Mediterranean Gardening France

www.mediterraneangardening.fr

MARCH 2026

Dear members and friends

ACTIVITIES IN FRANCE

Saturday 11 - Sunday 12 April
Plantes Rares et Jardin Naturel, Sérignan-du-Comtat, Vaucluse
Organised by Hedwige Lauwaert and Nanouk Pelen



This year, MGF will have a stand at the Sérignan-du- Comtat plant fair. It will be the 26th edition of this well-known plant fair in the northern part of Vaucluse, which attracts around 70 pépinièristes de collection and includes talks and guided walks. There is also the opportunity to visit the museum and Jardin Remarquable of the Harmas Jean-Henri Fabre.

Nanouk and Hedwige will be present at the MGF stand, along with local members.

Wednesday 15 April
A visit to l'ASTREDHOR Méditerrannée, Hyères, Var
Organised by Jacqueline Potter



We are very happy to have an exceptional opportunity to visit this French horticultural research centre based in Hyères. The director of the centre will welcome us for a guided visit.

ASTREDHOR (*Association of Experimental and Demonstration Structures in Ornamental Horticulture*) is a French technical institute for professionals in the plant sector: nurserymen, ornamental plant growers, local authorities, landscape designers, and managers of public green spaces.

Its main role is to carry out applied research - practical trials whose results can be directly used by professionals. The Hyères station is one of the most important, as the Var is a major centre of horticultural production in France (Mediterranean nurseries, flowering plants, palms, exotic plants, and young plant production).

In the afternoon we will travel to the nearby town of Solliès-Ville to visit a charming private garden. Built on two terraced levels along the hillside, this garden has an interesting characteristic: it faces north and therefore receives very limited winter sunshine. As a result, it contains a fine range of plants adapted to shade and semi-shade, as well as a small pond planted with aquatic species.
To book, contact Jacqueline Potter.

Sunday 19 - Monday 20 April
Abbeys and gardens around Forcalquier
Organised by Nanouk Pelen, Hedwige Lauwaert, Jennifer Hastings and Kevan Kristjanson


Photo: The dry garden at Valsaintes

A two day visit to the Forcalquier area to visit the Abbey and Jardin Remarquable de Valsaintes, the Jardin Remarquable de l'Abbaye de Salagon and an optional visit to the Abbaye de Ganagobie, as well as a experimental garden.

Accommodation to be arranged individually.
Places are limited to 25 people, and this outing is now fully booked. To add your name to the waiting list please contact Nanouk Pelen or Hedwige Lauwaert.

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.

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, l'Atelier and La Pomone.

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 l'Atelier in St Rémy, where she will give us a talk and guide us around two of her gardens, l'Atelier and La Pomone. 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



Photo : Jardin du Dragon à la Bambouseraie

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. You will receive a registration form at the beginning of March. Until then, please do not send anything or make any payments.

Programme

Date	Time	Event	Location	Estimated price/person
Wednesday 20 May	Group 1 15.00 – 16.00 16.00 – 17.00 Group 2 15.00 – 16.00 16.00 – 17.00	Musée cévenole[1] Jardin ethnobotanique[2] Jardin ethnobotanique[2] Musée cévenole[1]	St Jean du Gard.	Museum 7€ Garden : free
	Evening	Restaurant Le Cévenol	Anduze	23.90€ (excluding drinks)
Thursday 21 May	10.00 – 11.15	Pottery Workshop Chêne Vert[3] **OR** Park Tour Vieille[4]	Anduze Alès	Free
	11.30 – 12.00	Pottery shop[5]	Anduze	
	12.30 - 13.30	Picnic lunch, pre-ordered or *tiré du sac*[6]	St Jean du Gard	Takeaway lunch from L'Envie , around 15€
	13.30	Steam train[7]	One-way journey from St Jean du Gard to La Bambouseraie	11.50€
	15.00 – 16.45	Guided visit Bambouseraie[8]	Générargues	16€
	16.45 – 16.45	Aperitif offered by MGF and AGM	Bambouseraie Générargues	Free
	20.00	Restaurant Ferme de Cornadel	Anduze	29 € (excluding drinks)

Friday 22 May	10.00 – 12.00	Jardin de la Gardie[9] **OR** Short walk[10]	Rousson Anduze	8€ Free

