



Mediterranean Gardening France

www.mediterraneangardeningfrance.org

APRIL 2022

Dear members and friends,

PROGRAMME OF ACTIVITIES IN FRANCE

Thursday 5 May, Fayence, Var

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



In the morning we'll visit La Campagne Ste-Marie, created by author and artist, Nicole Rengade. The garden is a charming, almost English cottage garden in style, with 800 species of plants, lovely old roses a potager and a Zen garden.

We'll eat our picnic lunches here, then move on to the stunning garden of Carla and Herman Buehl.



Carla and Herman have designed a garden to complement the strikingly modern house they built around 20 years ago. At the time, an oak wood and an ancient olive grove dominated the sloping terrain. They terraced the land and built retaining stone walls, which act as an attractive back drop for the planting, which includes collections of hellebores, irises and peonies, and for some magnificent pieces of sculpture.

You can read more about these two gardens, which we last visited in 2018, in [Past Activities](#).

To book a place for this outing, contact [Gill Clarke](#).

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 the 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 bridge, including the third level, for up to 30 participants, and 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. To book, please complete the booking form sent to all members by email on 2 March. If you would like another booking form, please write to [Christine Daniels](#).

Wednesday 25 May, 10.00am, Puget Ville, Var
A visit to Le Jardin du Réal and lunch



Located in the heart of the hill of Puget Ville, at the foot of the Massif des Maures, the garden of the Réal is a haven of peace. An eccentric garden which gives testimony and the proof that native vegetation and plantations of various countries cohabit with happiness. It is fortunate to have water from a canal fed by the Réal Martin which allows watering at the height of the summer heat.

The garden is managed in an eco-responsible way, respecting the living and the bio-diversity: no use of pesticides or chemical products, respecting the cycle of the plants. It is not a manicured garden, but a place of sharing and opening. It also serves as an educational tool for the students of the surrounding schools and as a therapeutic tool for various institutions.

Arrival at 10.00am if you would like coffee, before a 10.30 tour followed by lunch with wine and wander at will the afternoon.

To book a place for this visit, contact [Gill Clarke](#).

Thursday /Friday 26/27 May, Narbonne, Turreilles and Fontfroide, Aude
A two-day trip to visit gardens in Aude



On Thursday morning we will visit gardens laid out by James Basson's team at Château Capitoul, a hotel complex located near Narbonne.

Caroline Bourdillon will guide us around the ten hectares of parks and gardens surrounded by garrigue, olive trees and vines.

Photo: The gardens at Château Capitoul, ©Scape Design



Then Roseanne McNamee will welcome us in her garden for lunch (bring your own picnic). Her densely planted garden covers 1500 m2. Surrounded by trees and shrubs, the 'rooms' are separated by low walls, paths and shrubs and also by water. The plantings include different types of salvia, phlomis, cistus, roses, wisteria, valerian, ceratostigma and fruit trees.

Photo: Roseanne McNamee's garden



Photo: Daniel Fiala's garden

Next, we will head to Turreilles to visit the garden of Daniel Fiala, a new MGF member. The sloping land of his garden covers 14,000 m² and is divided into two parts. The lower part around the house, not very steep, is a xerophyto-mediterranean garden without any watering. Plantings include lavender, phlomis, salvias, cistus, rosemary, yucca (100 taxa), agaves and cacti. Another garden 'à l'anglaise' contains shrubs, roses, buddlejas (over 30 taxa), grasses and fruit trees.

The upper part, garrigue on a steep slope, is a work in progress, currently planted with a beautiful collection of cistus.

The next morning, we will visit the Gallo-Roman garden of Amphoralis, in Sallèles-d'Aude, part of the 'village des potiers', in which an oven and a home have been restored. The arboretum includes the main species of wood used for the ovens and the garden has been planted with species known in Gallo-Roman times. Our guide will show us the five areas dedicated to food, condiments, medicines, decoration and handicrafts.

We will then go to the Abbey of Fontfroide to eat lunch, then enjoy a guided tour of the Cistercian abbey and explore one of the largest rose gardens in the South of France. We will be there at the right time to admire both ancient and modern roses (around 2500 species) at their peak blooming season.

You are free to sign up for any of the elements of the trip and are not obliged to participate in the entire two days. The hotel/restaurant for Thursday evening is your choice.

