) after that blast of cold the previous week so I planted the last of some tulips in a spot that will cheer up an area in the spring.

I had the opportunity to visit Carol at Soul Metal today and they are having a big show this weekend. Tell your friends! Lots of opportunity for Christmas shopping. There are many beautiful pieces of garden art including polished stainless steel; lilies and other works in all shapes and sizes.

In the newsletter you will see the flowering dogwood tree we planted in memory of John Baine. We did this Nov. 19. For new members, John Baine, a Past President and lifetime member died on November 18, 2022. For many years, John was an Assistant District 6 Director. In the spring of 2024 the Freulton Strabane church plans to have a formal ceremony to honour both John and Reverend Raymund Albright who was the founder of our Society. A Serviceberry was planted in his honour.

Lastly, our 2024 Spring Breakfast Poster will go with this newsletter so that you can think about early baking and freezing an item or two. Baking volunteers will be needed as will volunteers to help make our hosting a success.

Best wishes Susan MacMillan

Meeting and Speaker Information

Date: Wed., Jan. 17, 2024

Time: 7:00 pm

Refreshments served prior to meeting

Speaker: Kristen Martyn

Topic: Gardening for Birds

Flower Show: A photo of your summer garden.

Email to flamhort@hotmail.com by Jan. 15

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

November Greens Workshop



We had 45 sign up for the centerpiece workshop run by Connie Godyn. After our AGM, the participants got busy with arranging their greens, followed by the addition of decorative elements. The results were stunning!

Many thanks to Connie for organizing and running this workshop and for the purchase of so many creative live and dried accents which resulted in lovely centerpieces.

December Garden Tasks

Gardeners NEVER stop gardening!

- Finish applying mulch to gardens
- Erect shelters over shrubs requiring protection from wind and ice and heavy snowfall
- Continue to water newly planted trees and shrubs.
- It's not too late to plant shrubs and trees if the ground has not yet frozen.
- If cold stratifying seeds, remember to place them in the refrigerator or freezer.
- Tulip bulbs can still be planted if the ground is not frozen
- Wrap the lower trunks of young trees to prevent animals like mice and voles from eating the bark.

Horticultural Society Events

Christmas Dinner December 6

Time: 6pm

Location: St. Thomas the Apostle Church, Waterdown

The Christmas potluck is back by popular demand! A sign up sheet has been passed around during the in person meeting and emailed to members. There will be music and a powerpoint show along with turkey and ham and all the scrumptious side dishes and desserts from members.

Reminder: Please bring your own plates, mugs and cutlery!

OHA 50/50 Draw

The final draw in the OHA 50/50 Raffle will be held December 16th.

Tickets are available at
[Rafflebox](#)

Time to Plant Your Amaryllis!

Amaryllis bulbs usually take six to eight weeks to bloom after planting. I time mine so that I get blooms later in January rather than during Christmas as I already have poinsettias during that time.

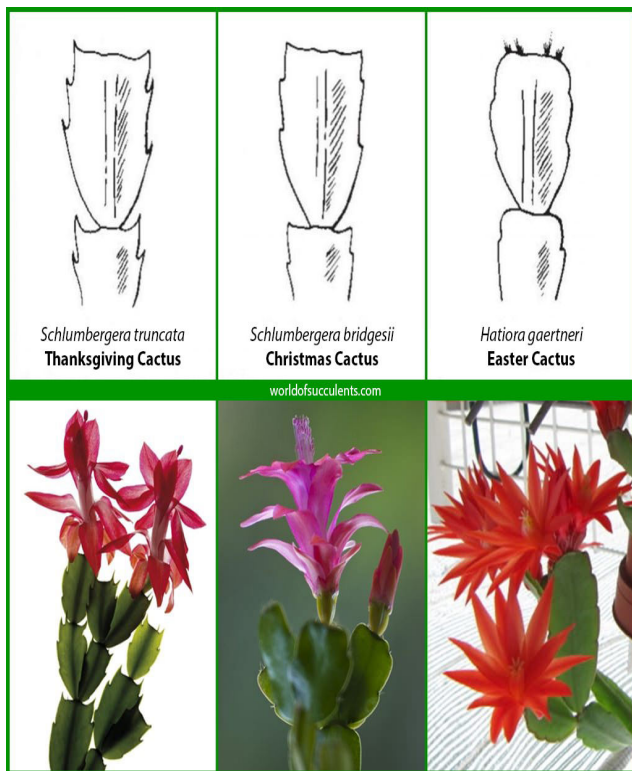
Larger bulbs will produce larger and more numerous blooms. They have been known to bloom for up to 75 years!

Keeping them in bright, indirect light will prevent the stems from stretching too much as they grow. Water regularly, but do not overwater. A support stake may be necessary to keep the blooms upright. Keeping them cool and out of direct sunlight will also prolong blooms.

Christmas Cactus?

The most commonly sold plant in stores and nurseries is usually NOT a Christmas Cactus but rather a Thanksgiving Cactus! Check the shape of the leaves to identity your plant!

Read more here: ["Holiday Cactus"](#)



Civic Improvement (by Jan Bignell)



Civic Improvement is one of the major tenants of our Horticultural Society as defined by the Agricultural and Horticultural Organizations Act. Currently we have four garden sites which are maintained by volunteers. We could always use more help, and would welcome suggestions about other projects.

