



# Mediterranean Gardening France

[www.mediterraneangardeningfrance.org](http://www.mediterraneangardeningfrance.org)

**MARCH 2020**

Dear members and friends,

## PROGRAMME OF ACTIVITIES IN FRANCE

**Thursday 30 April, Beaumes-de-Venise and Le Barroux, Vaucluse**

**A walk and a visit to Tony Stone's garden, La Jeg.**



In the morning we will have an easy walk amongst vineyards and admire spectacular views over Mont Ventoux and the Dentelles de Montmirail. At midday we have been invited to picnic in the garden of members Nanouk and Hugues Pelen, who live nearby. Then we'll visit Tony Stone's garden, La Jeg, in Le Barroux.

Photo (Clive Nichols): The view from La Jeg towards Mont Ventoux

Tony is a photographer, and together with renowned garden designer, Anthony Paul, he has created a magical mix of sweeping panoramas, beautiful plantings and perfectly framed views. Tony has a love of land art and as you follow the winding paths through the garden you will admire many thoughtfully placed contemporary sculptures. This is a remarkable and engaging garden and even if you already know La Jeg, you will be delighted by new discoveries every time you visit.

To book a place, please contact [Tilly Chambers](#)

**Wednesday 13 May, Vers-Pont-du-Gard, Gard**

**MGF Annual General Meeting, Pont-du-Gard**



This year our Annual General Meeting will be held on Wednesday 13 May at the UNESCO World Heritage Site, Pont du Gard. The Roman aqueduct, built in the first century AD to carry water to the city of Nîmes, crosses the Gardon river near the town of Vers-Pont-du-Gard.

Planning is underway and a booking form will be circulated in early April. We plan to hold our meeting in the morning, followed by lunch. Members will then be free to explore the extensive site with its thousand-year-old olive trees, botanical garden, preserved Mediterranean landscape - the 'Memoires de Garrigue' and a 19c charcoal kiln.

In order to help with planning, it would be useful to have an indication of how many members will be with us on the day.

If you haven't already done so, and think you are likely to attend, please write to [Christine Daniels](#).

### **Wednesday 10 June, Simiane la Rotonde (Alpes-de-Haute-Provence)**

**A day out to visit the gardens of the Abbaye de Valsaintes and learn about how to use essential oils in the garden.**



The Abbaye de Valsaintes, a 7th century Cistercian abbey and restored church is located near Simiane la Rotonde in the east Vaucluse. The gardens are classed as a Jardin Remarquable and include a dry garden, with 350 plant species; an ecological potager, using permaculture techniques and a rose garden, where one follows a path tracing the history of roses (550 species). At an altitude of 600m, the abbey is ideally situated for roses which benefit from cooler nights. Our guide will be Jean-Yves Meignen, the head gardener at the abbey, who gives daily gardening tips on Radio Bleu Vaucluse and has a Q&A session on Saturday mornings. He advocates

natural gardening, ie chemical-free, in particular using essential oils. <http://www.valsaintes.org/>

The visit is scheduled for 10 June 2020; at this time the roses will be in full bloom. It will be divided into two parts: in the morning, a guided 1h30 visit of the gardens (dry garden, roses, potager...) with Jean-Yves Meignen. This will be followed by a 30' guided tour of the church and demonstration of Gregorian chant. 14€ per person. In the afternoon Jean-Yves will give us a talk and demonstration on using essential oils in the garden, including making blends for specific uses and how to apply them. 9€ per person. The day will start at 10:30am and end at about 4:00pm.

For lunch, we can either take our picnics as there is a picnic area in the gardens; or enjoy a casual meal in the abbey's cafeteria (more details on that in the spring).

Contact: Frances Horne: frances.c.horne@orange.fr

## **INTERNATIONAL ACTIVITIES**

For a full list of international events, go to the [MGF website](#).

