Mediterranean Gardening France

www.mediterraneangardening.fr

MAY 2026

Dear members and friends

ACTIVITIES IN FRANCE

Tuesday 28 April
All about olive oil, Grambois, Vaucluse
Organised by Frances Horne



A day centred on an olive oil producer in Grambois, a small village in the Luberon. Les Templiers de Provence, famous for its award-winning olive oils, is owned and managed by an American and his French wife. Together with local farmers, they look after 3000 olive trees of varying ages and sizes.

The visit will start with a talk on olives, olive trees and olive oil, followed by a guided tour of the olive orchard, including a pruning demonstration. Next, an olive oil tasting and opportunity to buy some of their delicious oil.

After lunch in a nearby restaurant, we will visit one or two olive oil mills to learn about milling techniques. Numbers are limited to 20 people. To book, please contact Frances Horne.

Tuesday 5 May
A visit to Jacqueline Potter's garden, Le Beausset, Var
Organised by Jacqueline Potter



The garden visit will be followed by a discussion about MGF activities in the PACA region, sharing new ideas for activities, what is working well, and what could be improved.

Jacqueline is looking for some help - members who might be interested in contributing occasionally to activities:
- writing articles for the newsletter following visits
- taking photos during outings
- helping to organise visits

Lunch will be a shared picnic.
Read the recently published article about the beginnings of Jacqueline's new garden.
To book, please contact Jacqueline Potter.

Monday 11 May
Visit to three gardens in the Alpilles, Bouches-du-Rhône
Organised by Nanouk Pelen and Hedwige Lauwaert



Photo:©Marianne Majerus

This day trip in the Alpilles includes a visit to a member's garden in part designed by James Basson, and a meeting with garden designer Dominique Lafourcade, who will guide us around two of her creations.

We last visited Clare and Mark's garden in Maussane-les-Alpilles in May 2018, when it was newly planted using award winner James Basson's designs. For those who were present for that first visit, it will be interesting to see how the garden has developed.

After lunch we will meet garden designer Dominique Lafourcade at her home in St Rémy, where she will give us a talk, then guide us around two of her gardens. This will be followed by refreshments. https://www.dominique-lafourcade.com/
To book, please contact Nanouk Pelen or Hedwige Lauwaert.

Wednesday 20 to Friday 22 May
13th MGF Annual General Meeting and visits, Anduze, Gard
Organised by Roland Leclercq and Chantal Guiraud



The 13th Annual General Meeting of Mediterranean Gardening France will take place in Anduze on Thursday, 21 May 2026.
Roland Leclercq and Chantal Guiraud, with a team of MGF members, have put together a programme of activities, from 15.00 on Wednesday 20 May to midday on Friday 22 May.
To book, please contact Roland Leclercq.

Photo : Jardin du Dragon à la Bambouseraie

Programme

Date	Time	Event	Location
Wednesday 20 May	15.00 – 16.00 16.15 – 17.15	Musée cévenole Jardin ethnobotanique	St Jean du Gard.
	Evening	Restaurant Le Cévenol	Anduze
Thursday 21 May	10.00 – 11.15	Pottery Workshop Chêne Vert **OR** Park Tour Vieille	Anduze Alès
	11.30 – 12.00	Pottery shop	Anduze
	12.30 - 13.30	Picnic lunch, pre-ordered or *tiré du sac*	St Jean du Gard
	13.30	Steam train	One-way journey from St Jean du Gard to La Bambouseraie
	15.00 – 16.45	Guided visit Bambouseraie	Générargues
	16.45 – 16.45	Aperitif offered by MGF and AGM	Bambouseraie Générargues
	20.00	Restaurant Ferme de Cornadel	Anduze
Friday 22 May	10.00 – 12.00	Jardin de la Gardie **OR** Short walk	Rousson Anduze

INTERNATIONAL ACTIVITIES

MGi Mediterranean Gardening International
A global horticultural community

Thursday 30 April – Thursday 7 May
Wild plants of the Rhodope, Northern Greece
Organised by Mediterranean Plants and Gardens



The tour starts in Thessaloniki where we will look at cultural sights in the city, followed by a day at Lake Kerkini, a major migratory bird location with good wildflowers. The rest of the time will be spent in the Rhodope Mountains, first in Drama then in Komnina. The guide is Oron Peri. Maximum 13 participants.

More details on the MPG website.

Photo: *Pulsatilla halleri*

Sunday 28 June – Thursday 2 July
A summer garden tour in Gloucestershire, England
Organised by Mediterranean Plants and Gardens



Photo: Roses at Moor Wood

Gloucestershire is rich in interesting private gardens and home to many garden professionals. The tour will be based at the Cotswold Water Park Hotel, near Cirencester, and includes visits to the former home of garden designers Isabel and Julian Bannerman, an Arts and Crafts house and garden, the UK National Collection of rambling roses, a talk and garden tour with Derry Watkins of Special Plants, and a visit to Jekka McVicar's herb farm.

For more details and to book, visit the MPG website.

