



# The LAUREL

Connecticut  
Master  
Gardener  
Association  
Newsletter

Winter 2016 Volume 29, No. 1

## Symposium XXIII **Gardening Gone Native** March 19, 2016

The 23rd annual CMGA symposium will be held at the Connecticut College Crozier-Williams building in New London, CT. Please join us! The price remains the same as it has been for many years. Register by flyer received in the mail, or online at [www.ctmga.org](http://www.ctmga.org).

Registration begins at 8:00. Opening remarks are followed by our keynote speaker in the main auditorium at 9:00. The morning session will begin at 11:00. Lunch at noon is an assortment of wrap sandwiches (including vegetarian), green salad, assorted chips, assorted cookies, apples and beverages. The afternoon session will begin at 1:30. Our **closing speaker will speak at 3:00. Don't forget to check out our vendors and the silent auction (bidding ends at 1:00).** Session descriptions are on page 3.



**Keynote Speaker: Art Wolk**  
**"BULB FORCING FOR BEGINNERS AND THE SERIOUSLY SMITTEN"**

After over thirty years of experience, Art reveals his secrets of coaxing a wide diversity of bulbs into wintertime bloom to help both novices and the "seriously-smitten" learn what it takes to successfully force a wide variety of bulbs indoors during the winter.

**Closing Speaker: Dan Jaffe**  
**"WHERE THE WILD THINGS ARE: NATIVE PLANTS FOR POLLINATORS"**

Dan is Propagator and Stock Beds' Grower at New England Wild Flower Society. He will illustrate why pollinators are attracted to specific plants and how that information may be utilized to make more educated plant choices. You will find solutions to problem areas and determine what are the best plant choices for your specific environment.



# Officers 2016

<b>President:</b>	Tracy Burrell	president@ctmga.org
<b>V-President:</b>	TBD	cmga@comcast.net
<b>Treasurer:</b>	TBD	cmga@comcast.net
<b>Secretary:</b>	Jean Fletcher	cmga@comcast.net
<b>Membership:</b>	Maureen Gillis	cmga@comcast.net

## Board of Directors:

Tracy Burrell	Marge Bingham
Alicia Cornelio	Paul Cusson
Jean Fletcher	Rebecca Foss
Paul Grimmeisen	Theresa Hennessey
Kim Kelly	Katherine Kosiba
Paula Leibovitz	Margaret McElroy
Bill Oros	Diane Ostheimer
Florie Ricciuti	Pat Taylor

**CMGA website:** www.ctmga.org  
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Alicia Cornelio (Editor)

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Please send news, photographs and calendar items by email to cmganews@gmail.com

**Deadlines for publication are January 1, April 1, July 1, and October 1**

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# President's Message

As we start a new gardening year, it's a great time to think about trying something new, whether it's a new plant or technique or maybe even a whole new approach or mindset. Master Gardeners are always aware that we must change as our gardens change and while there might be some trepidation about trying something new, there's also anticipation and excitement. What will we learn about that new plant or technique? What will we learn about ourselves? It's one of the things that make being a gardener so rewarding.

This year CMGA is also trying something new for our March 19, 2016 Garden Symposium. After many years at Manchester Community College, they could no longer accommodate us. We looked at many different venues across the state and for 2016, we will be at Connecticut College. Visitors know their Arboretum is a beautiful site year round, and the Arboretum staff is working on some additional activities for us during the day, including a mini Winter Tree ID walk during lunch time.

We will continue to explore venues for 2017, but this was the best, and we believe, an excellent choice for 2016. While the venue is new, again thanks to the hard work of the Board, we have been able to keep the cost of attending the Symposium the same as previous years.

*(continued on page 7)*

# Breakout Sessions at the 2016 Annual Symposium

**Russ Cohen: NATIVE EDIBLE WILD PLANTS SUITABLE FOR THE HOME LANDSCAPE.** There's an increasing inclination to utilize more native species in home landscaping, thanks to books like Doug Tallamy's "Bringing Nature Home", which extol the virtues of native plants over exotic ornamentals for attracting and sustaining beneficial insects. Yet, for some people, this alone may be insufficient motivation to "go native". Perhaps knowing that many native species are edible will provide the additional incentive.

**Nancy DuBrule Clemente: GROWING A WILD GARDEN: ROMANTIC, SUSTAINABLE, SENSIBLE DESIGN.** Inspired by the Dutch Wave of landscape design, most specifically Piet Oudolf, this workshop will explain how to use plants in your landscape that create a naturalistic feeling while reducing the actual maintenance required. Learn about the plants that Nancy uses in her own yard and in the landscapes she creates for her clients. Perennials, grasses, shrubs, herbs, and edibles will be included in this diverse plant palette that offers interest in all four seasons

**Matt Mattus: THE ART OF VEGETABLE GROWING** looks at his personal journey in raising forgotten or more unusual vegetables, exploring nineteenth century techniques and some less-practiced techniques by home gardeners as well as various historical views of more common vegetables such as a historical view of carrots, tracing modern varieties from the alpine meadows of Afghanistan to how celery became popular in the mid-nineteenth century. It also covers various seed to harvest tales of different vegetable crops through the years.

**Vincent Simeone: GROW MORE WITH LESS: SUSTAINABLE GARDEN METHODS** makes the eco-friendly essentials of the what, how and why of sustainable gardening unmistakably clear. With effective time-proven recommendations, field-tested at a large botanical garden, and adapted for home use, he will identify a step-by-step roadmap for green gardening.

**Larry Weaner: SETTING A PROCESS IN MOTION: THE SELF-PROLIFERATING LANDSCAPE.** Nature has spent thousands of years perfecting the abilities of plants to reproduce and proliferate on their own, and yet we often go to great effort and expense individually placing every plant in our designed landscapes. How can we capitalize on the reproductive abilities of native plants and actively encourage planted as well as existing and new species to colonize our landscapes? Principles and protocols for creating dynamic, **ecologically rich landscapes where nature does much of the "planting" will be discussed.** The presentation will include detailed case studies that demonstrate how practical, concrete plant proliferation strategies can be applied at diverse scales, from the intimate Garden to large multi-acre landscapes.

# CMGA Annual Meeting

The 2015 CMGA Annual meeting took place on November 7, 2015 at the Tolland Agricultural Center in Vernon, CT. Over 40 people attended to hear about the goals and accomplishments of CMGA throughout the year and help celebrate milestones of CMGA members. Featured speaker Judith Dreyer, a specialist in homeopathic nursing, gave a presentation on *Lawns to Meadows*. Marge Bingham received a life-time achievement award for all her work over the years including securing speakers for our symposium. After the meeting, a splendid luncheon spread was enjoyed. There was also the opportunity to do a bit of shopping among several CMGA items. The meeting ended with the distribution of numerous and varied door prizes.



# Turtle Circle at Tolland Youth Garden

By Judith Dreyer, Master Gardener

The Tolland Youth Garden is a project of the Tolland Garden Path Garden Club. It abuts the paved walking trail at Crandall Park in Tolland. Judith Dreyer, Master Gardener through the Vernon field office, helped design a new feature to the Tolland Youth Garden: the Turtle Circle.



Volunteers measured the land space, placed the logs and mulch. Children sit in the circle along with adults during the various summer programs.

Flowers in the colors of the four directions were placed in the center along with an analemmatic sundial. This circle is set to true north and by next spring animals

and plants will adorn each seat designed by the children.

The Tolland Garden Path Garden Club wanted to give the children a fun way to learn the skill of orientation. Signage will be completed next season. Twelve plant fact sheets highlighting some of our stressed populations will be mounted and placed by each seat.

For more information: <http://tollandgardenpaths.webs.com/>

Judith Dreyer can be reached: [judith@judithdreyer.com](mailto:judith@judithdreyer.com)



# The Critter Wars!

**By Alicia Cornelio**  
**Editor, Laurel**

It is a topic almost too painful to broach. You eagerly await the ripening of hundreds of green tomatoes in your backyard and wake up to find the **plants eaten to the earth. They don't even wait for the berries to ripen before they are gone.** Shrubs are stripped of bark after a snowy winter. Lawns are filled with dirt piles and tunnels overnight. What to do?!



