



# The LAUREL

Connecticut  
Master  
Gardener  
Association  
Newsletter

Winter 2021 Volume 34, No. 1



## GARDENING ANY TIME | ANY PLACE

2021 CMGA Virtual Garden Symposium

Saturday, March 20, 2021

### 28<sup>th</sup> CMGA Garden Symposium -- *now virtual!*

**Saturday, March 20, 2021**

On Saturday, March 20<sup>th</sup>, Connecticut Master Gardeners, guests and the public will have the opportunity to learn from national and regional experts about how to enjoy "Gardening Any Time, Any Place" by attending our first-ever **CMGA Virtual Garden Symposium.**



**Registration opens Jan. 25, 2021**

**NEW REDUCED PRICE!**

**\$60 for CMGA members and guests**

**\$90 for non-members**

**Featured Speaker: Margaret Roach**

"Non-Stop Plants:  
A Garden for 365 Days"

**Featured Speaker: Dan Benarcik**

"Foliage First:  
Boom Without the Bloom"



On-line registration information is available at [ctmga.org/symposium-event-2021](https://ctmga.org/symposium-event-2021)

**NOTE: There will be no mail-in registration forms this year.**

Also new this year: a "*virtual event bag*" filled with coupons, promo codes and other special offers from our symposium sponsors! Send your questions to [symposium@ctmga.org](mailto:symposium@ctmga.org)

See page 4 for breakout session descriptions and event schedule.

# Officers 2021

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president@ctmga.org

**V-President:** Paula Russo  
vicepres@ctmga.org

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**Middlesex:**      **Gail Kalison Reynolds**      gail.reynolds@uconn.edu

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**New London:**      **Gail Kalison Reynolds**      gail.reynolds@uconn.edu

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**Windham:**      **John Lorusso**      john.lorusso@uconn.edu

**UConn Home & Garden Education Center:**      www.ladybug.uconn.edu

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**Sarah Bailey**      sarah.bailey@uconn.edu

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Please send information by email to [cmganews@ctmga.org](mailto:cmganews@ctmga.org).

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# President's Message



Dear CMGA Members:

So many of us are glad to say good-bye to 2020, but let's face it. The difficult issues we were dealing with last year will be following us at least for a portion of 2021.

Yet, there are also some really great things we are carrying into the new year. We have learned how to use technology to stay connected to each other, conduct business, and continue our education. We've had time to pause and think about what's really important in life and what kind of country we want to remain and become. A vaccine to prevent COVID19 has been developed, and distribution is underway. As always, we have gardening to keep us healthy, both physically and mentally!

Through the darkest moments of 2020, your Board of Directors has been a ray of light and continues to shine as we kick off the new year. I, personally, have been enriched by working with these talented and dedicated individuals.

Every organization changes and morphs, and we are no different. It is with sincere gratitude that I say good-bye to Kathy Culhane, who has faithfully served as our Secretary. Theresa Hennessey has completed her term as Vice President but will continue as the Chair of the 2021 CMGA Virtual Garden Symposium. I thank Theresa for her undying support and keeping me on the right track!

I am very excited to welcome ten new board members. They are already stepping up and contributing to our various committees! Congratulations to the Master Gardener Class of 2020! You did it! You overcame unexpected obstacles, passed your exams, and completed your community outreach projects. Please join us at CMGA soon! We are a great community of Master Gardeners, and the learning continues! Go to [ctmga.org](http://ctmga.org) and click on the Membership Tab.

So, what is next for CMGA? The 2021 CMGA Virtual Garden Symposium on March 20<sup>th</sup>, of course! We will have the same great lineup of speakers, and yes, it will be virtual. Stay tuned for more information by visiting [ctmga.org/symposium-event-2021](http://ctmga.org/symposium-event-2021).

As we all know, the 2021 Flower and Garden Show sadly has been canceled due to the pandemic. Some of us on the Board have been floating around the idea of having our own, smaller-scale Flower Show outdoors in June. I'd like to know your thoughts. You can reach me at [president@ctmga.org](mailto:president@ctmga.org).

For the next few winter months, let's settle in and read some gardening books and plant catalogs and plan for our spring gardens. With renewed hope, I say to you, please don't let your guard down. Stay optimistic, and we will be together again in person before you know it!

