

Dirt Newsletter

Ontario Horticultural Association – District 6



Assistant District Directors (ADDs)

Here are your ADDs and
their assigned societies.

Bob Heil – Lynden
Brantford, Winona

Susan MacMillan –
Waterford, Oakville,
Ancaster

Marie Decker – Acton,
Milton & District,
Georgetown

Liz Chappel – Stoney
Creek, Mt Hamilton,
Haldimand

Christine Scheewe
Burlington, Flamborough,
and Bronte

Martine Emery Kelman –
Paris, Glen Morris, St
George

Janet Lala – Delhi,
Simcoe, Port Dover/
Woodhouse

Message From District Director Lianne Krane

Season's Greetings to all our dedicated members!

As we approach the end of the year, we reflect on the wonderful progress and achievements we've experienced together as a District in 2024. From vibrant events to successful community projects, your dedication has been truly inspiring, and we couldn't have done it without each and every one of you.

As we begin planning for an even more exciting 2025, we're grateful for all the efforts made so far. Many Societies have already held their AGMs, with others gearing up for theirs in January. We want to offer our sincere thanks to the members stepping up to help run their Societies – whether as part of a Board of Directors or by serving on committees. Your leadership and hard work are what keep us all moving forward.

It's also that time of year for your Society's year-end reporting to OHA and OMAFA. Please remember to submit your volunteer hours right away. Your contributions truly make a difference, and it's important we get these hours documented to reflect the value of our collective work.

Additionally, this is the perfect opportunity to recognize deserving members of your Society through the OHA awards program. There's also free funding available through OHA that could benefit your Society, so please take the time to put forward nominations. The deadlines for most awards and grants are February 28th, but for all the details, forms, and deadlines, visit: <https://gardenontario.org/resources/awards-and-grants/>.

We thank you for your ongoing commitment to our District and to the wider gardening community. Let's continue to work together and look forward to a new year filled with opportunities, growth, and success.

On behalf of the District Board – Susan, Bob, Marie, Liz, Martine, Janet, Christine, and myself, we would like to extend our warmest Merry Christmas and a very and prosperous New Year to each of you and your families. Have a joyful and restful holiday season.

With gratitude,
Lianne Krane, District Director

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See Germination

Seeds have one or more mechanisms for blocking germination until conditions are right. Many seeds need not only soaking, but also a slight drying period.

Some plants produce a hormone, gibberellin, that aids in germination. You can also soak seeds in a solution of Gibberellic Acid-3 (GA-3) a hormone that aids in germination. The Ontario Rock Garden and Hardy Plant Society has details about [GA-3](#).

Seed Saving

Learn about all its benefits

<https://www.epicgardening.com/save-seeds>

Winter Sowing

Cold Stratification and Examples

The cold temperature breaks down the seed coat, and moisture enters the seed to allow it to germinate when planted. Mix the seeds with a small amount of barely damp sand or soilless potting mix. For larger seeds, a paper towel or coffee filter works; for really small seeds use the smallest amount of sand and baggy technique. Do more than follow the seed packet directions to find out whether seeds should be first soaked 1-2 hrs. in water and then for the duration of 4-12 weeks, in the refrigerator. Plant after this elapsed time. When cold stratifying over winter, a second option is to place seed/ soilless potting mix outside in rodent-proof containers. Example: 15 L plastic water containers etc. Cut most of the circumference of the container about three" from the bottom. Leave about two" uncut. Place soilless mix in the container, add

the seeds barely cover with soil, close over the top and tape the section back. Poke holes in the lid to allow moisture in while keeping rodents out.

For a list of seeds that like cold stratification and ones that need light to germinate see

<https://barbolian.com/cold-stratified-seeds/>

This is another list

<https://www.ecofriendlyhomestead.com/sustainable-garden/learn/list-of-flowers-herbs-and-vegetables-that-need-cold-stratification>

Dry seeds are dormant. Soaking a seed ends its dormancy and embryonic development begins.

