



Mediterranean Gardening France

www.mediterraneangardeningfrance.org

SEPTEMBER 2022

Dear members and friends

We open this newsletter with an image of a Lily of the valley (*Convallaria majalis*), in memory of Queen Elizabeth II. It grows in the gardens of Buckingham Palace, and the Queen said it was her favourite flower. It was included in her wedding bouquet.



Photo: DE AGOSTINI PICTURE LIBRARY

PROGRAMME OF ACTIVITIES IN FRANCE

Tuesday 4 October, Puget Ville and Giens, Var

A visit to le Jardin du Real and le Jardin du Chapeau Noire

This visit to le Jardin du Real replaces the one that could not take place in May.



Photo: le Jardin du Réal

Located in the heart of the hill of Puget Ville, at the foot of the Massif des Maures, le Jardin du Réal is a haven of peace. The garden is managed in an eco-responsible way, respecting biodiversity and with no use of pesticides or chemical products. There will be a guided tour in the morning followed by a convivial lunch in the garden. In the afternoon we are invited to visit a private garden, le Jardin du Chapeau Noire in Giens, to see, amongst others, dragonniers (*Dracaena* sp.) araucarias and cycads.

Arrive at 10.00 for coffee. The tour starts at 10.30.

To book, please contact [Gill Clarke](#)

Thursday and Friday 20/21 October

A two day trip to the Drôme to view autumn colours



On the Thursday we will visit the zen garden of artist and garden designer Erik Borja, inspired by his love of Japanese garden design. We will visit the gardens at our leisure and picnic during our visit. There is a possibility that Erik Borja will be available to give us a lecture on his garden; this is to be confirmed nearer the time.

www.erikborja.fr

For those wishing to stay overnight there are several hotels in or near Mirmande, one of the « plus beaux villages de France »

Hôtel la Capitelle à Mirmande, www.lacapitelle.com

La Treille Muscate à Clionsclat, www.latreillemuscate.com

There is also bed and breakfast accommodation in both villages. We will organise dinner in one of the two hotels for those who wish to join.

The following day there will be a guided visit to a natural reserve nearby, www.lagaredesramieres.com, before heading south to the village of La Garde Adhémar and its municipal Jardin Botanique, with two herb gardens, laid out on terraces overlooking the Rhône valley.

To book, please contact [Hedwige Lauwaert](#) or [Nanouk Pelen](#).

INTERNATIONAL ACTIVITIES

Tuesday 1 to Tuesday 8 November

A botanical visit to the Peloponnese, Greece



This trip, organised by Mediterranean Plants and Gardens, will visit sites with rich natural flora, including autumn-flowering geophytes (autumn crocuses, colchicum, sternbergia, cyclamen, anemones, snowdrops and tiny daffodils), some in wild places and others in unspoilt villages, in the medieval castle town of Monemvasia and on the slopes of Mystras. A visit to the house and garden of the late Patrick Leigh-Fermor will be included. Participants will stay in Nafplio, Kardamyli and Gythio. The botanical guide is Oron Peri, plant breeder and author of "Bulbs of the Eastern Mediterranean".

To register interest, complete the [website form](#).

Contact: [Heather Martin](#)

Saturday 22 to Saturday 29 April or Sunday 30 April to Sunday 7 May 2023

Plant Hunting In Croatia



This tour, organised by Mediterranean Plants and Gardens, will start in Dubrovnik and end in Zagreb. The event is primarily botanical with some sightseeing in old Dubrovnik and a visit to a school with an interesting botanical garden. The landscapes vary from coastal grasslands to limestone hills and mountains with lakes and beech woodland. There will be wild irises, orchids, fritillaries, cyclamen, anemones and crocuses as well as many pretty annuals.

Photo: *Euphorbia characias* above Trogir

More information at [Plant hunting in Croatia April 2023 – Mediterranean Plants and Gardens \(medpag.org\)](#)

Contact: [Heather Martin](#)

OTHER DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Plant fairs and open gardens

30 Sept, 1/2 October	Festival International Orchidées à Fontfroide	Narbonne, Aude
1/2 October	Gondwana, la Fête des Plantes méditerranéennes, Domaine du Rayol	Le Rayol- Canadel, Var
19/20 November	Les Journées de l'Arbre de la Plante et du Fruit	Quissac, Gard

Hortus Programme

Date to be determined	Visit to la Pépinière des 5 sens chez Eric Dubois	Marsillargues, Hérault
29 October	Plant exchange	Montferrier s Lez
19 November	Conférence sur les plantes exotiques dans nos jardins	Montferrier s 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



[Cistus, the rose of the garrigue](#)

In April this year, Roland Leclercq, Annie Nivière et Elisabeth Gratraud gave a talk on cistus to [Hortus](#) members.