Deb Prior  
President CMGA

# 2021 Symposium Speakers

**Featured Speaker: Margaret Roach**, the first garden editor of *Martha Stewart Living* magazine, creator of the "[A Way to Garden](#)" website, author, radio host and podcaster, will start the day with "**Non-Stop Plants: A Garden for 365 Days**"

**Featured Speaker: Dan Benarcik**, creative horticulturist at the 30-acre Chanticleer Garden in Wayne, PA, who also designs and manufactures the wood workings, stone carvings, paintings, and metal works on display throughout the garden, will be presenting "**Foliage First: Boom Without the Bloom**" Learn more at his website [danbenarcik.com](http://danbenarcik.com).

**BREAKOUT SESSIONS:** Attendees will choose from regional and local experts' presentations during two virtual breakout sessions. Each session will offer the same five presentations.

**Tovah Martin: "The New Terrarium"** Tovah is an award-winning gardening writer and lecturer whose gardening expertise includes indoor gardening with tropical plants in windowsills, greenhouses, and otherwise. Learn more at her website: [tovahmartin.com](http://tovahmartin.com).

**Lorraine Ballato: "Hydrangeas for Cold Climate Gardens"** Advanced Master Gardener, professional horticulturist and instructor at the New York Botanical Garden, Lorraine is also an expert on all things hydrangea. Check out her website at [lorraineballato.com](http://lorraineballato.com).

**Irene Brady Barber: "Growing Vertically for Accessibility with Practicality in Mind"** As the Horticulture Education Coordinator at the Coastal Maine Botanical Gardens in Boothbay, ME, Irene's educational programs emphasize ecological balance, therapeutic design and universal access to gardening for people of all abilities. Learn more at [mainegardens.org](http://mainegardens.org).

**Gregory Bugbee: "Improving Soil Fertility - A Soil Scientist's Perspective"** Greg is the head of the soil testing program at the CT Agricultural Experiment Station in New Haven. He works with the public to solve soil and water-related problems, and is available for site visits and speaking engagements. Visit his website at: [portal.ct.gov/CAES/ABOUT-CAES/Staff-Biographies/Gregory-J-Bugbee](http://portal.ct.gov/CAES/ABOUT-CAES/Staff-Biographies/Gregory-J-Bugbee).

**Nancy DuBrule-Clemente: "Mulch vs. Groundcovers: A Garden Experiment"** Nancy is the founder of Natureworks Horticultural Services, an organic garden center, landscape design, consultation, installation and maintenance service in Northford, CT. Learn more at their website [naturework.com](http://naturework.com).

## EVENT SCHEDULE:

**9:00—9:30** Welcoming remarks, special guests, presentation of Lifetime Member awards

**9:30—10:45** Featured Speaker with Q & A, (live, 75 min.)

**10:45—11:00** Coffee Break (15 min.)

**11:00- 12:15** Featured speaker with Q&A (live, 75 min)

**12:15 – 1:00** Lunch break (45 min)

**1:00 – 2:15** Breakout session #1 with live Q&A (75 min)

**2:15-2:30** Coffee break (15 min)

**2:30-3:45** Breakout session #2 with live Q&A (75 min)

**Send your questions to:**  
[symposium@ctmga.org](mailto:symposium@ctmga.org)



# CMGA Board Transitions Approved at Annual Meeting

Ten new members were added to the CMGA Board of Directors at our 2020 Annual Meeting on November 14, 2020. We had over 100 attendees at this virtual event, and CMGA members voted to approve the new board members for a three-year term, ending in 2023.

Our support of community projects in 2020 included awarding over \$8,000 in grant requests for local horticulture education projects as well as \$6,000 in scholarships for the 2021 Master Gardener interns, and nearly \$7,000 in financial support for the state-wide UConn Extension Master Gardener offices.



The new board members and the UConn Extension office/counties they represent are: Jackie Algon, Caroline Moran and Mary Ellen Seuch (Fairfield); Kathy Beaty, Valerie Bryan, Jan Johnston and Susan St. John (Hartford); Susan Eisenhandler (Litchfield); Lisa Doggart (New London) and Natasha Muttukumaru (Stamford).