Soak the following seeds first; 30 minutes to 24 hrs. in water; Corn, pumpkin, beans, chard, beets, cucumbers, squash, and peas.

Do not soak these seeds - flowers that have super tiny seeds, like sweet alyssum, campanula, verbena, daisies, black eyed Susans, pansies, petunias, carrots, lettuce, radish, celery, turnips, cauliflower, spinach and herbs. Larger seeds might need the edges sanded or use an emery board.

Cold-Moist Stratification

Cold moist stratification is as above but a little extra moisture is added. Keep the soil consistently moist but not wet until the seeds germinate. Plant after this elapsed time.

Examples:

Asclepias Seeds
New England Aster Seeds
Black Eyed Susan Seeds
Blue False Indigo - needs to be scarred/roughed up with sandpaper first.



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Caper Seeds
Columbine Seeds
Coneflower Seeds
Delphinium Seeds
Foxglove beardtongue- 30 days stratification.
Larkspur Seeds
Lavender Seeds
Marshmallow Seeds
Mugwort Seeds
Perennial Blue Flax
Rocky Mountain Bee Plant Seed
Sunflower Maximilian Seeds
For more information see
<https://grow.edenbrothers.com/>

Allium 'Purple Sensation' and Eryngium giganteum need a long period of cold-moist stratification with alternating temperatures. These are the most difficult seeds to germinate. See also Norman C. Deno's work on "[Seed Germination Theory and Practice](#)," published in 1993, currently out of print but online at the link.

Double Dormancy

Double dormancy is defined as a condition where seeds need to overcome two or more primary dormancies to germinate; Examples include seed that needs to have the seed coat damaged so water can be absorbed, and then it needs a cold period before radicle growth. Both the seed coat and the seed embryo require this double dormancy if they are to germinate.

Seed that needs a warm period to complete embryo development, and then needs a cold period for radicle development, e.g., peony seed, lilies, dogwoods, junipers, and lilacs Trilliums also require two "winters." So, 60 days in the fridge, 60 days in a warm dark area, 60 more days in the fridge as their second dormancy period, then bring them out to plant. Check to make sure the seeds are still a bit moist. Remove any seeds that have

germinated early so they do not turn into mould.

For a good video on Cold Stratification see
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6khqhtdc9Xk>

Seed viability chart

<https://empressofdirt.net/seed-viability-chart/>

Robert Pavlis has won the Independent Publisher Book Award for Science with his book, Plant Science for Gardeners. See his Seed Starting Tricks
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wzXBD27wKRQ>

One of the best Germination Guides

<https://onrockgarden.com/index.php/germination-guide>

This section contains:

- [Germination Guide Plant List](#)
- [Germination Guide Overview](#)
- [Use of GA3](#)
- [Germination Codes](#)

Thirteen seeds that need to be soaked before planting:

<https://www.epicgardening.com/seeds-to-soak-before-planting/>

Sedges, rushes, and grasses all LOOK like grasses but they are actually three different kinds of plants. A good way to help differentiate them is:

While sedges have edges and rushes are round, grasses have joints when the cops are around.

Nutritional values still remain in some dried herbs See

<https://nutritionovereasy.com/2011/04/dried-herbs-and-spices-have-nutritional-value/>

Citizen Science/Birding Events

Dec. 14: Christmas Bird Count, Long Point, stu.a.mackenzie@gmail.com, register

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Dec. 15: Christmas Bird Count, Cambridge, levicmoore@gmail.com, register

Dec. 16: Christmas Bird Count, Point Pelee, pelee.info@pc.gc.ca, register

Society Events

Acton

No Jan. meeting.

Ancaster

Jan. 21, 2025, Don Bodnar, Beekeeper, D. B. Bee Sanctuary. "It Is All About the Bees"

Feb. 18, Michael Albanese owner of Avesi "Storm Water and Landscape Solutions – Rain Gardens"

Mar. 18, Heidi Mungal owner of Generations Marketplace and Learning Centre "Modern Day Homesteading"

Apr. 15, Kim Drew owner of Purple Haven Lavender Farm "All Things Lavender"

Thanks to Betty Howitt for a fantastic lineup of events happening in our area.