The second part of the talk, **Cistus in the garden**, is now available as an illustrated article on the MGF website.

Photo :

Cistus. x purpureus in a garden setting with other garrigue plants



[How to turn your garden into a carbon sink](#)

This article by Isabelle Gerretsen was published in the Cape Horticultural Society newsletter, June 2022. It explains how gardeners can help fight climate change through plant choice and gardening practices.



David Bracey writes:

Broccoli and cauliflowers are so similar that botanists cannot tell them apart. Broccoli probably originated in the Eastern Mediterranean and spread to Italy. Here selection after selection was made to produce hundreds of landrace types suitable to the local needs of the grower.

In the mid-18th century broccoli was described as « sprout cauliflower » or « Italian asparagus ». Vilmorin the famous French seedsman suggested that broccoli resulted from cabbage which had been left to flower and from which further selection was made. With planning it should be possible to produce broccoli throughout the year, (I have not succeeded). Sprouting broccoli is ready to harvest in spring, Calabrese broccoli (named after Calabrea) is harvested in summer and Romanesco broccoli, planted in July / August to harvest in the autumn.

We buy 'broccoli' plants from our local nursery. There is no choice. It produces well in the spring but fails completely if planted in the summer. Do we need Calabrese or Romanesco types? Broccoli is the most nutritious of all brassicas, the thick fleshy stalks which support the aborted flower heads are full of nutrients and minerals.

NB: the classification of 'Broccoli' is a nightmare. Broccoli is *Brassica oleracea* var. *italica*. Cauliflower is *B. oleracea* Botrytis group. Romanesco broccoli is also *B. oleracea* Botrytis group.

My references were: Wikipedia, 'Food Plants', 'Foods of the World'.

FROM OUR INTERNATIONAL PARTNERS

Mediterranean Gardening Association Portugal

MGF members are welcome to join [MGAP](#) at their first events of the autumn /winter season.

27 September	A guided visit to the DRAP Fruit Collection in Tavira, Algarve For more information or to reserve places, contact mgapevents@gmail.com
29/30 October	Autumn Garden Fair at Estojo, Algarve Mediterranean plants, plus rare and unusual plants from arid and tropical zones, will be for sale, along with bulbs, seeds and gardening books. There is also an advice service and hot meals, refreshments and bar facilities will be available. More information from mgapfairs@gmail.com

Cape Horticultural Society



Our partner association in South Africa, CHS, has sent this link to a video explaining how to make a crevice garden in a trough. This is a way of creating a display of the small plants which would typically grow between rocks on a mountainside.

[PAUL SPRIGGS: CONSTRUCTION OF A CREVICE GARDEN IN A HYPERTUFA TROUGH - YOUTUBE](#)

Carl Hort Society

New videos from the Carl Hort Society.

« The videos of our [featured presentation for August](#) (and other meeting business) and the [PlantForum](#) are now available for viewing on our [YouTube channel](#). **Steve Hootman**, Executive Director and Curator, Rhododendron Species Botanical Garden, gave an in depth presentation on the cultivation of Rhododendron species *Meconopsis*, and *Cardiocrinum* and more at RSBG, followed by a Q & A. »

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 July “What is it” was *Hardenbergia violacea* (communicated by David Bracey). This plant of the *Fabaceae* family is native to the Eastern and South-Eastern Australia. *Hardenbergia* is somewhat difficult to grow in our regions: it requires a well-drained, not too dry, acidic soil. It can withstand light frosts down to -4°. It blooms more generously from February to June in full sun, but is quite acceptable in semi-shade in our sunny climate.

The new “What is it?” is proposed by David Bracey. This plant is of great historical interest. Answer in the next newsletter.



AND FINALLY

“Designing the garden is like learning to speak. You begin with odd words learning the individual plants. Then you create a simple phrase, finding two or three plants that look well together, next comes a sentence and finally the complete story”. Beth Chatto (1923-2018).

Best wishes

Roland Leclercq
Newsletter editor

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