



Mediterranean Gardening France

www.mediterraneangardeningfrance.org

MARCH 2019

Dear members and friends

PROGRAMME OF ACTIVITIES IN FRANCE

Saturday 9 March, 9.00 – 12.00, Prades le Lez, Hérault

A walk in the Domaine de Restinclières to discover edible wild plants



John Walsh, of Les Écologistes de l'Euzière, will guide us on a botanical walk around the domain to discover edible wild plants. We will learn how to recognize the plants and identify the best conditions to pick them. The walk is on flat ground and suitable for all. It will be followed by a wild salad tasting with a glass of local wine.

Bilingual activity French/English. The price will be 15 € per person, payment to Nina on the day.

This outing has been organised by Nina Guichard of NR Landscaping.

THERE ARE STILL FIVE PLACES LEFT. To book, contact Nina at contact@nrlandscaping.fr.

Wednesday 20 March, La Bambouseraie en Cévennes, Générargues, Gard

A garden visit and a talk, « *L'importance de la biodiversité dans nos jardins* »

by Dr John Feltwell



Dr John Feltwell, botanist, ecologist, author and photographer, was one of the first in Britain to promote wildlife gardening through his books '*Doorstep Wildlife*' (Hamlyn, 1985) and '*Naturalist's Garden*' (Ebury Press, 1987). His website is named Wildlife matters. John's talk will be based on his observation of the nature and habitats of the Basses-Cévennes over 50 years and will include suggestions of trees, shrubs and flowers to plant in our gardens to attract bees and other insects. John says he will speak in a "mélange of English, French and cévenol"

Photo: *Lagerstroemia indica* in the Cévennes

Participants may wish to arrive in the morning and explore the gardens of the Bambouseraie. The garden has a fabulous collection of camelias, which will be at their best at this time of year. If 20 people would like to visit the garden, we will be able to benefit from a reduced group admission rate and have a guided tour. We can then eat picnic lunches on a covered terrace next to the snack bar. The talk, organised by Catriona McLean and Aline Rideau, in conjunction with les Amis de la Bambouseraie, will take place in the afternoon. *Entrance to the talk will be free for MGF members.* To book a place, contact Catriona McLean saying whether you are interested in the full day, including the morning garden visit, or just the afternoon talk.

Thursday 28 March, Malaucène, Vaucluse

Atelier de taille

Chantal Guiraud has arranged for Valérie Guillaud, professional teacher at the CFPPA de l'Hérault (Centre de Formation Professionnelle et de Promotion Agricole), to give MGF members a pruning demonstration. This practical workshop will take place in the garden of Christine Daniels who has recently moved house in Malaucène and now has a walled village garden, with many, somewhat neglected, mature shrubs and small trees.

FULLY BOOKED but waiting list open. Contact [Christine Daniels](#).

April, near Le Barroux, Vaucluse

A wildflower walk close to Lac du Paty



This event will provide an introduction to some of the tiny but beautiful wild flowers which exist in the Ventoux landscape. The walk will be about 5 – 6 km, and led by an experienced French guide.

Precise location, date and joining instructions will be advised nearer the time to obtain the best wildflower experience and will depend on how advanced the season is. As wildflowers are best viewed in the cool of the morning, we intend to start at 09.00 and finish with a picnic lunch. The walk will therefore be of interest to those living in the Vaucluse, or willing to stay nearby the previous night.

Participants should wear footwear suitable for uneven ground and be prepared to purchase in advance their own loupe (a small magnifying glass) costing around €15. A loupe is essential for viewing the smallest wildflowers.

Maximum 15 participants. There is also the possibility of a wildflower event on Mont Ventoux in May. Attendance is open to members of MGF and a local independent garden group. To register an interest, contact the organiser, Tony Kell tony.kell2016@gmail.com.

Wednesday 24 April, near Correns, Var

A visit to the private gardens of two keen and knowledgeable gardeners



We shall be visiting the gardens of two members of the IWCP gardening group, in the area near Correns.