Brantford

Thurs. Dec 12 Christmas dinner party 6 pm provided by Alice's Catering. Speaker: Heather Cardle: "Nature Photography"

Feb 13. Let's Get Growing: Q&A Gardening Forum including Starting plants from cuttings demo. Mark Meloun & Joanna Korchowiec-Szeksztello.

Mar. 13 Sycamore Hill Farm: Honey & Organically grown Flowers Colin Phillips & Mandey Moote

Apr 10. Water in every Garden. Isa Webb.

Bronte

Meeting Speakers: Jan. 28, Anelia Tichkova from Oakvillegreen "The Mighty Benefits of Mini Forests"

Feb. 25, Andrea Rowe and Dr. Gilles Lapointe "From the Ground Up: A Reciprocal Relationship with Mother Earth"

March 25, Dorte Windmuller "Gardening for Bees, Birds, and Butterflies"

Burlington

January 8: Catherine McGill: "When the Ground gets Lower: aging and gardening."

February 12 ZOOM meeting: Anna Leggatt: "Vegetable Gardening in Containers"

March 12: Sean James: "An Appetite for Gardening- Incorporating Edibles"

April 9: Shaun Booth: "Managing Invasive Species in the Garden"

Follow-up from their October Guest Speaker: Olga Marranca, who spoke about plant propagation sent Gardeners of Burlington these websites for further information and reference:

<https://www.purdue.edu/hla/sites/yardandgarden/extpub/new-plants-from-cuttings-text-only/>

<https://empressofdirt.net/grow-softwood-cuttings/>

<https://empressofdirt.net/grow-hardwood-cuttings/>

[Seed stratification: What seeds require cold treatment | Good Growing | Illinois Extension | UIUC](#)

Delhi a.k.a. Delhi Dogwood Gardeners



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Jan 13 Fancy Farmerettes. Sustainable Living for Hobby Farmers and the Eco-minded

Feb 10 David Gascoigne. Urban Birds

Mar 10. Jackie Ellesfen presents Native Gardening for Wildlife

Flamborough- 3rd Wed. 7:30pm

Jan. 15 Rebecca Sweet. **This one is VIA Zoom.** When and How to Break the Rules of Garden Design. Her gardens have been featured in many national and regional publications, such as Sunset, Garden Design, Fine Gardening, and Horticulture Magazine. Rebecca has also been featured on PBS series Growing a Greener World and has also been a radio guest on numerous programs, including Martha Stewart Living.

One of our members as well as members from Lynden have gone to Cuba for a garden tour and the tour was given a great review. For anyone interested [see www.cuba1tours.com](http://www.cuba1tours.com) and click on 'Garden and Culture tour.' **They still have a few openings for Feb.**

Sat, Feb. 1st, Seedy Saturday.

Hamilton Central Library (4th floor) – 55 York BLVD, Hamilton. This brings together garden-minded vendors, and local organizations. For anyone interested in backyard gardening, edible gardening, pollinator gardens, sustainability, heirloom and organic seed supplies, and more! Vendors, exhibitors and speakers.

Feb 19, 2025, Onsite meeting. Cindy Saunders. Balcony Gardening and Gardening in Small Spaces. St Thomas Church 715 Centre Rd Waterdown

Mar 19, Heineken Theissen 'Picture Perfect'

Georgetown 3rd Tues. 7:30 PM

Jan 21, with Don Scallen - Wildflowers of the Bruce

Feb 18, AGM, and Framed Moss Art Workshop with Catherin McGill

Mar 18, with Lorraine Johnson-Rogue Gardeners and the Weed Police

Glen Morris

Dec. 7: Self-Guided Dark Sky Night, Point Pelee Nat'l Park, 7:30 pm to midnight.