### **23-31 August, SOUTH AFRICA**

#### **A Visit to the Fairest Cape (MGi event organised by the Cape Horticultural Society)**

Places still available – but you need to act soon !

From organiser, Glenda Thorpe in Cape Town, "We still regard our part of the world as The Fairest Cape and the speakers we have lined up for you will tell you why. Talks will cover the South African contribution to the international plant world, how people explored our land in search of plants and what we are doing to preserve our national heritage."

23 to 27 August - Pre-conference tour of Namaqualand at height of spring bulbs flowering season.

28 to 31 August 2020 - Core programme International Conference held at the historic Athenaeum in Cape Town at the foot of Table Mountain. Speakers and visits to notable private and public gardens. Special guided tour of Kirstenbosch included and possible day tour to Stellenbosch.

Full information and up to date schedule available on request from CapeHortSoc

[info@capehorticulturalsociety.co.za](mailto:info@capehorticulturalsociety.co.za)

Contact: [Glenda Thorpe](#)

## In the Winter MGAP newsletter: Headlines of the MGAP (Mediterranean Garden Association Portugal) events and news

MGF members are welcome to attend activities if they are travelling in Portugal.

- \* SPRING GARDEN FAIR will take place in São Bras at the Poeta Bernardo de Passos school on SUNDAY March 22
- \* Annual General Meeting will take place on SATURDAY March 7 at Silves
- \* BOTANIC GARDEN OPEN Sunday February 2
- \* NEW EDITION of The Dry Gardening Handbook now available from MGAP
- \* FREE SEEDS available from the joint MGS/MGi seed list – updated January 2020

Full details when you follow this link to the [Newsletter](#)

### OTHER DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

#### Plant fairs and open gardens

15 Feb - 3 March	Fête du Citron	Menton (Alpes-Maritimes)
28 February and 7 March	Collect wild salad leaves at la Soldanelle. S'inscrire par mail <a href="mailto:la.soldanelle.83@gmail">la.soldanelle.83@gmail</a>	Rougiers (Var)
7/8 March	L'art des Jardins	Ille-sur-Têt (Pyrénées-Orientales)
7/8 March	Expo-Vente Plantes, Nature & Terroir	Nîmes (Gard))
14/15 March	Journée des Plantes Rares au Domaine d'Orvès	La Valette-du-Var (Var)
22 March	Primavera	Montpellier (Hérault)
28/29 March	Fête des Jardins	Antibes (Alpes-Maritimes)
4/5 April	Un Printemps sous les Arbres	Saint-Brès (Hérault)
4/5 April	Les Journées Fleurs et Jardins	Maraussan (Hérault)
4/5 April	Floralies De Château Campuget	Manduel (Gard)
4/5 April	Fêté des plantes au parc Aurélien	Fréjus (Alpes-Maritimes)
11/12 April	Fête des plantes au MUCEM	Marseille (B-du-R)
11/12 April	Marché aux fleurs	Cassis (B-du-R))
12 April	Les Florales	Figanières (Var)
18 April	Fête du Printemps	Le Pontet (Vaucluse)
18 April	Marché aux fleurs	Bédoin (Vaucluse)
18/19 April	Plantes Rares et Jardin Naturel	Sérignan-du-Comtat (Vaucluse)
24-26 April	Naturévert, salon dédié au Jardin Durable	Nimes (Gard)
25/26 April	Portes ouvertes chez Tillandsia Prod	Le Cailar (Gard)
26 April	Salon Floridays	Auriol (Bouches-du-Rhone)
26 April	Fete des fleurs	Carpentras (Vaucluse)
26 April	Floralies de Florensac	Florensac (Hérault)
26 April	Festival Art et Jardin	Lussan (Gard)
26 April	Fleurs en fête dans le parc du château de Pignan	Pignan (Hérault)

14-15 May	Voyage annuel	Var
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All MGF members are welcome to join Hortus activities. For more information about Hortus, go to the [website](#). To book a place for any of the events in the Hortus programme, contact [Chantal Maurice](#).