Mavis' garden is set over several fairly wide terraces with olive trees. A gravelled area in front of the house has irises and a mixed border with a range of cistus. Succulents and cacti edge one of the terraces while roses hug another terrace wall.



Saskia's garden is mostly on a slope with olives at the front, and pines and oak trees at the back of the house. The sunny garden favours roses, lavender and cistus, while the area under the pines and oaks is planted with dry and shade-loving plants.

Lunch will be at a local restaurant.
Attendance is limited to 20 people.

To book a place, contact [Nicola D'Annunzio](#)

Tuesday 14 May, Ménerbes, Vaucluse

A day in the Luberon – Le jardin botanique du domaine de la Citadelle and La Louve



Morning:

First, a discovery and tasting of wild edible plants in the field, with Nadine Maffli, head of the association '*Le Silène et L'Ortie*'. Then, guided by Brigitte Bergeron, head of the association '*Un Savoir oublié*' we will visit the jardin botanique du domaine de la Citadelle. In this vineyard, six terraces have been developed to accommodate a wide variety of medicinal and edible plants. Lunch will be served here, a refined picnic with wild seasonal herbs, prepared by Romain Dumas, chef at the restaurant '*l'Atelier l'art des mets*'. The visit will take place in French. Cost: 26€.

Photo: Le jardin botanique du domaine de la Citadelle

Afternoon:

A visit to La Louve in Bonnieux, a garden created in the 90s by Nicole de Vésian, designer at Hermès and passionate about the Provençal style of gardening. The garden is on a set of terraces, living and contemplative spaces where stone, natural wood and Mediterranean plants subtly match the local landscape. The property is located in Bonnieux, a charming Provençal village perched on the side of a cliff, with beautiful panoramic views of the Luberon. Cost: 10€.

This outing has been organised by Frances Horne and Nina Guichard.

To book a place, contact [Nina Guichard](#).

27 – 29 May, Catalonia, Spain

Pre-AGM trip to Figueras and gardens of the Costa Brava



André Guiraud and Jennifer Hastings are putting together an itinerary for a three-day trip to Catalonia prior to our AGM in Céret. The provisional programme includes a choice of a visit to the Salvador Dali museum in Figueras or a coastal walk, plus visits to the Jardin Botanique de Marimurtra and the Santa Clotilde gardens in Lloret de Mar.

Photo: *Drossanthemum floribundum* in flower at Marimurtra.

To book, please contact [Jennifer Hastings](#).

30 – 31 May, Céret, Pyrénées-Orientales

MGF Annual General Meeting 2019 and garden visits

This year the AGM will take place in Céret, a small town located on the River Tech, in the foothills of the Pyrénées, and conveniently close to the A9 autoroute. Chagall, Dali, Matisse and Picasso all lived here and some of their works can be viewed in the excellent Museum of Modern Art. The programme of events for these two days is being organised by local members Lynn Hall and Penny Parkinson.

Thursday 30 May



Activities will start with lunch at Restaurant Guy Molas, followed by the **MGF Annual General Meeting**.

After the meeting, we are delighted to welcome designers, James and Helen Basson, of [Scape Design](#), who will give a talk on an aspect of their work in designing and creating Mediterranean gardens. The day will finish with dinner in a local restaurant.

Photo: James and Helen with their Chelsea Flower Show gold medal

Friday 31 May

The programme for this day includes a visit to [Mas Reynes](#), a stunning garden filled with exotic plants owned by MGF member, Pierre Bianchi, and the Tropique du Papillon near Elne, with its butterfly house and Mediterranean and tropical gardens.

To book, please contact the MGF secretary, [Michele Bailey](#).