Dec. 11: Plant, Sip & Shop, Walter's Greenhouses, preregister, \$60, 6:30 - 8:30

No January Meeting

Mon Feb 3, Glen Morris United Church, 7:15 p.m. "The Art of Willow Basketry"- Johnny Suderman.

Mar. 3. For the Birds. Feeder Workshop

Apr 7 Birds Around the World

Haldimand

Jan 23 Meeting. Melinda Ramsey (Lickety Spit Fibre Farm)

Feb 27 Meeting. Nick Winklemolen-Trees

Mar 27 Meeting. Fisherville Greenhouses- fresh Ginger and share boxes.

Apr. 5 Seed and Garden Show

Lynden

NO Jan meeting

Feb 3 Nick Winklemolen speaking on "Winklemolen's Past, Present and Future of Trees."

Milton

Jan. AGM

Feb speaker TBA

Mt. Hamilton

Jan 17 AGM / Induction of Officers, Speaker: Connie Dam-Byl. Topic: Boldly Go

Feb. 21 Darren Heimbecker 'Peonies'

Mar. 21 Theresa Forte. 'The Writer's Garden'

Apr 25 Fancy Farmerettes. 'Hemp'

Oakville

Mon Dec 9 AGM and potluck, 6PM 89 Dunn St Oakville, Knox Presbyterian Church.

Feb.

Mar.

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Paris

Jan. 8th. Meeting, AGM, Installation of Executive and Directors.
Virtual tour of Reford Gardens, located in Grand-Metis QC, presented by Dave Collins.
Feb

Port Dover/Woodhouse

Jan 16 AGM/Installation, potluck, and entertainment by the Carillon Belles Chorus
Feb 20 Guest speakers - Fancy Farmerettes
Mar 20 Bernie Solymar presents Ephemera Wildflowers in Norfolk County

Simcoe

Jan. No Meeting
AGM Jan 8 at 6 pm and a potluck. Our entertainment is going to be a magician.
Feb. No meeting
Mar. 1 Seedy Saturday run by Heidi Mungal and Sarah Judd, 9 am at the library.
Mar. 12 Paul Oliver from the Urban Nature Store is presenting. Time: 7:30.

St. George

Tues. Feb. 18th- St. George Firehall 7:00 pm.
Topic: Regenerative Farming- Gord Alblas and Doug Donkers.
Design Challenge: Homemade bird treat using natural material.
Tues. Mar 18th St. George Firehall 7:00 pm
Topic: Pruning Trees and Shrubs- Demonstration- Trent Meyers
Design Challenge: Forced branch from a flowering shrub. Member seed exchange

Stoney Creek

Jan 13, Green Venture. Growing Our Garden's Climate Resilience.
Feb 20 Jennifer Gould Seeds and starting the process.
Mar 12, Silent Auction

Apr 14, Trillium awards process. Ann Cochran and Joanne Hofstee will talk about the Trillium Awards.

Waterford

Jan 28 AGM and Potluck
Mar. 4 Fancy Farmerettes. Hemp for Gardens and Homesteads
Apr 1. Christine and Jim Roberts. Habitat Gardening/At Risk Wildlife

Winona

January - AGM
Feb.- speaker T.B.A.
March - demo/presentation on botanicals in kombucha with Heather Farmer.
April-Monet's Garden through the eyes of our photographer/member Maggie Martin

Past Notable Events:

District 6 Breakfast Meeting Hosted by Lynden Hort. Society Sept 14.

With assistance from Brantford H.S.
Nick Winkelmolen " Winkelmolens: The Past, Present and Future of Trees."
Thank you to Lynden for being such a great host to the event and for all of Brantford's contributions. The many questions to Nick were indicative of all the interest in their operations.

Cathy Kavassalis also wowed us
Presenting current information on invasive plants at a Lynden Fall Breakfast Meeting.



Photo credit: Lianne Krane

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District 6 Dinner and Winona's 95th Birthday

Congratulations to Winona for hosting a fabulous dinner and 95th birthday celebration. Great food, an opportunity to socialize and meet new members, prize draws, and optional games. A truly well-organized event.