1. **Guided tour of musée des vallées cévenoles**: this museum presents rich ethnographic, historical, artistic and traditional collections on rural and traditional society in the Cévennes from the 17th to the 20th century.
2.**Jardin ethnobotanique** adjacent to the museum. Visit with its passionate creator, Alain Renaux.
3. **Poterie Chêne Vert**: Visit to the pottery workshop. Making of "Vase d'Anduze".
4. **Parc de la Tour Vieille** : This botanical park located north of Alès, 16 minutes from Anduze, is home to more than 700 species, including 200 rare ones. The visit will be guided by the head gardener.
5. Poterie Chêne Vert: for those who wish, after visiting the Park Tour Vieille or the pottery workshop, there will be an opportunity to purchase Anduze pots.
6. **Picnic** on the banks of the Gardon. Examples of pre-ordered takeaway lunch from L'Envie: Option 1: Coleslaw salad + potato with hard-boiled egg/sardine/chicken or tofu. Option 2: Sandwich with hard-boiled egg/sardines/chicken or tofu and seasoned green salad with onions. Option 3: For diabetics and gluten-free: buckwheat galette instead of bread or potatoes. Goat's cheese. Apple and strawberry compote and shortbread biscuits. 1 bottle of water.
7. Steam train (Train à vapeur). The station is next to the picnic area. Please arrange carpooling as there is no return by train, so each car will need a volunteer to drive the car to the Bambouseraie.
8. Bambouseraie: One-hour guided tour for two groups, including one English-speaking group, followed by free visit until the AGM.
9. **Jardin de la Gardie** This garden includes a medieval vegetable garden, a garden of medicinal and everyday herbs, and a Mediterranean-style garden. You will also discover a plot of ancient cereals and companion plants and a reconstructed apiary.
10. Easy short walk to discover dolmens, beautiful landscapes and the flora of the Cévennes above Anduze (distance: 3 km, elevation gain 100 m).

Suggested accommodation
Hotels
Hôtel les 3 barbus Générargues (6 min from Anduze) (****190-230 €)
Hôtel du Garage Anduze (***130 €)
Hôtel Porte des Cévennes (*** 140-150 €)
Hôtel de la Madeleine Tornac (6 minutes from Anduze) (**90-100 €)

Chambres d'hotes (approximate price per night for 2 persons):
La maisonnette de Cabanis Anduze (120 €)
Lou Secadou Thoiras (12 min d'Anduze) (90 €)
Mas des druilles Générargues (6 min d'Anduze) (130 €)
Château de la Bruguière Tornac (6 min d'Anduze) (130 €)
Le domaine du Soulier Tornac (6 min d'Anduze) (85 €)
Eco-Lune de Miel Anduze (100 €)

Houses for 4 people and more can be found on the website of l'Office du Tourisme d'Anduze
There are also other possibilities in Alès.

Other Plans for 2026

Mid-March
Aix-en-Provence autrement (a different way…)

March/April
Montpellier, Hérault
A visit to the Jardin des Plantes de Montpellier.

End April/early May
Le Beausset, Var
A discussion meeting at Jacqueline's home, followed by a visit to her garden in Le Beausset and a shared picnic.

INTERNATIONAL ACTIVITIES

MGi Mediterranean Gardening International
A global horticultural community

Saturday 11 to Saturday 18 April
Spring flowers in Gargano, Italy
Organised by Mediterranean Plants and Gardens



The Gargano, in the Puglia region of Southern Italy, has outstanding wildlife, especially orchids. The trip is divided between Rodi on the north coast and Monte Sant'Angelo in the south. The guide is Stefano Doglio, who has specialised in this area for years and knows unique sites for some rare orchids and others. The scenery, much of it unspoilt karst, is splendid.

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

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 helleri*

OTHER DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Tulips in Jonquières, Vaucluse



Hedwige Lauwaert writes:
In general, the last weekend of March and the first weekend of April, the tulip bulbs that were planted in the Autumn are blooming in Jonquières. During this time the public is invited to visit the tulip fields in full bloom.
You can follow the progress of the bloom on Facebook "Fêtons les Tulipes de Jonquières".