OTHER DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Plant fairs and open gardens

25/26 April	Fête des Plantes et du Massif – Fontfroide	Narbonne (Aude)
25/26 April	Journées des Jardins et de la Nature	Anduze (Gard)
25/26 April	Portes ouvertes chez Tillandsia Prod	Le Cailar (Gard)
26 April	Fête des jardins	Forcalquier (Alpes-de-Hte-P)
26 April	Fête des plantes	Villecroze (Var)
26 April	La fête du printemps	Saint-Andiol (B-du-R)
26 April	Foire aux fleurs	Montvendre (Drôme)
26 April	Marché aux fleurs	Carpentras (Vaucluse)
26 April	Floralies de Florensac	Florensac (Hérault)
1 May	La main verte	Le Vigan (Hérault)
1 May	Marché aux plantes	Forcalqueiret (Var)

1 May	Marché aux plantes, de la gastronomie et de l'artisanat	Nans-les-pins (Var)
2 May	Les Floralies	Pertuis (Vaucluse)
3 May	Nature en Fête	La Londe les Maures (Var)
2/3 May	Fête des roses et des plantes	Saint-Jean Cap Ferrat (Alpes-Mar)
2/3 May	Floralies de Juhèges	Torreilles (P-O)
2/3 May	Fête des roses - Villa Ephrussi	Saint-Jean-Cap-Ferrat (Alpes-Mar)
2 – 31 May	Les Floralies d'Antibes	Antibes Juan-les-Pins (Alpes-Mar)
3 May	Fête du jardin	Valernes (Alpes-de-Hte-Provence)
3 May	Foire aux fleurs	Richerenches (Vaucluse)
3 May	Floralies Gourmandes	Cadenet (Vaucluse)
7 -10 May	Orticola	Milan, ITALY
8 - 10 May	Expo Rose	Grasse (Alpes-Maritimes)
10 May	Journée des plantes	Uzès (Gard)
10 May	Plantes et fleurs en fête	Grospierres-en-Ardèche
16/17 May	Créativité et bien-être au jardin	Gassin (Var)
16/17 May	Foire éco biologique Naturellement!	Nyons (Drôme)
16/18 May	Un Printemps sous les Arbres	Saint-Brès (Hérault)
17 May	Fête des Jardins et du Terroir	La Verdière (Var)
24 May	Plantes et Bienêtre au Château Grand Callamand	Pertuis (Vaucluse)
29 – 31 May	Journées des Plantes d'Albertas	Bouc-Bel-Air (Bouches-du-Rhone)
29 - 31 May	Foire horticole et rurale	Belcodene (Bouches-du-Rhone)
31 May	Rencontres botaniques au jardin de Foncaude	Feuilla (Aude)
5 -7 June	**Rendezvous aux Jardins**	Open gardens throughout France
21 - 22 June	Mère Nature	Lasalle (Gard)
28 June	Fête de la Figue grise	Figanières (Var)

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 on the Hortus programme, contact **Chantal Maurice.**

7 - 9 May	Voyage annuel - jardins du Vaucluse	Bédoin. Le Barroux, Sarrians, Puymeras

NEWS AND INFORMATION

New on the website



Photo: *Loropetalum chinense*

A wildflower walk on the Plaine des Maures and a visit to the Jardin du Réal

Jacqueline Potter writes:

"Our group met near Les Mayons in the Var, where a local guide led us on a walk through the forest of the Plaine des Maures. Along the way we discovered the special vegetation of this protected natural area. The soil here is abundant in silica, which creates a flora quite different from the limestone landscapes that dominate much of Provence."

At the Jardin du Réal, many winter-flowering shrubs were in bloom, including *Loropetalum chinense.*

Our website archive of garden and plant information

Christine Daniels writes:
Our first website was created by Charles Waterhouse in 2011, for what was then MGS Languedoc. When we created Mediterranean Gardening France, in 2014, Ian Davis set up a new website, bringing across much of the original material, notably our first garden diary 'Chez Olivier and Clara Filippi', commenced in August 2011 by Catriona McLean and Duncan Munford, and last updated in June 2016, by Roland Leclercq.

The website thus contains fifteen years' worth of MGF members' best thoughts, recommendations and advice. I find the lists of recommended plants invaluable when creating a new planted area in my garden, or when I need to replace a plant which has died. A couple of years ago I decided to make an avenue of cistus alongside a garden path, so consulted the three excellent articles on cistus in the Articles about Mediterranean Plants section.

David Bracey recently drew my attention to an article he wrote in 2022, The evolution of MGF members' gardens: Towards a 'Mediterranean' style, which examines how Mediterranean gardens had evolved over the previous 30 years. I wonder whether other influences have emerged since then, particularly the challenge of gardening in a changing climate, and hope Liz Godfrey will give us her thoughts on this in a forthcoming article.

Please let me know if you have favourite pages from the website, and I'll publish a list in a future newsletter. Send your thoughts to Christine Daniels.

MGF stand at Sérignan Plant Fair, 11/12 April



Hedwige Lauwaert writes:
Our participation in the Sérignan plant fair was a success.