The main garden in Waterdown is at the corner of John and Hamilton street. This garden is a colourful display of mostly perennials plus an heuchera bed and day lilies and grasses along the fence line. Some summers it has been difficult to maintain this garden as there is no nearby water supply, although we are helped by the township landscaper when they water the hanging baskets. Volunteers who look after this garden are Rosanne Waugh, assisted by Sabina McPhee and more recently Darryl Fletcher, who has also committed to help out next year.

A bench on Hwy 5 near Goldenvue and Sunnycroft streets, is surrounded by grasses and sedums which is another hot spot, without a water supply. Heather Wilson maintains this bed.

There are two small beds on Brock Road in Freelon, above the sports field; one is very shady and is filled with Hosta and contains the

Centennial Sign. Liz Henderson looks after these gardens. Extra help from other members would be welcome.

We also maintain the garden at the Freelton Library which is mostly perennials and grasses with some annuals for extra colour. Recently we have been buying them in the "Colour of the Year" which is suggested annually by the Communities in Bloom group. The size of the purple alliums which pop up in this bed every year is amazing! Jan Bignell maintains this one with help from Liz Henderson.

Each year in the Festive season, we deliver Poinsettias to local retirement and nursing homes in the area, for their enjoyment.

We also give advice to other groups who have garden projects such as the vegetable garden at Grace Anglican Church. This year we also provided some plants for a local school initiative to upgrade their garden.

Memorial Tree Planting



Jan Bignell, Susan MacMillan, Marilyn Brown, Trudy Bliedung, Roy Horlick and Linda Baine

Our Society was founded by the local Freelton Minister the Rev. Albright in 1939 as a way to encourage people to garden during the second

world war. We have recently replanted a tree in his memory at the Strabane/Freelton United Church, and also one in memory of John Baine who had been the Society President for some years and was a lifetime member. In Spring we will plant another tree in honour of Rosemary Brown, a wonderful long time member and a great gardener, to commemorate her 100th birthday.

Reading Corner:

The Toronto Botanical Garden's award winning magazine, "Trellis" is available online. Filled with stunning photography and informative articles, it will provide a great pastime to replace the hours we used to spend in our gardens!

[Trellis](#)

Garden Ontario

Read the latest Trillium Newsletter and OHA news here: [Trillium Newsletter](#)

Ontario Invasive Plant Council

Read the latest updates: [OIPC](#)

Dealing With Scale

I have lost a number of plants to scale due to a lack of diligence followed by putting off treatment! It's important to regularly inspect plants that have been outdoors and that are most susceptible to scale. They appear as small hard, brown bumps. Scale can easily be removed by dipping a cotton swab or a soft toothbrush into rubbing alcohol and wiping them off the plant. Check both sides of leaves, stalks and stems. Prune and dispose of severely affected branches. Wipe down all the leaves as the larva are only 1/100 of an inch and not always visible to the eye.

Consider Planting Winterberry

Winterberry (*Ilex verticillata*) is a great native replacement for Holly. This is a deciduous shrub that typically grows about 3 m in height. Small, greenish white flowers emerge in June and July followed by bright red berries. Since the berries only grow on female plants, a male plant is also required. The brilliant red berries are showy in late fall and early winter. They also provide food for cedar waxwings, robins, bluebirds, catbirds and even woodpeckers. They are also a valuable nectar source for honey bees. An added bonus is that deer do not eat them! This plant spreads well and can form small colonies. The roots can be useful for controlling erosion. Winterberry grows best in normal to wet conditions with full to partial sun and is fairly shade tolerant as well. It can grow in a variety of soil types, including sand and clay. This shrub can be naturally found in wet meadows, wet forests, around marshes or swamps, and along river or lake shorelines.

Feeding the Birds

If you are hesitant about putting up bird feeders lest they attract rodents like mice and rats, a good alternative is to have native plants in the garden which will provide food for the birds. Leaving perennials like goldenrod and coneflowers uncut is a good start. Planting native shrubs to provide food and a spot to roots is also an option.

Consider the space and light conditions when choosing a shrub. For small gardens, there are many varieties that grow up to 1m such as snowberry and others such as Serviceberry and Pagoda Dogwood that can emulate small trees.

Read more here: [Best Native Shrubs for Ontario](#)

Poinsettia: Did You Know?

I had planned on not buying a Poinsettia this year, but then I made the fatal error of stopping in at a local nursery and walking past the large display! There are so many more varieties on sale now than the usual red ones of decades ago. In fact, there are more than 100 varieties available today (but not all in one nursery)!

- Poinsettias are named after Joel Roberts Poinsett, who was a botanist, physician and the first United States Ambassador to Mexico. He sent cuttings of the plant he had discovered in Southern Mexico to his home in Charleston, South Carolina in 1928, thus introducing it to the USA.
- In Mexico, the poinsettia is a perennial shrub that grows (3m to 5m) 10 to 15 feet tall.
- The colorful part of the poinsettia, commonly referred to as the plant's flowers, are actually modified leaves or bracts. The true flowers are the small yellow to green centers of the bracts.
- No more pollen, no more colorful bracts! The plant loses its bracts and leaves soon after the tiny little flowers in the middle shed their pollen. For the longest-lasting Poinsettias, pick ones with **little or no** yellow pollen showing. (I just checked the one I was not supposed to buy this year, and NO yellow pollen is showing- which is a good sign!)
- Plants held in sleeves will deteriorate quickly as it results in poor drainage if overwatered. (I am removing the sleeve right away as this may be why I have killed mine in recent years!)

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

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 2023/24

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 and an open position

Sign Standardization – Ann Cochren

Speakers and Programs – Connie Godyn & Roxanne Riley

In seed time learn, in harvest teach, in winter enjoy.

William Blake