There are as many remedies as horror stories. Here is a collection of the more humorous, unscientific recommendations I have heard:

**Those rotten deer!** Do you have a large lawn ornament like a tractor or a wagon? Paint it red and move it to a different place in your yard every few weeks. The suspicious deer will stay away.

**Rabbit invasion!** Conceal old shoes around your garden to give the impression that humans are near. Leather shoes are best. Do they stink the most?

**Moles at large!** Attract owls to your yard by putting up large nest boxes filled with straw high up in your tree. Will the screeching keep you up at night?

**Chipmunks are not cute!** To deter chipmunk activity, fill burrow holes in your yard with expanding foam insulation. Hopefully, they will choke on it.

**Mice love trees!** Did you lose a lot of your shrubs last winter? Install an electronic beeping device. The noise drives the mice crazy and they flee the area. Will it work on the neighbors?

**Groundhogs are the worst!** This is when you hear about desperate measures. But the top advice: get a big dog. Is the price of the dog food less than the vegetables?

Oh well, stay calm and keep trying!!

## Connecticut Master Gardener Association Year in Review

*In 2015, the CMGA:*

- ◆ Provided almost \$8000 in grants for over two dozen projects across our state
- ◆ Quarterly newsletter: The Laurel is published and delivered to statewide membership by print and online
- ◆ Hosted the annual symposium March 21 with over 350 attendees
- ◆ Awarded Billy Baxter and Marge Bingham lifetime memberships for their significant contributions to CMGA
- ◆ Enhanced our grant application process for better service
- ◆ Added a new automation process for tracking CMGA finances
- ◆ Hosted an ice cream social for MG classes 2014/15 at the UConn Farm Tour
- ◆ Organized the Summer Safari to two wonderful gardens.
- ◆ Hosted the Annual Meeting featuring Judith Dreyer and door prizes
- ◆ Expanded the CMGA website to include more information and resources
- ◆ Recognized the UConn Extension Centennial with additional donations
- ◆ Seven new members joined our Board
- ◆ Watched our Facebook participation grow: - over 500 photos added - over 2000 postings - over 81,000 views of posts - over 2000 post feedbacks

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*(President's message continued from page 2)*

In 2015, CMGA gave over \$14,000 to the MG program, including an increase in the grant budget of over 30 percent. In order to maintain and continue to increase the level of support we give to the MG program, we hope that you will be able to join us in March, and also at other CMGA events throughout the year.

This issue describes the upcoming Symposium and a recap of our **Annual Meeting, in November; we'd like to thank Tolland County MG Coordinator Deb Prior and all of the volunteers for a great day. A special moment at this year's** meeting was awarding Lifetime Membership to Marge Bingham. Marge has secured speakers for the Symposium for over decade, tirelessly travelling countless miles to do so, and we expect her to keep going for countless miles more. Congratulations to Marge!

Thanks to Debbye Rosen for her service as our Treasurer for the last two years and to departing Board members Kathy Baechle and Toni Royal. We also welcomed several new Board members and we continue to look for more folks to join us on the Board or on specific events.

*Tracy Burrell, President*

# 2015 Master Gardener Graduates

## **Bartlett**

Janine C. Aggott  
Elizabeth E. Boze  
Janet S. Bruehlman  
Mary Buchanan  
Terese Burns  
Nicole Christensen  
Charlie Dos Santos  
Kim Doyle  
Robert Fossity  
Lauran Fowks  
Marc Gershowitz  
Lisa Greene  
Deb Higgins  
Denise James  
Debra Keyworth  
Peter Kokias  
Karen Mayhew  
Vicki A. Mulligan  
Debbie Nichols  
Iolanda Peck  
Patricia L. Ritchie  
Bianca Romano  
Anne Rowlands  
Diane S. Ryan  
Sally Savoia  
Lia Scammon  
Mary Scuilla  
Patricia Sell  
Brian Sharp  
Barbara Stauder  
Mary Veillette  
Ellen Visnyei  
Cindy White  
Maribeth Winslow

## **Middlesex/N. London**

Sandra Abrahams  
Bob Bartosiak  
Mary Helen Braceland  
Nicholas Capozza  
Susan Curtin  
Craig DePaolo  
Linda DeRusha  
Mark Dixon  
Lisa Doggart  
Miriam Furey-Wagner  
Jeremy George  
Faith Ham  
Richard Harrall  
Jennifer James  
L. Allen James Jr.  
Lillian King  
Susan Koris  
Karen Lipeika  
Toni Leland  
Barbara Longo  
Jennifer Ludlow  
Catriona Macauslan  
Thomas Nazarko  
Anne Nord  
Andrea O'Boyle  
Philip Presti  
Mary Riley  
Janice Russo  
Candace Sanford  
MyLan Sarner  
Sherry Smith  
Mary Solera  
Jessica Stern  
John Suhr  
Cynthia Tillson  
Thomas Wagner  
Pam Woods

## **Hartford/Litchfield**

Janet Adeletti  
Linda Aldrich  
Susan Caron  
Aimee Jane Critchley  
Mary Davidow  
Elise DeFrank  
Darnell DePaoli  
Jane English  
Kathy Frederick  
Tiffany Glanville  
Everton Gordon  
Sandra Graham  
Susan Grew  
Julio Guzman  
Wendy Halloran  
Patricia Hammer  
Victoria Hart  
Suzanne Hauselt  
Marianne Horn  
Erin James  
Jean Madden-Hennessey  
Lora Madorin  
Martha Maietta  
Elizabeth McCormick  
Lori O'Connor  
Michael Randich  
Andrea Rutsky  
Diana Simoni  
Emily Sloss  
Glenda Thomas  
Margaret Turner  
John Vecchitto  
Melissa Wagner Pavick  
David Ware  
Julia Wholey  
Carolyn Wilcox

*Please send any omissions or corrections to : [cmganews@gmail.com](mailto:cmganews@gmail.com)*

# 2015 Master Gardener Graduates

## Fairfield/New Haven

Elizabeth Bilus  
Rose Bonanno  
Drew Cohn  
Emily Curry  
Aimee Davidson-Locke  
Tina DeLapa  
Martina Doshan  
Bronice Gage  
Dorene Grasso  
Marie Gross  
Melissa Gryspeerdt  
Eva Klatt  
Mandy Lightcap  
Karen Linder  
Dabney Mahoney  
Patricia Morris

Patricia Pavlov  
Suruchi Prakash  
Cathy Prior  
Eileen M. Schaub  
Cynthia Sherwin  
Toni Simonetti  
Stephanie Sisk  
Noel Vizzo  
Allie Ward

## Windham/Tolland

Lois Bouchard  
Andrew Broneill  
Ellen Charpentier  
Amy Driscoll  
Mary Ellen Ellsworth  
Stuart Fisher  
Rebecca Foss  
Eileen Gillan  
Carrie Kocher  
Christopher Lewis  
Ronald Lewis  
Mary St. Onge  
Carol Pearson  
Gordon Schies  
Michelle Weiss

# 2015 Master Gardener Advancements

## **Bartlett**

### **Advanced MG**

Susan Anton  
Cynthia Carlson  
Janet Connolly  
Bill Flahive  
Serena Guerrette  
Hilary Gurdon  
Dolores Luciano  
Thomas MacGregor  
Annelise McCay  
Patty Primavera  
Nancy Scanlon

Kitsey Snow  
Karlyn Sturmer  
Patricia Taylor  
Janice Underwood  
Alexis Wilcox

### **Bronze**

Louise Bahner  
Deirdra Wallin

### **Silver**

Margot Abrams  
Siobahon Deveney  
Adelle Hack

Kathryn Ruzek

Flo Vannoni

### **Gold**

Ruth Flahive  
Tim Ohsann

### **Ruby**

Kathie Ohsann

### **Sapphire**

Lillemor Wallmark

# 2015 Master Gardener Advancements

## Hartford/Litchfield

### **Advanced MG**

Karen Berger  
Jane Comerford  
Holly Florio  
Janice Johnston  
Jennifer Klinger  
David Lewis  
Susan Chapin Manzi  
Deborah Pike  
Eleanor Woike