INTERNATIONAL ACTIVITIES

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



1 – 8 April, International Spring Conference, Évora, Portugal – organised by MGAP “Bringing the Mediterranean Landscape into your Garden”

1 – 4 April: Pre-Conference tour based in Armação de Pera, Algarve

5 – 8 April: Conference and garden visits in Évora, capital of Portugal's south-central Alentejo region.

Full details of the various elements and a Booking Form can be downloaded from the [Mediterranean Gardening International website](#). Any questions, contact [Rosie Peddle](#).

6 – 9 May, Liguria, ITALY

An MGF trip to the gardens of the Italian Riviera

This trip, organised by June Grindley and Maggie Vance, includes visits to the gardens at Villa Boccanegra, Villa della Pergola, Maurizio Casale's grasses nursery, the village of Dolceacqua and [La Mortola](#), the Hanbury garden. The group will be based at Hotel Villa Elisa in Bordighera.

FOUR PLACES HAVE RECENTLY BECOME AVAILABLE FOR THIS TRIP. To book, contact [June Grindley](#).

OTHER DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

30 March – 28 April, Festival des Jardins de la Côte d'Azur - Nice, Cannes, Antibes, Grasse, Menton



« Rêves de Méditerranée » is the theme selected for the second *Festival des Jardins de la Côte d'Azur*. Throughout April 2019, gardens specially created by professional designers and paysagistes will be on display, together with others created by local communes.

Our President, Christine Daniels, will be one of the members of the 'Jury du Festival' and along with experts such as Jean Mus (*architecte-paysagiste*), Véronique Mure (*professeur de botanique*), Matthias Meilland (Meilland Roses) and Bruno Henri-Rousseau (*directeur de la Villa Ephrussi*) will select the three prize-winning gardens. The gardens, each one 200m² in size, will be open to the public throughout the month of April.

Plant fairs and open gardens

16 Feb – 3 March	Festival des Orchidées et la Fête du Citron	Menton (Alpes-Maritimes)
2/3 March	L'art des Jardins	Ille-sur-Têt (P-O)
16/17 March	Plantes Rares et de Collections au Domaine d'Orvès	La Valette-du-Var (Var)
16/17 March	Expo-Vente Plantes, Nature & Terroir	Nîmes (Gard)
24 March	Primavera	Montpellier (Hérault)
30/31 March	Fête des Jardins	Sophia Antipolis (A-M)

31 March	Portes Ouvertes à la Soldanelle	Rougiers (83)
6/7 April	Floralies De Chateau Campuget	Manduel (Gard)
6/7 April	Fête des plantes au parc Aurélien	Fréjus (Alpes-Maritimes)
7 April	Foire aux Fleurs	Beaumes-de-Venise (84)
7 April	Foire aux plantes	Saint-Savournin (B-du-R)
13 April	Fête du Printemps	Le Pontet (Vaucluse)
13/14 April	Plantes Rares et jardin naturel	Sérignan-du-Comtat (84)
14 April	Les Floralies	Figanières (Var)
20 April	Fête des fleurs	Carpentras (Vaucluse)
20/21 April	La Fête des plantes au MUCEM	Marseille (B-du-R)
20/21 April	Marché aux fleurs	Cassis (Bouches-du-Rhône)
28 April	Floralies de Florensac	Florensac (Hérault)
28 April	Bourse aux plantes	Villecroze (Var)
1 May	Foire aux plantes	Forcalqueiret (Var)
1 May	La main verte	Le Vigan (Hérault)

Hortus Programme

4 May	Bourse aux Plantes	Montferrier sur Lez (Hérault)
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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](#).

2 March and 10 March, La Soldanelle, Rougiers, Var

Découverte et initiation à la cueillette des salades sauvages

A walk in the fields around La Soldanelle's nursery, accompanied by expert, Claude Marco, to find and pick wild salad leaves, followed by their preparation to eat alongside a shared picnic lunch, *tiré du sac*, at 13.00. Walking groups will leave the nursery at 09.30 and 14.30 on each day.