In addition, Marjorie Bingham (Hartford), Jean Fletcher (Hartford), Kim Kelly (Windham), Paula Russo (Middlesex) and Deb Prior (Tolland) are returning board members. Leaving the Executive board after three years of service is Kathy Culhane, who served as secretary. Theresa Hennessey has completed her term as Vice President, but will continue as Chair of the 2021 Symposium Committee.

Executive Officers were also approved at the Annual Meeting: Deb Prior, interim President; Paula Russo, interim Vice President; Carolyn Wilcox, Secretary; Susan Demuth, Treasurer, and Debbye Rosen, Assistant Treasurer.

Guest speaker for the open portion of the event was Jana Milbocker, author and principal of Enchanted Gardens Landscape Design in Holliston, MA, who presented "The Magic of the Winter Garden."

As the alumni association for UConn Extension Master Gardeners, CMGA provides members opportunities to share our knowledge and love of gardening throughout the state. Through sponsorship of events like the upcoming 2021 CMGA Virtual Garden Symposium, and through leadership of volunteer projects, our members help to educate and beautify their communities.

**Ordering from Amazon???** Please remember to use the Amazon Smile website ([smile.amazon.com](https://smile.amazon.com)), and select CT Master Gardener Association as your charity. Amazon will donate 0.5% of the price of your eligible AmazonSmile purchases directly to CMGA. Thank you for your support!



# The Giving Garden

Linda McDonald  
CMGA member



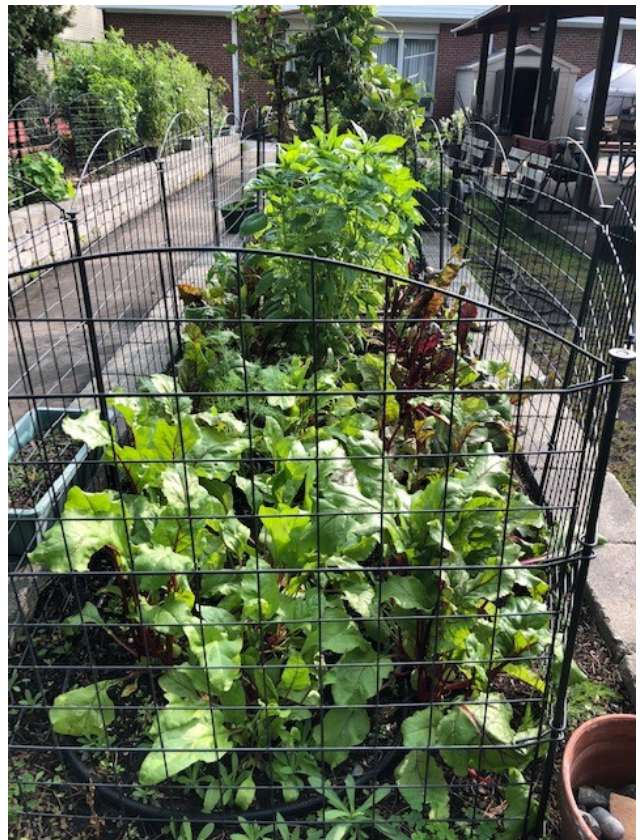
Grant Recipient

The Giving Garden is part of the Newington Senior and Disabled Center. It is operated by a small, dedicated team of volunteers including Master Gardeners and members of the Center.

It includes two 50 by 4 foot organic vegetable beds, an herb bed, a perennial pollinator garden, a rhubarb bed, a winter squash bed, and three blueberry bushes.

The purpose of the Giving Garden is:

- ⇒ To provide fresh, organic produce to lower income, fixed income and homebound residents of the community via the Newington Food Pantry
- ⇒ To provide opportunities for senior and disabled individuals to participate in and learn about growing vegetables, herbs, and flowers.







Activities include design, planting, maintenance, troubleshooting, and harvesting of produce, with guidance from experienced and knowledgeable volunteers.

This year has been very challenging with the pandemic since many of the volunteers would fall into the higher risk categories due to age or medical condition. With a much smaller group of socially distanced, masked volunteers, the garden has successfully produced organic vegetables for the local food pantry including garlic, rhubarb, lettuce, radishes, carrots, potatoes, eggplant, peppers, summer and winter squash, beets, green beans, Swiss chard, tomatoes and a wide variety of herbs. Victory for sure!