### **Bronze**

Diana Hughes  
Marilynn Palmer

### **Gold**

Jean Fletcher

### **Ruby**

Jon Krish  
Marlene Mayes  
Susan St. John

### **Ruby Bronze**

Steve Kovack  
Don Lukaszek  
Rebecca Martorelli

### **Ruby Silver**

Sarah Bailey

## Fairfield/New Haven

### **Advanced MG**

Georgia Abbott  
Pam Barry  
Barbara Boland  
Jan Broome  
Juliet Cassone  
Barbara Gerson  
Carol Giunta  
Penelope Hoblyn

### **Bronze**

Dick Bryn  
Colleen Giambo  
Jean Hersh

### **Silver**

Elaine Helte  
Phyllis Padro  
Amanda Sutton

### **Gold**

Patrick Connor  
Betty Johnson

### **Sapphire**

Linda Albanese  
Phyllis Atkinson  
Lesley Gehr  
Lillemor Wallmark

### **Sapphire Bronze**

Regina Campfield

### **Sapphire Silver**

Ganga Duleep

### **Sapphire Gold**

Alice Smith

### **Ruby**

Dawn Fiss  
Pam Hale  
Peter Russell  
Carrie Sears

### **Ruby Bronze**

Janet Kruse  
Beth Miller  
Daniel Schiefferle

### **Ruby Silver**

Greg Moonie  
Nedra Gillette

## Middlesex/N. London

### **Advanced MG**

Jean Petryshyn  
Judie Blackman-Cochran  
Lynda Laux-Bachand  
Tom Kalal  
Marilyn Zeeb

### **Bronze**

Ken Sherrick  
Gail Reynolds

### **Silver**

Ken Sherrick  
Gail Reynolds

### **Gold**

Ken Sherrick

## Windham/Tolland

### **Advanced MG**

Maryellen Donnelly  
Eleanor Fiske  
Sharon Foster-Chalecki  
Roseanna Longenbaker  
John C. LoRusso  
Judith N. Olsen  
William M. Oros  
Carol Salsbury  
Nancy Stearns  
Donna Tedford-Sheridan

### **Bronze**

Emily Logee-Savoie  
Joe Suich, Sr.

### **Sapphire**

George Smith

*(continued next column)*

# Connecticut **Master Gardener** Association

## 2016 Membership Form

for the calendar year Jan. 1, 2016 to Dec. 31, 2016

**Dues are \$20**

**PLEASE PRINT**

Name					
Street					
City				State	Zip
Email			Phone (       )		
Office Where Certified	Year		RENEWING MEMBER		2014 GRADUATE or NEW MEMBER

Membership is restricted to Master Gardeners  
**Dues are payable by December 31, 2015. Annual dues are \$20.**

Please send your check, **payable to CMGA**, with this page or a copy to:  
**Maureen Gillis, 93 River Road, East Haddam, Ct. 06423**

**OR pay online with your credit card using Paypal  
at [www.ctmga.org](http://www.ctmga.org)**

CMGA is run exclusively by volunteers and is always happy to welcome participation by its members. Please check activities with which you are willing to help.

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| Symposium (March 15) _____                                    | Annual Meeting (Nov) _____   |
| CMGA Board Member (monthly meetings and committee work) _____ | Publicity/Public Relations _____   |
| Membership Database Maintenance (Using MS ACCESS) _____       | Partners Program Chair _____   |
| Summer Safari (July) _____                                    | Other skills/suggestions? Email us at <a href="mailto:president@ctmga.org">president@ctmga.org</a> |
| Annual Meeting (Nov) _____                                    |  |

Dues provide a subscription to our newsletter, *The Laurel*; discounted admission to the annual symposium; discounts at area garden-related businesses; support of the Master Gardener Program at the University of Connecticut Extension Service; and grants and support for Master Gardener activities throughout the year.

CMGA would like to take advantage of the latest technology in communications; please let us know if you would prefer to access *The Laurel* online instead of receiving a hardcopy. The online version is in full color; we will send you an email when it's available. All new members, beginning in 2013, have online access only. *The Laurel* currently costs CMGA approximately \$10 per member to print and mail each year to those receiving a hard copy. If you have signed up for online access in the past, you will not receive a hard copy.



**CMGA**  
C/O Maureen Gillis  
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# THE LAUREL 2016



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# The LAUREL

Connecticut  
Master  
Gardener  
Association  
Newsletter

Spring 2016 Volume 29, No. 2

## Summer Garden Safari



Summer Garden  
Safari  
July 23, 2016

Windham County  
Extension Center  
139 Wolf Den Rd,  
Brooklyn, CT 06234

Final details will be in the next  
issue of the **Laurel**

Please check the CMGA website  
**[www.ctmga.org](http://www.ctmga.org)**  
frequently for updates and  
expanded information!

# Officers 2016

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## President's Message

*"If nothing ever changed, there'd be no butterflies." – Anonymous*

This year's Symposium was a wonderful example of this quote. We had a spectacular day at a new site, Connecticut College. Over 350 gardening minded folks threw off the vestiges of winter and emerged energized, eager and excited to apply everything they learned to their gardens and to outreach projects across Connecticut. The camaraderie of MGs is always wonderful and it was great to see all the bright, shining faces as they reconnected with old friends and made new ones. We had attendees from every Connecticut county and from Massachusetts, New York and Rhode Island. Thank you everyone for embracing this change!

I am always in awe of what Master Gardeners can do and as this year's Symposium Chair, I got to see, more than ever, how dedicated, innovative and just plain wonderful MGs are. We had an incredible group of volunteers, including the CMGA Board, the Symposium Core team, the Middlesex Focus Group, Connecticut College Arboretum staffers, the Mountain Laurel chapter of Wild Ones and the over forty people who volunteered on the day of the event. Special thanks to Jamie Burgess, Rebecca Foss, Chantal Foster, Maureen Gillis and Kim Kelly – they met every challenge with a smile.

This edition of the Laurel is chock full of great stuff, and while I know you're eager to get your hands in the dirt, sit down for a bit and enjoy this issue.

Mark your calendars – this year's Summer Garden Safari will be on July 23 in Windham County.

And don't forget, if you have an outreach project, CMGA has money for grants! Check out the Grants and Scholarships section, under the Member Benefits tab on the CMGA website for information on how to apply.

Tracy Burrell, President

# Save the Date



## Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station Workshop

Thursday, May 19st  
3 – 5 PM

*Disease Diagnostics: How to Identify Common Plant Health Problems*  
CAES Jones Auditorium, 123 Huntington St., New Haven.  
with Dr. Yonghao Li from CAES. Free and open to the public.  
To RSVP for a workshop, send an email to  
[rsvp@agstationfriends.org](mailto:rsvp@agstationfriends.org) [www.agstationfriends.org](http://www.agstationfriends.org)



## Tolland County Master Gardeners' Plant Sale

Saturday, May 21st  
9 AM – 12 noon

Tolland Agricultural Center - Gold Building  
24 Hyde Avenue, Vernon

Perennials, herbs, and vegetables ~ Soil pH testing available ~  
Master gardeners available to answer your gardening questions ~  
Information on pollinators ~ Meet a beekeeper ~ Live demos  
Plant Donations Greatly Appreciated  
Contact Kurt via email at [urtis01@att.net](mailto:urtis01@att.net)



## Connecticut Master Gardener Summer Safari

Saturday, July 23st  
8:30 AM – 1 PM

Windham County Extension Office  
139 Wolf Den Rd, Brooklyn, CT 06234  
Fun for all! CMGA Semi-annual meeting, buffet breakfast,  
garden tours, shopping opportunities,  
lunch social with ice cream.  
Don't miss it!

# 2016 CMGA Symposium a Huge Success

A huge thanks to the outstanding job of the Symposium Committee, all the Master Gardeners, venue staff, friends, and vendors who came out in support of the event. The Symposium, held at a new location, Connecticut College in New London, was attended to full capacity. Impressions of the new site by attendees was extremely positive. The lunchtime walks on the extensive college grounds was especially enjoyed by participants.

