



# Mediterranean Gardening France

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

**DECEMBER 2021**

Dear members and friends,

## PROGRAMME OF ACTIVITIES IN FRANCE

**Thursday 28 April, 11.00am, Le Barroux, Vaucluse**

**A visit to two gardens of MGF members**



Hedwige Lauwaert and Paul Kiekens write:

“Our garden is now four years old. We followed the planting layout and concept of our Belgian garden designer and transformed a mainly wooded piece of land, with hardly a view, into grounds laid out in terraces and open to the surrounding landscape. The garden is still a work in progress.”



Tony Stone 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.

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

To book a place for the visit to these two gardens contact [Hedwige Lauwaert](mailto:Hedwige.Lauwaert@mgf.fr).

**Wednesday 11 May, Vers-Pont-du-Gard, Gard**

**MGF Annual General Meeting**



We are pleased to have been able to re-book Pont-du-Gard as a venue for the 2022 AGM. This UNESCO World Heritage Site, with its Roman aqueduct, built in the first century AD to carry water to the city of Nîmes, will be a splendid place for us to get together again, two years later than originally planned.

We will hold our meeting in the morning, followed by lunch at the Les Terrasses restaurant. In the afternoon there will be a guided visit to the upper level of the bridge for up to 30 participants, or members can explore the extensive site with its thousand-year-old olive trees, botanical garden, preserved Mediterranean landscape (Memoires de Garrigue) and a 19c charcoal kiln.

Planning is underway and a booking form will be circulated in March.

## Other plans for Spring/Summer 2022

### Gardens in Aude

A two day visit, including Daniel Fiala's garden in Tourreilles, south of Limoux

### Fayence, Var

A visit to La Campagne Sainte-Marie and a garden belonging to MGF members

### Grignan and Nyons, Drôme

A guided rose walk and a visit to an ecological fair

## DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

### Plant fairs and open gardens 2022

29/30 January	Mimosalia	Bormes-les-Mimosas (Var)
4 -6 February	Salon des Orchidées	Vergèze (Gard)
5/6 February	Fête du Mimosa	Sainte-Maxime (Var)
12 -27 February	Fête du Citron	Menton (Alpes-Maritimes)
26/27 March	Fete des Jardins	Antibes (Alpes-Maritimes)
2/3 April	Plantes Rares et jardin naturel	Sérignan-du-Comtat (Vaucluse)

### Hortus Programme

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

### New on the website



The fig tree (*Ficus carica*) is one of the emblematic trees of the Mediterranean and the fig is considered to be the first fruit to have been cultivated by man 11,000 years ago. It was one of King Louis XIV's favourite fruits and 700 fig trees were planted in the vegetable garden of Versailles.

Read Roland Leclercq's summary of Pierre Baud's talk: [how to choose and care for fig trees](#)

Photo: *Ficus carica* 'Panachée'



### [Visits to a chateau garden and fig tree nursery](#)

Sara Robinson writes "Under a brooding September sky, a large group of enthusiastic MGF members gathered in a wine village west of Vaison-la-Romaine to visit a chateau garden designed by Alain Idoux, with contributions from Erik Borja. We were to be guided by the renowned fig and grenadine pépiniériste, Pierre Baud, who has acted as a horticultural consultant to the owners for more than 20 years."

Click on the link above to read more.

## Garden to visit.



### **Jardins-Secrets, Annecy 74.**

(reported by David Bracey)

This is the original quirky garden. Located in stunning rolling pre-alp countryside “Jardins - Secrets” combines touches of Moroccan tiles, norias, parterres, Alhambra, shaded rooms, hidden corners as well apothecaries jars and stuff from the region.

Worth a visit not for the botanical interest, but for the sheer audacity of the garden.

<https://www.jardins-secrets.com/>



Photos. Jardins secrets

## FROM OUR INTERNATIONAL PARTNERS

### Flowers of the month in Chile

Alfredo Unda has sent us links to these flowers of the month, photographed in bloom in central Chile. You can read more about them in Spanish and in English on the [Mediterranean Gardening Chile](#) website.



#### [FLOR DE OCTUBRE 2021](#)

*Oziroë arida*, is locally known as Lagrima de la Virgen (tears of the virgin).

Endemic to Chile, it grows from Coquimbo to Araucanía, in sunny sites with good drainage.



#### [FLOR DE DICIEMBRE 2021](#)

*Conanthera campanulata*, the Chilean bluebell, is a 15 to 40 cm tall geophyte with fibrous corms and, flared and hanging flowers. Its petals range from white to dark violet, with or without spots.

## Stellenberg garden in Cape Town



Here is [a video](#) in which Cape Horticultural Society members, Andrew and Sandy Ovenstone, talk about their fabulous garden. There is an opportunity to donate to their charity.

You can also read the MGF website report on [a visit to Stellenberg garden](#), written following a trip to gardens of the Cape in 2016, organised by Angela Durnford, of MGS Italy. You'll find the report under the Cape Town Suburbs tab.

## Armenia: trips in 2022 and 2023 and a lecture on its botanical flora



In May 2015, MGF joined forces with our UK partners, Mediterranean Plants and Gardens, for two wonderful botanical tours of Armenia. MGF member Katharine Fedden led these tours, which were guided by local botanist Anna Asatryan. You can read about them [here](#).

Now MPG are hoping to run two more tours, in June 2022 and 2023. Sue Tymon writes:

“As planning remains a precarious activity, we continue to maintain a watching brief and advise members accordingly. Due to the large registered interest in this trip, we are contemplating running two trips, one in 2022 and another in 2023. Please contact [sue@tymon-uk.com](mailto:sue@tymon-uk.com) if you would like to be included in the list of those interested.” MPG tours are open, space permitting, to members of MGF.

Coincidentally, the California Horticultural Society has also been taking an interest in the flora of Armenia. Dave Tivol writes:

“The flora of Armenia has diversity and richness from its geography. At a crossroad of two major ecosystems, Caucasian and Irano-Turanian, there are many species of value which can be grown readily in California, as well as endemics of interest for botanical tourism. Tamar Galstyan, who studied ecology, has travelled the length and breadth of Armenia and has learned about its flora. She recently gave this lecture to the Californian Horticultural Society: [Tamar Galstyan, "Armenia: Nature & Climate - YouTube](#)

## 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. Contributions should be sent to [Roland Leclercq](#).

The “What is it?” in the October Newsletter (sent by Alfredo Unda) was *Alstroemeria pulchra* Sims native to Central Chile. The flowering of this beautiful plant occurs in Chile from September to November. Although *A. auriantaca* and *A. psittacina* are present in many Mediterranean Basin gardens, this species is little known.



What is this fruit ? (sent by Monique Mirès). A clue : the plant originates from Asia. Answer in the next newsletter.



## MY FAVOURITE PLANT

You are welcome to send a picture of the plant that you hate or of your favourite plant (rare or common), accompanied by a short text, to be published in this newsletter. Contributions should be sent to [Roland Leclercq](#)

## AND FINALLY

« Why should proud summer boast  
Before the birds have any cause to sing?  
Why should I joy in an abortive birth?  
At Christmas I no more desire a rose  
Than wish a snow in May's new-fangled mirth;  
But like of each thing that in season grows. »

Shakespeare. In Love's Labour's Lost

Best wishes

Roland Leclercq  
Newsletter editor

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