A total of nine new members joined MGF and paid their membership fee on the day. Another four people promised to adhere via our website. Seven of the new members are from Drôme/Vaucluse/Bouches-du-Rhône, one from Occitanie, and one from Catalunya. The others who expressed interest are from Arles, Ardêche and the Vaucluse. With this experience in mind, we might consider participating again next year.

Seed collection

Chantal Guiraud writes
Despite the severe weather of February 12th, which damaged his garden and forced me to cancel our visit, Pierre Bianchi has just sent me some precious seeds that are likely to interest collectors and passionate gardeners. These seeds will only be available on our website in July when it is updated. You can take advantage of them now, and for ordering information, I recommend you refer to the following page: https://mediterraneangardening.fr/seed-collection-collection-de-graines/



• *Eucalyptus leucoxylon subsp. leucoxylon*: maximum height 15m, smooth bark, flowers often pink, sometimes white, tolerates all well-drained soils, even calcareous ones, drought and cold resistant (to about -8°C).



• *Eucalyptus leucoxylon subsp. megalocarpa*, same characteristics as subsp. *E. leucoxylon*, but smaller than the previous one: 8m, pink or red flowers, rarely white.



• *E. albopurpurea*, a small eucalyptus with a narrow habit, 5 to 6 m tall, flowers in late winter and autumn, often pink, sometimes white, rarely mauve, adaptable. Plant in groups of 3 at 1m/1.5m spacing.



• *E. petiolaris* (red flowers): very similar to *E. leucoxylon subsp. megalocarpa* but much more true to the flower colour of the parent plant from seed, reportedly tolerant of calcareous soils, slightly saline soils, and salt spray, therefore useful in coastal climates.
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• *E. woodwardii*: Western Australia, approximately 8m tall, glaucous leaves, yellow flowers, drought and calcareous tolerant but not very hardy: around -5°C.
• *E. conferruminata*: a small species with yellow-green flowers and large fused fruits, suitable for climates with mild winters.



• *Melaleuca elliptica*: a relative of the callistemon, growing up to 2.5 meters tall, with a bushier habit, exfoliating bark, and intense carmine-red bottlebrush-like flowers. It tolerates all well-drained soils and is drought- tolerant to temperatures as low as -8°C.



• *Melaleuca linearis* var. *acerosa* (formerly *Callistemon pinifolius*): a species with very narrow leaves and orange flowers, resistant to drought and moderate cold (-8°C to -10°C).



• *Leucaena retusa*: goldenball leadtree (Texas), a deciduous shrub growing up to 4 meters tall, with bright green compound leaves and large, golden- yellow flower clusters in spring. It tolerates almost all well-drained soils and is drought-tolerant, but not particularly fond of it, tolerating temperatures down to approximately -8°C. Rare in cultivation, even in the USA.






Drain, baby, drain

Roland Leclercq writes

The two photos at the top, taken in early August 2025, show the same plant species, *Cistus* x *tardiflorens*. Both plants were propagated from cuttings taken from the same parent plant, have the same exposure to sunlight, and are watered only by rain, yet one is in bloom whilst the other has not been flowering for a month. But why, then?

The only observable difference is the planting site: the plant that is not in flower is in clay soil simply mixed with stones. The flowering plant is situated between a rockery and a concrete path, and its roots are in a very poor soil consisting of stones and fill material with little topsoil but excellent drainage.

The two photos below, taken today, show more rockroses in full bloom at the same spot.

It is worth remembering how important good drainage is for Mediterranean plants. Only then will they be in peak condition.

New Recommended Nursery



Le Petit Jardin 66500 Mosset

Some of us bought plants from Savaria Henry, the owner of this nursery, at the Sérignan plant fair. The display was beautifully labelled, with information about the conditions in which each plant will thrive. Savaria's nursery is at 600m, so her plants are used to cold winters.

Daniel Fiala, a local member who has visited the nursery for some years, confirmed that Le Petit Jardin is a worthy addition to our list. Mail order is available.

Mediterranean Gardening International

Reminder:

MGF is part of an umbrella association called Mediterranean Gardening International (MGi).

MGF members are welcome to join activities organised by these associations.

The newsletters of the partner associations can be found at the following web addresses:

Mediterranean Gardening Association Portugal:

https://www.mediterraneangardeningportugal.org/ (click on Latest News Update)

Cape Horticultural Society, South Africa

https://capehorticulturalsociety.co.za/about-us/ (Click on Newsletters)

California Horticultural Society, USA

https://calhortsociety.org/bulletins/

Mediterranean Plants and Gardens (UK) https://www.medpag.org also has a newsletter, which is accessible to members only.

Our associate groups in Canada and Chile don't have newsletters but both their websites feature interesting blogs:

Okanagan Xeriscape Association, Canada

https://okanaganxeriscape.org/blog/

Mediterranean Gardening Chile

https://medgardenchile.wixsite.com/mg-chile/blog (bilingual Spanish/English, mostly about native plants).

Mediterranean Gardening Margaret River

2026 Events Calendar now available from Pamela Edwards.

AND FINALLY



A butterfly: a love note folded in half, searching for a flower's address
(Jules Renard, French writer, 1864-1910)

Best wishes
Roland Leclercq
Newsletter editor
Please send contributions to this newsletter to Roland Leclercq