When you attend the Symposium, you invest not only in yourself by the knowledge gained, but also in the funds raised which are used for CMGA grants, stipends for the Master Garden Program Coordinators and scholarships for MG Interns. We look forward to seeing you at our 2017 CMGA Symposium!



# Symposium 2016



# Keeping Rain Barrel Water Cool and Clean

**By Catherine Phinzy,  
Master Gardener Class of 2005**

Water is gold. Out west states argue whether rivers can be owned geographically, whether those living up stream should control what happens to a river downstream. Here in Mystic the Aquarian Water Company charges us for our tap water, and the Town of Stonington charges us for its disposal according to how much a household uses. When I water my lawn, I pay for the water coming and going even though the sprinkled water soaks into the aquifer. Worse, some folks in Maine now pay a tax for water runoff depending on how much of their property is pavement as opposed to pasture. Coming and going, water is gold.



Therefore, after training to be a Master Gardener and learning how to conserve water in both our inside and outside spaces, I looked to how our family might reduce our water use. (The proper term is use, not the coined usage.)

My husband installed conservation shower spigots and with rocks reduced the space in our toilet tanks so as to reduce the amount of water used to flush our toilets. I looked to the watering of our potted plants, the perennial beds, and bird baths and decided to collect rain water for these. Our neighbors having had difficulty with, clogged, busted, buried, and varmint chewed soaker hoses and with timers that overwatered brought me to the conclusion that I did not want to fuss with those or with sprinklers that sprinkle everything, including you, except the plants that need the water. I came to prefer watering with a hose each plant when needed and watering with a watering can once I had installed rain barrels to collect the run-off from my roof and downspouts.

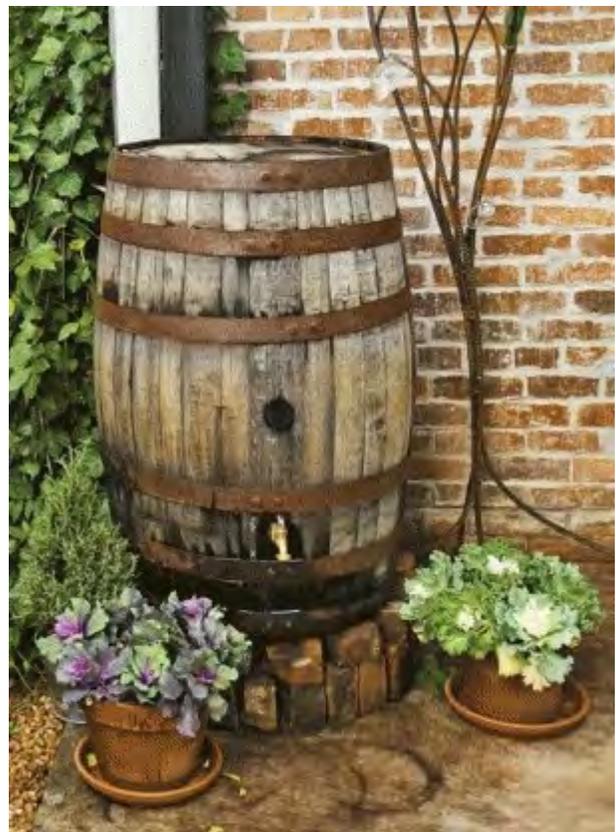
In the end I opted for collecting rain water in wooden whiskey barrels and half barrels, collecting 200 gallons of Free water (Hear that Aquarian and Stonington? Free!) I purchased the half barrels at Holdridges and the whole barrels from "Kentucky Barrels" on-line. They were costly.

I gravitated towards them because of their natural appearance and because I thought they might keep water cooler. I had tried a few, much cheaper, brown plastic barrels, but they admitted so much light that algae became a problem, clogging the barrels' spigots. I gave them away, noting that I had better control of algae with wooden barrels.

The whole whiskey barrel inhibited light, heat, and debris. The algae problem in this barrel became one of odor only, and not green muck. My open barrels, 'though, remained problematic. Lichen from the roof shingles, bird droppings, feathers, dust from mowing the lawn, twigs, and fallen leaves contaminated the water. Mosquitoes would fly up at me as I'd dip a bucket into the barrel. I bought a metal sieve to strain the water before filling a watering can, but this grew tiresome.

Eventually I tried covering the barrels with window screen and black plastic bags, tying the two down together with bungee cords. I poked holes in the black plastic for the rain water to drip through. This system of covers did keep the mosquitos and debris out and the algae down, but what an ordeal it was to uncover and recover the half barrels.

Then, a technical school graduate friend of mine came up with the idea of using air filters, cutting them to make covers for the water barrels. The filters would let water in, and keep waste out. However, air conditioning filter material is fabric and would have to be strapped down like my other covers. In addition, ready-made air conditioning filters in frames are not a size that would entirely cover the half barrels. I was losing hope of finding a good solution until a hardware store salesperson suggested aqua filters for pools or ponds. I was then able to find at Holdridges sheets of stiff plastic filter material, from which my husband with a jig saw cut circles from the sheets, the diameter of which fit as lids onto the open half-barrels.



Aqua filter sheets can be expensive and are not always easy to find, but they do reduce the debris, light, and heat of the water. These filter-lids also deter mosquitoes. With Dunk tablets afloat in the barrels, hatching mosquitoes no longer fly up into my face. Dunk kills the larvae in the water.

Algae became even less of a problem when I went to the aquarium section of Pet World. There I bought a liquid that kills algae in fish tanks. As I guessed, it also kills algae in water barrels.

All of this was a trial and error journey to come to the realization that it is possible to collect rain water and keep it cool and clean and bugless for most of the summer. One just needs these recommended items.

- ◆ Real whiskey barrels, whole or half.
- ◆ Aqua filter material from which to make lids for half barrels. (Partner or friend with tools to help make the lids.)
- ◆ Dunk tablets.
- ◆ Aquarium anti-algae liquids.

This is not to say that these items are a perfect solution. They aren't. One does need to use up the water one collects, and after that before the next rain, clean with a scrub brush from the walls and bottom of open water barrels the brown algae that adheres there. Moreover, before turning water barrels over in the winter, one needs to rinse them out. What this does is make the task of collecting water and watering birds and flowers cleaner and somewhat easier.

## Conserving Water

Did you know that only 1% of the Earth's water is available for fresh drinking water?



# New Grant Recipients

## Betances STEM Magnet School Vertical Garden



The Betances STEM Magnet School in Hartford, Connecticut, educates 4th and 5th graders. CMGA recently awarded the school a grant to construct a new vertical vegetable garden as part of the school's science curriculum.

*vertical garden example*

## Region 10 Schools Raised Bed Gardens

Region 10 school district initiated a project of building raised garden beds at both Lake Garda Elementary School in Burlington and Harwinton Consolidated Elementary School in Harwinton. The project supports the school's science curriculum.



## People's Harvest Community Garden

*People's Harvest* of Pomfret is a community garden run by Master Gardener volunteers. Last year they picked nearly 4,500 pounds of food for Community Kitchens of Northeast Connecticut. CMGA recently awarded a grant to expand and enhance the gardens. This included new fencing to keep out hungry woodchucks!

*Master Gardener John Larusso and Volunteer Gordon Scheizs  
Photo from Courant Community*

# Wild Flowers of Connecticut

A precious resource

**Alicia Cornelio**  
Editor, Laurel

Wild flowers form a colorful part of the natural environment that leads the casual hiker to want to learn more about them. Appreciation of our native wild flowers is at a crucial crossroads as more plants and animals are becoming endangered. About 288 plants are on the Connecticut listing of endangered, threatened, and special concern species. Extinction is a natural process but the rate at which we are losing species is alarming. How does this happen? DEEP suggests the three biggest factors are loss of habitat, competition by non-native species, and often illegal over-collection. But there are initiatives to combat these losses.