See also: MGF visit to tulip fields – March 2024

Plant fairs and open gardens

14 February – 1 March	Fête du Citron	Menton (Alpes-Maritimes)
14, 27, 28 February	Festival des orchidées	Menton (Alpes-Maritimes)
28 February – 1 March	Fete des Violettes	Tourrettes-sur-Loup (Alpes-Mar)
1 March	La Fête de la Nature en Minervois	La Redorte (Aude)
22 March	Primavera	Montpellier (Hérault)
27 - 29 March	La Petite Fête de l'Arbre	Lodève (Hérault)
28/29 March	Fête des Jardins	Antibes (Alpes-Maritimes)
3 – 5 April	Fête des plantes au MUCEM	Marseille (B-du-R)
4 – 6 April	Cassis au Jardin	Cassis (B-du-R))
5 April	Festival des Fleurs et des Plantes	Sommières (Gard)
5 April	Foire aux Fleurs	Beaumes-de-Venise (Vaucluse)
11/12 April	Plantes Rares et jardin naturel	Sérignan-du-Comtat (Vaucluse)
12 April	Foire aux plantes	La Garde (Var)
18 April	Fête du Printemps	Le Pontet (Vaucluse)
19 April	Marché aux plantes	L'Isle sur La Sorgue (Vaucluse)
19 April	Floralies	Cadenet (Var)
25/26 April	Fête des Plantes et du Massif – Fontfroide	Narbonne (Aude)
25/26 April	Journées des Jardins et de la Nature	Anduze (Gard)
26 April	Fête des jardins	Forcalquier (Alpes-de-Hte-P)
26 April	La fête du printemps	Saint-Andiol (B-du-R)
26 April	Foire aux fleurs	Montvendre (Drôme)

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.**

28 March 14h30	Histoire des roses par Jean-Marc Duplouy, jardinier paysagiste, ethnobotaniste,	Foyer rural de Montferrier, à Montferrier-sur-Lez
18 April 14h30	Bourse aux plantes	Espace Culturel du Devézou
7-9 May	Voyage Hortus près du Mont Ventoux	Mont Ventoux

NEWS AND INFORMATION

New on the website



Mon Jardin dans le Var

Jacqueline Potter has written the first of what we hope will be a series of articles about the creation of her new garden. She describes how she approached the task, the difficulties she encountered during the first two years, and how the garden is now taking shape, in a rather different way to how she had originally thought. She says "I have decided to forget about having a simple garden. I have once more become addicted to collecting plants! "

The end of an era for Le Clos du Peyronnet



Photo: ©Claire Takacs

Members may have had the good fortune to visit the garden of Le Clos du Peyronnet in Menton. For many years the owner, William Waterfield, welcomed visitors to his intensively planted walled garden, open to the sea on the south side.
William died in 2021, and his wife Judith continued to allow a few groups to visit, including the MPG group in October. Now the house and garden have been sold, and there are no more visits for the time being.

Country Life magazine has published two very interesting articles by Charles Quest-Ritson about the history of English country gardens on the French riviera and Le Clos du Peyronnet, purchased by William's grandparents in 1912.
English country gardens on the French Riviera.
Le Clos du Peyronnet, the legendary English Riviera garden of William Waterfield

From the Cape Horticultural Society

Fynbos vegetation is frequently subject to fires, which are needed in order to sustain plant diversity. Some species store their seed in fire-safe cones for release after a fire and others re-sprout from the base.
In April 2025, there was a fire in Silvermine Nature Reserve, part of Table Mountain National Park on the Cape peninsula.

Isabella Hayden, a CHS member, took these photographs in December 2025. She writes: "The flowers were exceptional after the April fire, and we saw a number of species that ONLY flower after fire."



Aristea bakeri



Watsonia borbonica



Watsonia tabularis



Bobartia indica



Pseudoselago serrata



Silvermine

Read more about flowers of the fynbos in the 'Botanical walks' section of Christine Daniels' report on a visit to gardens of the South African Cape in 2016. Walk Two took place in the Silvermine Nature Reserve.

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

Death of Francis Hallé

'Everyone knows that going down to the garden does not solve everyday problems, but it puts them into perspective and makes them more bearable. Sigmund Freud had this late regret: I wasted my time; the only important thing in life is gardening' (Aux origines des plantes, Fayard 2008. **Francis Hallé**, French botanist, biologist and dendrologist. 1938-2025)

This internationally renowned botanist died in Montpellier on 31 December 2025. He contributed greatly to our knowledge of trees, particularly primary forests. Thanks to his invention of the 'canopy raft', he was able to explore the canopy of several forests around the globe and revealed their incredible biological diversity



Photo: Jardin de Kerdalo

Timothy Vaugan, a great gardener, passed away in August 2025. Born in Somerset in 1951, he began his career as an apprentice at Wellington Botanic Garden in New Zealand. In 1974, he worked at Hillier Arboretum before returning to his studies to obtain a horticulture diploma from Kew. After participating in the restoration of the Tehran Botanical Gardens, he moved to France and restored the gardens of the Château de Thoiry, then the park at Courson and parks of several French châteaux. One of his greatest works was the restoration of the Kerdalo Garden in Brittany, which has been designated 'jardin remarquable'. He finally settled in Plougrescant in Brittany, where he spent the rest of his life

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