To receive a booking form for the two-day event, with details of costs, please contact [Chantal Guiraud](#).

Thursday 2 June, Ste Maxime, Var

A picnic in Gill Clarke's garden with a talk by David Richter



Gill writes:

My garden is small (1,000 sq.m.) on a steep south facing site. I have invited David Richter to come to Ste-Maxime to give us a talk about Le Jardin botanique de la flore des Alpes-Maritimes that he and his wife are planning to create in Gréolières. They have been working on this project for the past two years. Read more about it here: [Jardin botanique de la flore des Alpes-Maritimes - Nature & - MiiMOSA](#)

Photo: Gill's garden

To book a place for this visit, contact [Gill Clarke](#).

OTHER DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Plant fairs and open gardens

1 May	Hortus Botanicus au Jardin Romain	Caumont-sur-Durance (Vaucluse)
1 May	La main verte	Le Vigan (Hérault)
7/8 May	Fête des Plantes et du massif de Fontfroide	Narbonne (Aude)
8 May	Foire aux fleurs	Aubussargues (Gard)
8 May	Les Florales de Cadenet	Cadenet (Vaucluse)
8 May	Plantes et fleurs en fête	Grospierres-en-Ardèche (07)
8 May	Bourse aux plantes	Rousson (Gard)
20/21/22 May	Journées des Plantes d'Albertas	Bouc-Bel-Air (Bouches-du-Rhône)
28 May	Fête aux Herbes	Pertuis (Vaucluse)
3, 4, 5 June	Rendez-vous aux jardins "Les jardins face au changement climatique"	Many places in France. See Accueil (culture.gouv.fr)
5 June	Journée des plantes	Uzès (30)

Hortus Programme

30 April, 14h30	Bourse aux plantes de printemps	Le parking du Devezou,
14 May, 14h30	L'odyssée des champignons par J.P. Maurice, mycologue	Foyer municipal, 34980 Montferrier sur Lez

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



A new article about the Botanical Garden of Viña del Mar in Valparaiso, Chile has been added to the [Gardens to Visit section](#).

David Bracey writes:



Grow your own vegetables: A homegrown sweet potato!

FROM OUR INTERNATIONAL PARTNERS

Mediterranean Gardening Association Portugal

MGAP has published its spring programme of events in its [latest newsletter](#). If you are planning a visit to Portugal, you would be welcome to join in as long as there are places available. Example events include a visit to a re-wilding project near to Aljezur on 2 May and a Midsummer Celebration at the botanical garden at Quinta da Figueirinha on 21 June. For more information and to book please contact the MGAP Events Coordinator, Mimi, at mgapevents@gmail.com.

Carl Hort Society

Two new videos from the Carl Hort Society.

The video of the PlantForum is available for viewing on [YouTube channel](#).



Meghan Ray, Garden Manager, Blake Garden, University of California at Berkeley uses many original photos and documents to relate the [history of Blake Garden](#).

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?” of the March newsletter was *Dianella caerulea* (blue flax-lily, blueberry lily). This plant is a perennial herb of the family *Asphodelaceae*, found across the eastern states of Australia and Tasmania, commonly seen in Australian gardens. It grows to a metre high, with dark green blade-like leaves. Blue flowers in spring and summer are followed by coloured berries. The plant can grow in our Mediterranean gardens.



The new “What is it?” is proposed by Erwan Jehanno. A clue: this protected plant grows in the region of Marseille. Answer in the next newsletter.



AND FINALLY

- The wild **salsify plants** are blooming. It's time to transform their heads into ephemeral jewels. See how to proceed: [The ephemeral jewels of the salsify flower'](#).
- **Myth or reality? Les “Saints de Glace” (Ice Saints):**
Traditionally, French people expect the weather to be cold and even to freeze at night on the 11th, 12th and 13th May which commemorate respectively Saint Mamert, Saint Pancrace and Saint Servais, known collectively as the Saints de Glace. This has given rise to many sayings:
« The three turnip-blooded saints, Pancras, Mamert and Servais (11-12-13 May), are well named the ice saints. In spring they bring back winter. »
« Saints Servais, Pancrace and Mamert together make a little winter.”

True or not? Let's see what happens on 11, 12 and 13 May

Best wishes

Roland Leclercq

Newsletter editor

Please send contributions to this newsletter to: rolandlec@wanadoo.fr