Attendees of this year's CMGA symposium received seed packets from Harts Seed containing a mixture of seeds to promote the proliferation of wild flowers in Connecticut. Please use these seeds in any available space to grow these beneficial plants. If we all plant these seeds, no matter how small a space, we can contribute to the survival of these plants and the animals that need them for food.

## Some flower seeds in the packets:



Butterfly Milkweed  
*Asclepias speciosa*  
is essential for the Monarch butterfly. It is a perennial that grows three feet with pretty pinkish flowers that bloom in July and August with ornamental seedpods.



Ox-eye Sunflower  
*Heliopsis helianthoides*  
is a perennial that grows two to four feet high, is long blooming, attracts birds for its seeds and butterflies for its nectar.



Dense Blazing Star  
*Liatris spicata*  
is a perennial that grows two to three feet high, blooms in July or August, and attracts butterflies and hummingbirds. It is very drought tolerant and can be found mostly in open meadows.



Wild Blue Lupine  
*Lupines perennis*  
is a perennial that grows one or two feet, blooms in May to July, and prefers dry, open woods. It is the only food of the larva of the Karner Blue butterfly.

## Endangered in Connecticut:



### **Indian Paintbrush**

*Castilleja coccinea*

A favorite of hummingbirds, this bright orange wild flower is an annual or biennial that grows on the roots of other plants. It blooms in May and June, is one to two feet high, and prefers meadows.

### **Two-flowered Cynthia**

*Krigia biflora*

A member of the aster family, this bright yellow perennial, blooms in May to September, is one to two feet high, and prefers open meadows or roadsides.



### **Balsam Groundsel**

*Packera paupercula*

All three balsam ragworts of Connecticut are threatened and this ragwort is endangered. A perennial, it blooms from June to August, is 4 to 12 inches high and prefers rocky places and ledges in the woods.

### **Kidney leafed Violet**

*Viola renifolia*

Believed to be extinct, please contact the DEEP and/or the Connecticut Botanical Society if you see this wild flower. A perennial, this white violet with purple lines blooms from May to June, is 4 inches high, and prefers shady woodlands.



### **Links:**

[The Best Spots To See Connecticut's Blooming Wildflowers](#)

[Connecticut Botanical Society Wildflower Database](#)

[Endangered, Threatened and Special Concern Species in Connecticut](#)

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# The LAUREL

Connecticut  
Master  
Gardener  
Association  
Newsletter

Summer 2016 Volume 29, No. 3

## Summer Garden Safari

CMGA Semi-Annual Meeting and Garden Tours  
July 23, 2016



We have requested fantastic weather, have some beautiful gardens lined up to visit, and the company of your fellow Master Gardeners to make your participation at the 2016 Summer Safari a day to remember! *So please join us for this annual event.* This year's event is in Windham County.

We will be touring two very special gardens this year. Goodwin Forest and Conservation Center and Windham's Garden on the Bridge. There will also be the opportunity to shop at two local nurseries to fill in the gaps in your home garden. *Details on page 3.*

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**Deadlines for publication are January 1, April 1, July 1, and October 1**

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Summer is an incredibly busy time for Master Gardeners – we volunteer at outreach projects, answer hundreds of questions in the Extension offices and at fairs across the state, and in our 'spare' time, hopefully get to spend some time in our own gardens! The Summer Garden Safari offers two fantastic examples of MGs at work that we'll be visiting on July 23rd: Goodwin State Forest and Garden on the Bridge. MGs have contributed much to the ongoing success of these two distinctly different and distinctly beautiful sites and they are eager to share their knowledge with you.

One of our Lifetime members, Paul Grimmeisen, has spearheaded and shepherded this unique tour for many years. With his extensive travel schedule and other responsibilities happily taking up more and more of his time, this will be the last year that Paul will be co-chairing this event. Along with his co-chair Diane Ostheimer, with key assistance from Kim Kelly, we will have a wonderful day. Please join us and bring a friend!

If you get a chance, check out the 2015 edition of Highlights of Extension – describing services and activities that UConn Extension offers to folks across CT. I was surprised and very humbled to be included in the Extension Volunteers section, starting on page 20. Special thanks to UConn's Stacey Stearns for putting this [informative report together](#).

We also wanted to note the passing of Jay Beausoleil. Jay was a member of the CMGA Board for a number of years and a tireless volunteer at People's Harvest and Channel 3 Kids Camp. We will miss his kind smile and gentle sense of humor.

Don't forget to sign up for a Hot Topics class.

Tracy Burrell

# 2016 Summer Garden Safari

## Don't miss it!



The annual Summer Garden Safari is a little more than a month away, so now is the time to take a few minutes to sign up. This event is a wonderful experience and a great way to meet Interns and Master Gardeners from other counties.

Registration remains at only \$15 per person (CMGA members and guests). Please reserve a place for yourself and your guests by registering by mail or online. **Payments at the door will be \$20.**

Send your check (payable to CMGA) for \$15 per person to:  
Paul Grimmeisen  
2 Iron Forge  
Avon, CT 06001

Please include the name of your guest(s) when sending payment for more than one.

Credit card payments can also be made through PayPal at <http://www.ctmga.org/#/summer-safari-pay-online/4551120615>. Select the number of registrations you want to pay, and please include guest(s) names in the comments section of the payment.

### **PROGRAM:**

#### **WHEN**

Saturday, July 23 beginning at 8:30 am

#### **WHERE**

James L. Goodwin Forest and Conservation Center building  
23 Potter Road Hampton, CT. 06247

See <http://www.friendsofgoodwinforest.org> for directions.

#### **DETAILS**

8:30 Buffet breakfast provided by CMGA

9:00 CMGA Semi-Annual Meeting

9:30 Group One will remain to tour the Goodwin Forest and Conservation Center while Group Two boards the bus for the Windham Garden on the Bridge. When the bus returns, **the groups will switch** to tour their second garden.

12:00 Bring a lunch and join us back at the Extension Center; CMGA will supply drinks and desserts

1:00 10% Discount at nearby nurseries for CMGA members (transportation on your own)

*Descriptions of garden tours and nurseries on next page.*

# Summer Garden Safari Tours

## *Garden Tour #1: Goodwin Forest and Conservation Center*

The James L. Goodwin Conservation Center is an environmental education facility owned and operated by the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection. Currently there is a partnership with the Connecticut Forest and Park Association. They offer programs for the public, schools, those who use and impact Connecticut's forests. There is a wide variety of trails, including the equestrian trail and the miles-long Air Line Trail along with gardens featuring native plants.



## *Garden Tour #2: Windham Garden on the Bridge*



This Windham town park on an old bridge is a jewel set between Windham Mills State Heritage Park and a restored mill building. Where traffic once crossed over the river, there is now a garden and benches with scenic views of the restored mill complex and the river. Throughout the growing season, a variety of annual and perennial flowers bloom and spill over the edges of stone containers along the walls of the bridge. Benches invite you to sit and enjoy the scene. Here in the midst of an urban mill site is a steep, wooded river bank and the sound of water rushing over the dam. You may see a great blue

heron flying down the river or a pair of mallard ducks swimming by.

*Logee's Nursery and Bassett Farm:* Nearby places to shop after the tours.

We hope to see you there! This special Safari is one you won't forget.

# CMGA News



## CMGA has a New Treasurer

Paula A. Russo has joined the CMGA Board of Directors as our new treasurer. She is an associate professor of Mathematics at Trinity College in Hartford, CT. She has been a Master Gardener since 2007. We thank you for volunteering. Your efforts are very much appreciated!

## More Money for Grants

The CMGA Board of Directors voted at the June meeting to raise the allotment for Grants by an additional \$2000 dollars for 2016. So if any Master Gardeners are involved in worthwhile projects this summer, consider applying for a CMGA Grant. [www.ctmga.org](http://www.ctmga.org)



## CMGA Remembers Jay Beausoleil

CMGA has lost a very active member. James "Jay" Beausoleil passed away on May 21, 2016. He requested that gift donations be given to CMGA and many members have already responded. We are grateful to Jay for all his contributions to CMGA and will miss him dearly.