# 2021 Grant Cycle Begins

It's time to 'think spring!' The CMGA 2021 grants cycle will be starting soon, and we're eager to help YOU help your community through a gardening project. We've made some changes to the grants program for this year, and invite you to look through the updated and expanded information before you write your grant application.

## ***What's new this year?***

- The grant application will be completed online again this year, but the questions have been clarified and expanded.
- In thinking of how your grant project can be funded, we encourage you to seek some of the funds and/or materials donations from other local sources. The 'budget' section of the application asks you to list all anticipated expenses AND potential funding sources.
- The criteria used by the Grants Committee to review and rate applications have been clarified and expanded. Knowing how your application will be rated can help you assure you don't leave out important details. Sample grant applications will be posted for you to view before you begin writing your own grant application - a model to show you how to explain your project in the best possible light.



## ***When can you get started?***

- 2/15 grant applications available on web site
- 3/15 grant application submission deadline
- By 4/15 grant recipients notified of grant award
- Mid-late April checks sent to grant recipients
- TBD project report due

## ***Have questions?***

Please email the Grants Committee with your questions - we want to help you be successful in applying for and receiving a CMGA grant benefits your community!

Please email us at [grants@ctmga.org](mailto:grants@ctmga.org).



# Gardening and Artificial Intelligence

## Are you ready?

Alicia Cornelio  
Editor, Laurel

Artificial intelligence (AI) has been developed for many industries for decades. However, agriculture is a uniquely human/nature relationship that requires a higher cognitive level. Only now is agriculture seeing advances in AI for farmers as well as home gardeners. Justin Stoltzfus<sup>1</sup> states that artificial intelligence excels at image processing. Computers can now “see” almost as well as humans. This gives AI the ability to differentiate between a crop plant and a weed, identify a pest from a beneficial insect, and identify plant diseases. And, many AI functions are solar powered making it a pollution-free system.

### Innovations in Professional Agriculture

The world population is expected to increase to nine billion people by the year 2050. To ensure food security, food production must increase by 70%. K. Mayank<sup>2</sup> states in *Open Data Science* that making AI technology accessible and affordable at the grassroots level will help meet this demand. All types of agriculture are beginning to implement AI techniques.

High-tech outdoor farming begins with seeding. AI systems help with predictions such as where seed will grow best and the soil conditions where those seeds will grow. Indoor and vertical farming are even more controlled with systems for planting seeds in pods and the monitoring of those seeds until germination.

As the cost of implementing AI systems decreases, more and more indoor farming growers will add AI to their operations.<sup>3</sup> AI can control soil, favorable light, water, and temperature in indoor farming to grow crops optimally. Water monitoring reduces usage. AI systems can eradicate pests and diseases automatically and specifically.

AI keeps an “Eye to the Sky” to monitor the growth of outdoor crops. Unmanned aerial vehicles (drones) are outfitted with precision sensors to run over the fields and collect data to detect stunted crops, signs of pest or weed damage, arid conditions, and many other variables. Then, this data is sent to the grower for analysis. AI does the detection work and all the grower needs to do is focus on what to do with the information. Once a problem is found, pest and weed control can be deployed specifically by drone instead of spraying of the entire crop. It saves money, makes the food cleaner and creates less pollution.



AI provides the grower with a personal assistant for farmers. These AI personalities, like an “Alexa”, converse with growers to solve complex problems using analytics as well as a huge database of agricultural information.

Who or what will be picking our food in the future? There are already robotic harvesting machines and driverless tractors used in outdoor agriculture. These machines have vision and sensors to “see” where the fruits and berries are, and mimic human cognition and directed action. These agricultural robotics are filling a gap in human labor, especially during the pandemic of 2020-2021. The employment shift is from farm laborer to AI programmers and maintenance.

AI is enhancing and promoting more local agriculture. Vertical farming can be applied in arid, semi-arid, and drought-stricken regions of the world where the need is greatest. Food becomes cheaper because it doesn’t need to be imported internationally if grown indoors locally. Eateries can invest in an indoor farm system to grow their own food and use the produce within hours of harvest. The food industry will become hyper-localized and experimental, according to *Open Data Science*.