To book a place, contact Sylvie and Christian at la.soldanelle.83@gmail.com saying whether you would prefer the morning or the afternoon walk.

NEWS AND INFORMATION

Mediterranean Gardening France website

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

Seed List update



Callicarpa bodinieri



Digitalis minor



Linaria vulgaris



Salvia palaestina

Over 100 new varieties of seed have been added to the Seed List in the spring 2019 update. Chantal Guiraud 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](#).

CHILE – Flower of the Month



Alberto Unda, of Mediterranean Gardening Chile, continues to add new plants to the 'Flower of the Month' section of their website. The [January flower](#) is *Eschscholzia californica* Cham. (pictured), a naturalized 'migrant' flower in La Aurora.

In Chile it is known as *dedal de oro* or 'Gold thimble flower'.

The featured flower for November is *Tropaeolum tricolor* and for December, *Senna arnottiana*

The South Australian Mediterranean Garden Society



Glorious roses at Al Ru Farm



Colour contrasts at Boats End



Garden of Discovery working bee

Our partners in South Australia have created a beautiful new website <https://www.mediterraneangardening-southaustralia.com/>. It is full of stunning photographs of members' gardens and has a section on the Garden of Discovery in the Waite historic precinct, owned by the University of Adelaide. The SAMGS undertook a major refurbishment of the garden in 2009, donating many plants and committing to help maintain the garden through regular working bees.

Winter Newsletter Mediterranean Gardening Portugal

The updated MGAP Winter Newsletter is now available [here](#)

TWO NEW REGULAR TOPICS!

My favourite plant

What is it?

My favourite plant

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

We are always happy to receive photos of plants to illustrate the plant lists on the MGF website. Recently, Johannes-Ulrich Urban, a member of Mediterranean Gardening Association Portugal, sent some photos of a plant on our Seed List, *Ipomoea alba* syn. *Calonyction album*. He said it flowered abundantly in his garden, so we asked him to write about his experiences of growing it.

An interesting climbing plant



"Having grown this plant as an annual in the fairly cold climate of Northern Germany for many years, it surprised me last summer in my new garden in Portugal. Every evening from late summer onwards a single plant produced about 50 flowers, each the size of a saucer. If you are on the spot at the right moment, the opening of the flowers can be watched. It is always striking to see the large buds opening. Giant nocturnal moths are attracted by the scented flowers, and hover in front of the flowers to draw on the nectar with their long, thin proboscis. They could be mistaken for humming birds.

This plant is easily grown. The large very hard-shelled seeds benefit from scarifying with a serrated tool until the white inside of the seed is just showing. Then, soak the seed in lukewarm water overnight until it has at least doubled in size and is covered with fine white cracks. If this does not happen the procedure should be repeated. Then sow the seed, it will germinate quickly with bottom heat. My preference is to sow single seeds in pots.

The young plants need a warm, sunny place in rich soil and plenty of water. Growing in very large pots is possible, but make sure the compost never dries out and fertilize regularly. At this point I should warn you that it is an extremely vigorous plant, climbing at quite a speed. It will also produce non-climbing shoots on the ground in search of any object to be strangled.... so, give it enough space from the beginning. I remove most of these non-climbing shoots, and some of the climbing ones as well and can easily fill a wheel barrow.

There are also a large number of ripe fruit capsules, each containing several seeds. It may be wise to keep in mind that this plant might become invasive in favourable conditions. But with me it is very dependent on irrigation, which reduces this risk. And yes, in a frost-free winter climate it is a semi woody perennial."

What is it?

In this new 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 rolandlec@wanadoo.fr.

The first contribution was sent by David Bracey. So, what is it?



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

Glyphosate and even later news

The use of copper in the production of "bio" foodstuffs

The quote of the month

Gardening requires lots of water - most of it in the form of perspiration.

Lou Erikson (writer)

Best wishes

Roland Leclercq
Newsletter editor

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