# Litchfield County Extension Center Renovation

Jennifer Klinger

Advanced Master Gardener Class of 2013

Last fall, as I was dividing the perennials around my yard, it occurred to me that the Litchfield office would be a great home for the newly divided plants. As I began to think more about the beds surrounding The University of Connecticut's, Litchfield County Extension Center, I was inspired to begin a total renovation of the garden area, and I applied for a CMGA grant to help with the new plant materials. The project was completed in phases. Step one was to cut back, weed, divide and clean up the existing area. The daylily digging turned out to be a huge task, and Dave Lewis, Litchfield County Master Gardener Coordinator, and I soon realized that we would need multiple days to complete this stage of the project. As the days turned colder towards the end of the fall, the ninebarks were cut back, and the previously existing perennials from the Litchfield office as well as the new plants from my garden were reordered with our plan in mind.

When spring arrived, our requested grant from the Connecticut Master Gardener Association was approved. It was time to assemble a work crew to finish the project.



A few days were spent cleaning up the site and preparing the beds. This included weeding the area and designing a plan for the install of the new plants that we acquired with the help of the CMGA grant. All of the purchases were made with a budget in mind, and an emphasis on maintaining low costs for the new materials. We were lucky to have 5 eager workers on the day of the install, Dave Lewis, Erick Lukingbeal, Dwight Keeney, Douglas Cosentino and myself. Over five hours were spent digging, planting and mulching the area along with assigning watering volunteers for the coming months. The project required over 30 hours to complete. It was a pleasure to renovate this site, and we hope that the new garden area will make people stop for a moment and smile at the colorful beauty as they use the Litchfield office.

We truly appreciate the grant and support of CMGA!

# Wildflowers of the Desert Southwest

Alicia Cornelio Editor, Laurel

“Canyoning”, especially in the Grand Canyon, is on the must-see list of many people. But if you are a gardener, going in May is a bonus. You will be rewarded by smaller crowds and a landscape covered with desert wildflowers.

With a new Southwest Wildflower guide, given to me as a birthday gift from my dear friends and fellow travelers, I began to identify flowers unique to the desert Southwest from photographs taken by my very patient husband.



The Southwest in spring is abloom along roadsides, along trails, on the desert plains, and in the canyons.

The Hanging Gardens of Zion National Park Riverside Walk Trail are not to be missed. The miles of canyon walls along this trail weep with water from flash floods bringing temporary tiny waterfalls that nurture shooting stars, columbine, Monkey-flowers, and beardtongues as well as many other flowers.



*Aquilegia*  
(Columbine)



*Penstemon*  
(Beardtongue)



*Mimulus cardinalis*  
(Monkey Flower)



*Dodecatheon*  
(Shooting Stars)

The rural roadsides near Glen and Bryce Canyons are lined with wild flowers in the late spring. Below are just a few of the many varieties that can be seen among the cactus, yucca, and coyote bush if you take time to look for them.



*Helianthus niveus*  
(Dune Sunflower )



*Lathyrus lanszwertii*  
(Mountain Pea )



*Sphaeralcea ambigua*  
(Desert Globemallow )



*Coreopsis californica*  
(California Tickseed )



Driving through the Kailbab-Paiute Indian Reservation with acres of desert plain, spots of color can be seen in the distance everywhere.

*Stanleya pinnata* (Prince's Plume) wave in the desert breeze. The impressive three to four feet stalks rise above the other vegetation conspicuously (above left).

In contrast, *Oreostemma Alpigenum* (Alpine Aster) hugs the ground among the cactus (above right). The plant is almost leafless with very narrow low leaves.

And a rare sight among the fallen branches is *Draba Asprella* (Rough Draba). A relative of the mustard family, this plant is found over a relatively small area of north Arizona and southwest Utah right in canyon country.

Seeing unfamiliar flowers on a faraway trip is an additional pleasure where gardeners can be rewarded by looking down as well as up!

***Invasive Insects***  
***What you need to know in***  
***Connecticut***



***Hot topics***, a required seminar for Master Gardeners, concentrated on the many non-native invasive insects plaguing our state this year. See [ipm.uconn.edu](http://ipm.uconn.edu) for pictures of the insects described below:

**Winter Moth:** Originating from Europe, these moths have become a huge threat in Connecticut this year due to its propensity for significant feeding damage to a number of fruit crops, trees, shrubs, and perennials. Please contact Donna Ellis or 860-486-6448 if you suspect you have this pest on ornamental plantings.

**Gypsy Moth:** The gypsy moth is one of the most destructive forest pests in North America. Young caterpillars cause shot hole damage in foliage of over 300 host plants including apple, birch, linden, oak, sweet gum, willow, and others. 2015 was a particularly prolific year for these insects. A fungal pathogen *Entomophaga maimaiga* has provided natural control of this pest. Weather, particularly moisture and high humidity help the fungus.

**Tiger Mosquitos:** *Aedes albopictus* is the main carrier of the **Zika Virus**. There is no vaccine. Most people (80%) who are exposed to Zika virus will not get sick. If they do get sick, symptoms usually start 2-7 days after being bitten by an infected mosquito and may include fever, rash, joint pain, and conjunctivitis (red eyes). Mosquito bites are not the only method of infection. Women can be infected from sexual contact with an infected male. If infection occurs when a woman is pregnant, the infection can sometimes spread to the developing fetus causing birth defects.

It is advised to take steps to avoid mosquito bites by wearing long pants and sleeves outdoors and use screens and insect sprays with DEET. Eliminate standing water where mosquitoes can breed such as pails and pots, bird-baths, gutters, etc.. Zika virus has long been found in Africa and Asia since the 1950s but was only discovered in South America in 2015. It has quickly spread to North America. Do not hesitate to be tested for the Zika virus if you suspect you are infected.



### ***CMGA Summer Garden Safari July 23, 2016***

Held in Windham county this year, CMGA has lined up two beautiful garden sights to tour and three nurseries for shopping. Don't miss this annual event! See pages 3 and 4 for a full description.

### ***Farm to Food Tour September 8, 2016***

Hartford County-UCONN Extension, Farm to Food Tour is going to sea! Extension's partnership with Connecticut Sea Grant has opened the door to the mysteries of aquaculture and the "farmers" who produce Connecticut's shellfish and other ocean grown products. For more information:

<http://extension.uconn.edu/>

### ***CIPWG Symposium Invasive Plants in Our Changing World October 11, 2016***



The Connecticut Invasive Plant Working Group (CIPWG) will hold its annual symposium at the UCONN Storrs campus. This 8th biennial conference features national, regional, and local experts as well as citizen volunteers sharing practical solutions for invasive plant management and actions needed to promote native species and improve wildlife habitat.

For more information: <http://cipwg.uconn.edu/2016-symposium/>

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# The LAUREL

*Connecticut  
Master  
Gardener  
Association  
Newsletter*

Autumn 2016 Volume 29, No. 3

## Annual Meeting December 3

Please join us for the CMGA Annual Meeting on Saturday, December 3, 2016 at the Middlesex County Extension Office, 1066 Saybrook Road, Haddam, CT. 06438. This is always a fun meeting and a great chance to socialize with your fellow MGs. Our guest speaker, Marjorie Schnerr, will introduce beautiful dahlias for our gardens. There will also be door prizes, always a popular feature of the annual meeting. For directions to the extension office, please click [here](#).



### **Agenda:**

- 10:00 Socialize / Brunch
- 10:30 Business meeting and elections
- 11:00 Guest Speaker Marjorie Schnerr,  
President of the CT Dahlia Society  
"The Dahlia Year"
- Noon: Door Prizes!



# Officers 2016

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Florie Ricciuti	Paula Russo
Pat Taylor	

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## President's Message

Ah, fall, the time of year when gardeners reap the benefits of all their labors during the long, hot (and this year, dry) summer. Your CMGA Board has been working tirelessly this summer to garner the harvest for our members and this fall, we have a bumper crop!