### **Innovations in Home Gardening**

What advantages does AI have for the home gardener? Wouldn’t it be nice to have some of the more mundane tasks of gardening automated intelligently? Good news! AI is here. There are many garden robots on the market ready to do your bidding.<sup>3</sup> One product is *Yardroid*, not unlike a miniature tank.<sup>4</sup> It can handle gardening tasks using AI. It rolls along on tracks with water, herbicide and pesticide chambers that are filled with



your preferred product, including organic solutions. There is even a leaf blower.

No perimeter wires are necessary. This robot can recognize different garden areas with its “eyes”. It is capable of spotting plants that are on its watering schedule. When it gets low on water, it can fill itself underneath a home’s existing spigot.

*Yardroid* can identify weeds and pest insects on sight and responds with a squirt! But what I **love most** is its recognition of animals that it repels from your yard with a squirt of water. This is better than a dog!! The robot

can also be operated manually using a program on your smart phone. Retail price is about \$2500. It will be available to the public in 2021.



Mowbot not only mows your lawn, it researches lawn problems.<sup>5</sup> Sensors help it avoid garden structures and other obstacles. The AI in the system analyzes which areas of your lawn are growing faster so it knows where to trim more often. It is quiet, lightweight and doesn't leave tracks. Mowbot can be pro-programmed to coordinate with your schedule. Mowbot is only effective on small lawns.

Tertill, created by the inventors of Roomba, is a system that automatically weeds your gardens. It is a self charging solar powered system that can distinguish a plant from a weed as it roams over a garden bed. Once it senses a weed, it whacks it into the soil. No herbicides are used. It easily navigates over mulch. The AI system can be connected to your smart phone for monitoring.



#### References:

1. Stoltzfus, Justin. "The 6 Most Amazing AI Advances in Agriculture". October 26, 2020. <https://www.techopedia.com/the-6-most-amazing-ai-advances-in-agriculture/2/33177>
2. Mayank K, (Open Data Science.) "The Future of Artificial Intelligence and Agriculture". Nov. 5, 2018. <https://opendatascience.com/the-future-of-artificial-intelligence-and-agriculture/>
3. Drotleff, Laura. "Why Horticulture Is Ripe for Artificial Intelligence". April 26, 2019. <https://www.greenhousegrower.com/technology/why-horticulture-is-ripe-for-artificial-intelligence/>.
4. Coxworth, Ben. "Tank-like robot designed to autonomously tend gardens". November 20, 2020. <https://newatlas.com/robotics/yardroid-gardening-robot/>.
5. Krane, Jenny (Better Homes and Gardens). "These Robots Are the Future of Garden Care". Oct. 9, 2018. <https://www.bhg.com/news/garden-robots/>



# Get Ready to Garden!

By Linette Branham

Right after the new year, many of us begin to dream of what our gardens will contain that year, and planning for a spring and summer garden is one way to get through what can be a long, cold winter. Our dreams can easily be fueled by poring through seed catalogs and/or clicking through websites to discover what's new for the season and to find different varieties of plants we haven't tried before.

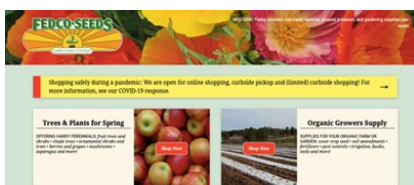
To help stir those gardening juices and build your enthusiasm for the upcoming gardening season, whether you're interested in buying seeds from a commercial company or a seed bank, check out these catalogs and websites. This list isn't exhaustive by any means, but contains suggestions for companies that offer variety, that are recommended by other gardeners, and many of which are right here in the Northeast. It's never too early to plan!

## Johnny's Selected Seeds - Winslow, Maine ([www.johnnyseeds.com](http://www.johnnyseeds.com))



Veggies, flowers, herbs, farm seed, organic, tools & supplies, and more! As you browse, you can choose from a variety of filters to find seeds, including heirloom, organic, hydroponic, greenhouse performers, container gardening, cold or heat tolerant, slow or fast growing, and more.