Two Photos above by Susan MacMillan



Carol Mathison & Christine Scheewe at their wheelbarrows full of prizes
Photo Credit: Lianne Krane

Ancaster Submission

Ancaster Horticultural Society – Keeping Ancaster Beautiful. Established in 1961
On Nov. 19, 2024, the society held its annual holiday dinner and AGM.



The Ancaster executive members were confirmed and the additional volunteers in various roles continue to move ahead with their roles for 2025.

Bob Wilt presented the following awards: President's Awards to Donna Fraser and Liz Martin below with Bob Wilt.



Blue Ruffle Awards to Jeanne Robertson, Sharon Lee, and Carolyn Bonderencko
Ancaster Photos above by David Puskas

Mayor's Award to Carol Howe.

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Photo by David Puskas

A Special Award also goes to Sue Freshwater, President and Vice President of our Society who has led our Plant Sales for over 24 years. Our special guests were Susan MacMillan, OHA District 6 Assistant Director, Nancy Hurst, Assistant to Councilor Craig Cassar, and Al Frisini, co-owner of Harpers Garden Centre.

Our amended Code of Conduct was reviewed and passed by attending members. The Board of Directors for 2024. There were three board meetings and nine general meetings with two via Zoom. We participated in various presentations throughout the year and events like the Plant Sale and Trillium Awards. Members volunteered to maintain gardens at Fieldcote plus Ancaster's municipal gardens. New members joined the Board of Directors this year.

On Wed. Dec. 4th at 9:30 am. Volunteers are decorating the Ancaster Old Town Hall for the holidays. We continue to utilize Instagram and Facebook to promote and engage the community to share our events, speakers, and presentations. Social media is now the major source of information in the community. We continue to support local community organizations in the hope we can share our events and with their support we can benefit each other locally.

From our Society to yours. We wish you a Merry Christmas, Happy Holidays, and all the best for the New Year.

"May your walls know joy, may every room hold laughter, and every window open to great possibility." –Mary Anne Radmacher
Publicity Director, Rhu Sherrard 2024 /2025

Watershed Steward Award Flamborough Horticultural Society (FHS) Member

While the town of Waterdown is part of Hamilton, much of its watershed is on private land within the Halton Region Conservation area. This year the Hamilton Watershed Stewardship Program and Conservation Halton co-hosted the annual Watershed Stewards Appreciation Day that took place on October 5, 2024. We celebrated 30 years of stewardship programming, the contributions of over 300 landowners to the conservation, protection, and enhancement of our local wildlife, meadows, streams, woodlands, wetlands, valley lands and the escarpment. This year FHS member Ann Martin received one of the Watershed Stewardship awards. Congratulations Ann!



Ann Martin. Photo by John Martin

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Other News- Hosting District Events

At a recent D6 Board meeting and after many District members expressed their concerns with driving at night to dinners, your District Board passed a motion to combine the Fall Breakfast and Dinner into a Fall brunch.

Anticipate that workshops, including judges' workshops will continue at the Spring Breakfast Meetings. Send your District Executive some topics you would like presented at workshops. The hosting signup sheet is going out to Societies to share with your members. Please consider hosting or co-hosting and let other societies help you celebrate an anniversary.

Blooming Boulevards Online Workshops over the Winter and spring for a nominal donation. Enroll [here](#)

[Christmas Cactus or Thanksgiving? How to ID Your Plant](#) Photo Credit: Empress of Dirt



See the Winter issue of Ontario Nature [here](#)



Launched	Sales End	Draw Date	Draw Location
Sun Sep 29 2024	Fri Dec 13 2024	Sat Dec 14 2024	11:00 AM - 59 Glen Cannon Drive, Stony Creek ON L9G 4E1

This Draw ends Dec 14 [BUY Tickets HERE](#)



Details and tickets [HERE](#)



OHA Shop [HERE](#)