The Board has voted to increase the amount for MG Intern scholarships from \$3500 to \$6000 and each MG coordinator will see their stipends rise from \$500 to \$750. Outreach grants remain at \$6000, however, as in the past, we'll increase that amount as needed.

CMGA has launched an online store where you can order CMGA merchandise anywhere, 24/7 and have it delivered directly to you. Many thanks to Board member Pat Taylor for putting this together – this is something that we had talked about for some time and it was wonderful to see it finally come to fruition! Pat will continue to tweak and add to the items offered as we go along.

In August the Board held its monthly meeting at the Colchester Town Hall. We had an informative chat with the town's First Selectman, who depends on the volunteer efforts of MGs. Katherine Kosiba and the local garden club's collaboration between town government, volunteers and grant money from CMGA helped to create the beautiful butterfly garden at Cohen Woodlands.

This newsletter is chock full of interesting stuff, and almost all of it was written by you! Our editor Alicia Cornelio would love for you to keep the articles coming.

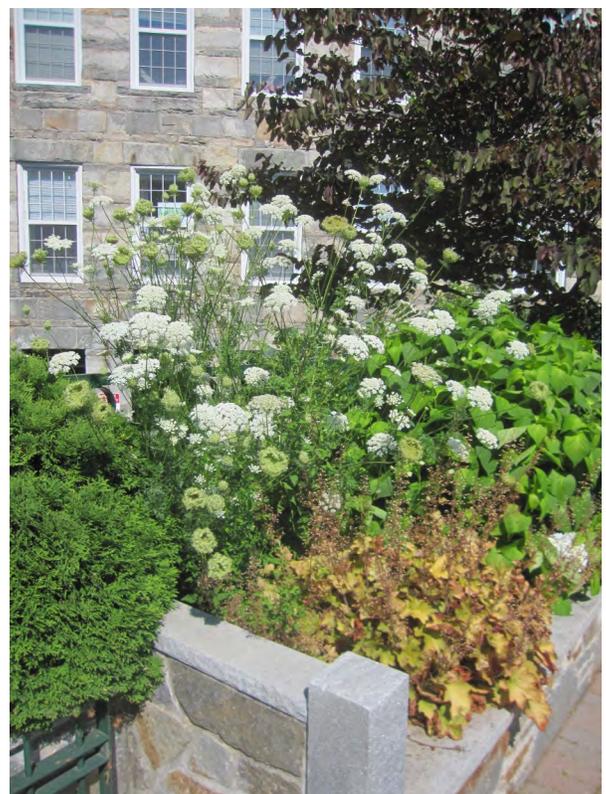
We'd also like to acknowledge Dean Gregory Weidemann and State MG Coordinator Leslie Alexander as they enjoy the harvest of their years of work – a well-deserved retirement!

Don't forget to renew your membership – for the 13th straight year, CMGA has not raised our fees. We will continue to work hard to provide a great harvest for you, not just during the fall, but all year round.

Tracy Burrell, President

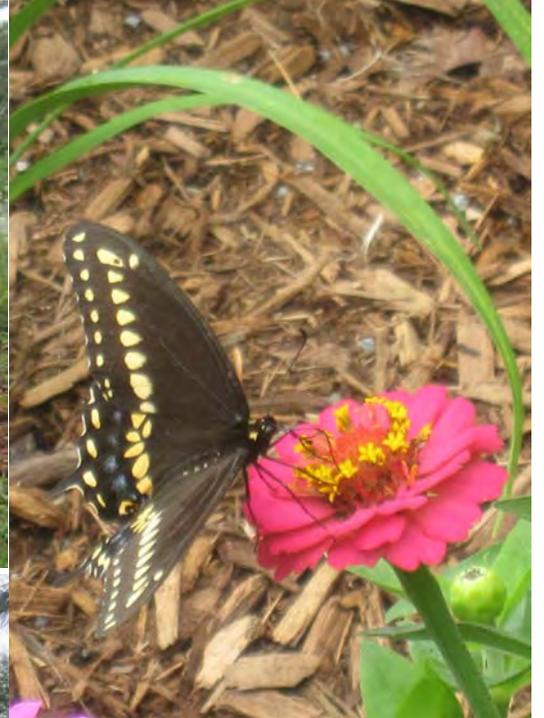
# CMGA Summer Garden Safari July 23

It was a fun and fabulous time at the 2016 CMGA Summer Safari! About 50 members attended the semi-annual meeting led by President Tracy Burrell. Despite severe thunderstorms the previous night that left the Goodwin Forest Center without electricity, the gathering enjoyed the breezes off the pond under the pavilion for the annual meeting. Then, the group toured the beautiful Willimantic Garden on the Bridge and the trails of Goodwin Forest. Thanks to Paul Grimmeisen and Diane Ostheimer for co-chairing the Safari committee, especially to Paul who will be chairing for the last time.



## CMGA Members Tour Cohen Woodlands

The August 2 meeting of the Board of Directors was held at the Colchester Town Hall. After a potluck lunch, CMGA members, spouses and friends toured the Colchester Butterfly Garden led by CMGA member Katherine M. Kosiba. A project spearheaded by AMG Katherine Kosiba, president of the Colchester Garden Club, with funds from CMGA, the park preserves meadowlands, a pond, and a butterfly pollinator garden of native plants. More information [here](#).



# Surprise Garden Resident

**By John Carlson,  
Connecticut Master Gardener Lifetime Member**

For virtually every property owner in Connecticut, trees grow in every landscape. That's a given as this state is blessed with many, many trees. According to CT DEEP, 60% of Connecticut was forest in 2010, the highest percentage of any state in the country. At first glance one wouldn't think so, but, when you travel around the state and notice all the treed land, there's lots of it. [See their report.](#)

Common trees most likely to exist on our properties are varieties of oaks, maples, sassafras, weeping willow, sweet gum (with its nasty seed balls), and conifers. There are many others, too.

Then one day about seven or eight years ago, I noticed a sapling shoot up in the back yard that I thought might be a linden tree, looking at its leaf. About three years ago the tree began producing white flower clusters with red stems that developed into dark, almost black, small 3/16" berries. Linden's don't do that. So I wondered what it really is. I didn't pay much attention to this tree until my curiosity got the best of me a few weeks ago when I noticed the birds had almost completely devoured the berries. A tufted titmouse perched on top a fiberglass pole with one of the berries in its beak.

So I decided it was time to try to satisfy my curiosity and identify the tree, which I did using the Arbor Day tree identification application. It didn't take long to identify the tree and it certainly was a surprise to find it is a Black Tupelo, (*Nyssa sylvatica*) aka black gum. I never heard this tree mentioned, ever. It is an interesting tree listed as a native of Connecticut by DEEP. If you would like to know more about this tree check it out on the internet or your favorite tree identification book.



# Camp Harkness: A Very Special Place

**By Linda DeRusha,  
Master Gardener Class of 2015**

We are a small group of Master Gardeners and Advanced Master Gardeners who volunteer at Camp Harkness in Waterford every Wednesday morning. It is a state-owned facility for recreational use by people with special needs and their families. The camp, adjacent to Harkness State Park and its beautiful Beatrix Farrand-designed gardens, was donated to the State of Connecticut in 1950 by Mary Harkness

to be used for the benefit of the handicapped. There are cabins where campers stay in the summer, picnic tables, a beach, and playground equipment, all of it handicapped-accessible. Guests enjoy many activities such as music, arts and crafts, and games, during their one- to two-week visits.



The Camp Harkness Master Gardener program was started by Julia Griswold, Mary Smeraldi and others around 2000. Mary donated the funds to build our greenhouse in 2000 and volunteers provided all the labor.

We offer three activities for campers. First, they create, with assistance if needed, beautiful, unique bouquets for the tables in the dining hall, using flowers we cut from our home gardens and from the gardens on-site, which we plant and maintain for everyone's enjoyment.

Another activity is potting up an array of interesting bedding plants (Coleus, Chenille plant, Dusty miller, Begonias and many others) into large pots. Campers group the plants in ways that please them, producing many fascinating and eye-catching arrangements.

Last, we fertilize and water the finished masterpieces. Everyone enjoys these creations during their stay, then take them home, either to keep for themselves, or to give as a gift for family or friends.