## NEWS AND INFORMATION

### Mediterranean Gardening France website

The [WHAT'S NEW?](#) page has a summary of material added recently.



“Florence is best known for its magnificent art treasures, but if you leave behind the crowded city centre, walk across the river to Oltrarno and head steeply upwards, you will find another treasure: the Giardino Bardini.”

Read more in this [article and photos](#) by Michèle Bailey on gardens of Florence, Italy.

### Update to Seed List

Chantal Guiraud has updated our seed list for spring 2020, with the addition of seeds of over 80 new Mediterranean-climate plants. Some are old favourites; others have never been on the list before. Here is a selection:



*Argemone  
ochroleuca*



*Bupleurum  
longifolium 'Bronze  
Beauty'*



*Corynabutilon x  
suntense*



*Eucomis bicolor*



*Kniphofia uvaria*



*Melica ciliata*



*Orlaya grandiflora*



*Rhodochiton  
atrosanguineum*



*Scabiosa japonica*



*Verbascum  
blattaria f.  
albiflorum*

Chantal thanks everyone who has sent in seed and hopes to receive orders from many of you. You'll find the updated seed list [here](#). Send your order to Chantal either by post (see website for address) or [email](#).



## GARDEN IDEA (by Julie Kinney, seen in the Mediterranean Garden Margaret River Newsletter)

“ An idea I have been trialing for a couple of summers is to use a liner in the terracotta pots I love to collect.

Find plastic flower pots to fit each size of pot and plant into these. It also allows you to replace your potted show if using seasonal plants like bulbs. I remember reading about a garden in Provence which called them spots in pots and they became a seasonal feature, everything from bulbs to Agapanthus. For my big pots I have found that cheap plastic buckets fit well and I just make a few holes in the bottom with my garden fork. Of course, this means I need a place to house all those out of season pots and to nurture and repot as required. For those with small gardens this is a means for more variety, if like me you can't help yourself and want to keep collecting ”.

### WHAT IS IT?

In this topic, photographs of unusual plants, fruits, seeds or garden tools will be shown without the caption and readers are asked to identify them. The answer will be given in the following newsletter. The photos will also be available in the Members' Forum where you can suggest your answers. Contributions should be sent to [Roland Leclercq](#).

The “What is it?” in the January Newsletter (proposed by Chantal Guiraud) was a fruit of *Ficus pumila*.



*Ficus pumila*, commonly known as the creeping fig or climbing fig, behaves as a woody evergreen liana, native to East Asia where it is often used in gardens and landscapes covering the ground and climbing up trees and walls. It belongs to the *Moraceae* family. It loses leaves at 0°C and dies at -8°C. So, it is usually seen in our regions as a houseplant. However, it grows in the Chantal's garden in Montpellier since 2006 and produces fruits. For pollination, the presence of a fig fly is required. It deserves a try in your garden in a sheltered place.

The new “What is it?” is below (proposed by Annie Nivière). You can find a clue in the website (Forum, item “What is it?”). Answer in the next newsletter.



## What's new in the [members' Forum](#)

Here are some of the new topics being discussed on the members' forum.  
To see them, log into the member area and click on ACCESS THE FORUM

*MGi Forum comments & suggestion/ Can you upload photos from a smartphone or tablet?  
Pot pourri/New tomato virus and glyphosate update*

### TIP/ QUOTE OF THE MONTH

**Tip:** Sow seed of wild-flowers outside to encourage beneficial insects: poppies, nigellas, scabious.

**Quote:** The idea is not to copy nature but to give a feeling of nature (Piet Oudolf, Dutch garden designer, plant nursery man and author)

Best wishes

Roland Leclercq  
Newsletter editor

Please send contributions to this newsletter to: [rolandlec@wanadoo.fr](mailto:rolandlec@wanadoo.fr)