The handicapped-accessible herb garden is another area the campers enjoy. As we talk about the various uses for the herbs (in cooking, as medicine, etc.), everyone gets to hold snippets of each to feel, smell, even taste. Campers try to guess what kinds of foods the smells remind them of.

In the winter, we grow plants in the greenhouse. We start annuals, perennials, herbs, and some vegetables from both seed and cuttings, nurturing them through until Mother's Day weekend. While we hold back some of our "starts" to plant in the gardens on the grounds, the vast majority are then hauled over to the area where the Friends of Harkness hold their annual plant sale fund-raiser; our offerings are added to the plants the Friends have supplied from their own gardens. A portion of the proceeds from this sale helps fund our programs.

Once the plants are out of the greenhouse, we clean and reorganize it to get it ready for the next season. Then we move outdoors: There is, of course, plenty of clean-up and weeding of the gardens! There is also a small man-made pond with a fountain, which we clean out and spruce up each spring. We plant, fertilize, edge, water as needed, and mulch—all your usual spring chores! We beautify the cabin areas with pots and hanging baskets, as well as planting the window boxes each season.

I love working at Camp Harkness and look forward to my time there each week. There is such camaraderie among us, and I personally have never met a more dedicated group of individuals, most of whom have been making this commitment for 15 or more years. I am privileged to work not only with the special needs clients, but this wonderful group of Master Gardeners.



Camp Harkness Sensory Garden

# Horticultural Therapy

**By Dierdra Wallin,  
Master Gardener Class of 2011**



Growing up, I had the good fortune of living across the street from a forest, which we wandered and explored. Having a mom and grandfather who shared their love of plants and canning with me, I enjoyed the abundance of these gardens and harvests at will!

By high school, I was filling my room with plants that I cared for and propagated, not that I knew that word at the time! Once out on my own, I was finding ways to keep plants a part of my life, whether that was an indoor window box filled with herbs or a container filled of flowers on the stoop.

These early experiences certainly fostered a connection to nature within me. At the time, I didn't know anything about the people— plant connection or Edward O. Wilson's

Biophilia. It wasn't until many years later as a wife and mother, with a background in social services and just having completed the Master Gardener program through UCONN, that I would hear the words "horticultural therapy". That was when I knew I had found the perfect pairing of my two passions, people and plants!

So, what exactly is horticultural therapy?

For a woman in her early forties in physical rehabilitation, working on standing endurance, a session may be conducting plant checks at a counter looking for signs of diseases and pests, as well as water and pruning needs. The next session may be a table top activity in which she is seated with others, choosing from the plants they have cared for to propagate. She works on fine motor skills and range of motion as she takes a cutting, passes shared supplies, and pots up her cuttings, which she will care for during the remainder of her stay and then bring home.





For a youth, participating in a vocational program, therapy may be going back and forth, shoveling leaf mulch, which had been made earlier in the season into a wheelbarrow and out into a garden bed. Not a job everyone wants but for this young man, a job he chooses during a time that he struggles working with others and needs to keep his anger in check. It is a job that helps him focus and keep calm while accomplishing a tangible project with meaning and purpose.

A group of males and females, varying in age, may meet together twice a month to work on a horticultural project, whether planting a container, pounding flowers, or making fun seed heads. The various projects provide a positive distraction from illness, while allowing opportunity to connect with others, sharing and learning what they know about horticulture. Often there is soft music playing in the background. Sometimes groups take a little excursion outside to enjoy the spring bulbs, the fall foliage or to walk the labyrinth.

Horticultural therapy can be quite different depending on where it is happening and who is participating. But, what will always remain the same is what defines it: a trained therapist utilizing horticultural activities to work on specific goals with a client.

In the United States, the roots of horticultural therapy began in the early 1800's when patients with mental illness were involved in agriculture. They were also given park like settings to sit in and walk through. This active and passive involvement in horticulture by patients was recognized as beneficial in treatment, while also providing physical exercise and positive distraction from their thoughts. With the World Wars of the 20th century, horticultural therapy grew beyond the cognitive benefits into increased physical benefits to address the rehabilitative needs of our veterans. Today, horticultural therapy continues to grow as an effective modality which addresses cognitive, psychological, social and physical goals with clients of all ages. Programs can be social, vocational, educational or therapeutic in nature, in such places as hospitals, schools, prisons, community and botanical gardens.

For more information on horticultural therapy, please visit the American Horticultural Therapy Association, <http://ahta.org/>. For the opportunity to connect, share and learn with others who are interested in horticultural therapy in your area, please visit the Northeast Horticultural Therapy Network, <http://www.nehorticulturaltherapy.net/>. Lastly, mark your calendars as we are very excited to announce that the 2017 American Horticultural Therapy Association Annual Conference, "Nourishing the Soul, One Therapeutic Garden at a Time" which will be in Burlington, Vermont, September 9-10<sup>th</sup>!

## Online Shopping is Here!

Online shopping, a long awaited feature of the CMGA website, is up and running, just in time for your holiday shopping, especially for yourself!

Much thanks to Board member **Pat Taylor** for this huge task of getting the process up and running.

There is an varied offering of merchandise for CMGA members to choose. Purchasing is easy and secure.

You can access the online shopping page at the CMGA website: a link on the home page menu bar or bookmark the direct page: <http://www.barkerstores.com/cmga/>. There is also a link to this page on the CMGA Facebook site.



## Outreach Breaks New Records



Do you know that Connecticut Master Gardeners have given 34,000 hours of volunteer outreach for many different activities in 2015?

Congratulations to all of us! Let's keep up the good work of fulfilling our mission of communication and education to fellow master gardeners and the community at large on horticultural topics essential to all of us.

## SALT Conference

Smaller American Lawns Today (SALT) will meet at Connecticut College on November 19. CMGA members will be able to attend at the CC member price of \$65. For more information: [SALT Conference](#)

## Extension Retirements

Leslie Alexander, our long-standing UConn Extension Liaison with CMGA, Julia Cencebaugh, Fairfield Extension Coordinator, and Gregory Weidemann, Director of the College of Agriculture, Health and Natural Resources, are retiring after long distinguished careers with UConn.



# Connecticut **Master Gardener** Association 2017 Membership Form



for the calendar year Jan. 1, 2017 to Dec. 31, 2017  
**Dues are \$20**

**PLEASE PRINT**

Name			
Street			
City		State	Zip
Email		Phone (    )	
Office Where Certified	Year	<input type="checkbox"/> RENEWING MEMBER	<input type="checkbox"/> 2016 GRADUATE or NEW MEMBER

Membership is restricted to Master Gardeners  
**Dues are payable by December 31, 2016. Annual dues are \$20.**

Please send your check, **payable to CMGA**, and this page or a copy to **Maureen Gillis, 93 River Rd East Haddam, CT 06423**

**OR pay online with your credit card using Paypal at [www.ctmga.org](http://www.ctmga.org)**

CMGA is run exclusively by volunteers and is always happy to welcome participation by its members. Please check any activities with which you are willing to help.

- Symposium (March)
- CMGA Board Member (monthly meetings and committee work)
- Partners Program Chair
- Summer Safari (July)
- Annual Meeting (Nov)
- Publicity/Public Relations
- Other skills/suggestions? \_\_\_\_\_

Email us at [president@ctmga.org](mailto:president@ctmga.org)

Dues provide a subscription to our newsletter, *The Laurel*; discounted admission to the annual symposium; discounts at area garden-related businesses; support of the Master Gardener Program at the University of Connecticut Extension Service; and grants and support for Master Gardener activities throughout the state.

CMGA would like to take advantage of the latest technology in communications; please let us know if you would prefer to access *The Laurel* online instead of receiving a hardcopy. The online version is in full color; we will send you an email when it's available. All new members, beginning in 2013, have online access only. *The Laurel* currently costs CMGA approximately \$10 per member to print and mail each year to those receiving a hard copy. If you have signed up for online access in the past, you will not receive a hard copy.

Save trees, postage and fuel!  
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