## Fedco Seeds - Clinton, Maine ([www.fedcoseeds.com](http://www.fedcoseeds.com))



This website invites you to browse by whether you want trees and plants for spring, bulbs & plants for fall, veggies, herbs and flowers, organic seeds, and has a special section dedicated mostly to potatoes and onions. Each section includes a helpful library of articles pertaining to that type of gardening.

## High Mowing Organic Seeds - Wolcott, Vermont ([www.highmowingseeds.com](http://www.highmowingseeds.com))



100% organic...100% of the time. A variety of veggies, flowers, herbs, and cover crops, with features for new seeds and easy-to-grow varieties. This site includes an extensive blog with archived articles, and invites users to contact them about the Seed Donation Program for organizations & community groups.

## John Scheepers Kitchen Garden Seeds - Bantam, CT ([www.kitchengardenseeds.com](http://www.kitchengardenseeds.com))



A wide variety of veggie and flower seeds, seed collections of both flowers and vegetables, and six different habitat seed collections (e.g., butterflies, bumblebees, beneficial insects). A searchable blog, e-cookbook, and horticultural tips are a bonus!



## Select Seeds - Union, CT ([www.selectseeds.com](http://www.selectseeds.com))



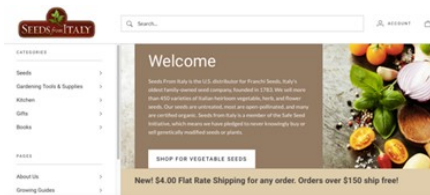
Browse through a wide variety of categories of flower seeds, such as annuals, perennials, fragrant, native, organic, or rare finds. A separate category for herbs & edibles, and a limited selection of vegetable seeds.

## Annie's Heirloom Seeds - Hudsonville, MI ([www.anniesheirloomseeds.com](http://www.anniesheirloomseeds.com))



For the heirloom lover, all are heirloom seeds! Site includes flowers, vegetables, herbs for both culinary & medicinal use, and grains. Collections of seeds for vegetable, companion, and herb gardens, and gardening supplies, tools, and books.

## Seeds From Italy - Lawrence, KS ([www.growitalian.com](http://www.growitalian.com))



Italian heirloom vegetable, flower, and herb seeds from the oldest family-owned Italian seed company. Many are organic, untreated, or open-pollinated. Site also includes garden tools and supplies, gifts, books, and kitchen products.

## Park Seed (<https://parkseed.com>)



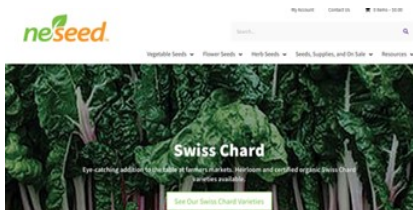
One of the most well known seed companies, a wide variety of flowers, vegetables, and herbs, including organic and heirloom, all always non-GMO. Bulbs, trees, shrubs, fruit seeds and trees, gardening tools and supplies, and a 'know-before-you-grow' selection of articles with helpful growing tips.

## Burpee - Warminster, PA ([www.burpee.com](http://www.burpee.com))



Another well-known seed company, with a wide variety of flowers, vegetables, herbs, and fruits, many of which are organic, heirloom and non-GMO. Videos and articles about gardening, gardening calendars, growing zone maps, and recipes.

## New England Seed - East Hartford, CT ([www.neseed.com](http://www.neseed.com))



Vegetable, flower, and herb seeds and gardening supplies for home garden and commercial farm use. Company offers conventional, hybrid, organic, and heirloom seeds; site includes a map of where to buy seeds retail. Gardening supplies and how-to articles for gardeners.

## The Old Farmer's Almanac - Dublin, NH ([www.almanac.com](http://www.almanac.com))



A cornucopia of gardening information! Although they don't sell seeds directly, the site includes a list of 40+ seed catalog companies; an online garden planner, calendar, and frost dates; loads of tips, articles, and videos on gardening; and much more from "the old farmer".

**Seed banks / libraries:** for seed saving and seed sharing

## Community Seed Network (CSN) <https://www.communityseednetwork.org>



A joint initiative of Seed Savers Exchange and Canada's SeedChange, CSN provides a platform to connect people to community seed initiatives. Included are a useful directory and map of projects.

## J. L. Hudson, Seedsman (Public Access Seed Bank) <https://www.jlHUDSONseeds.net>



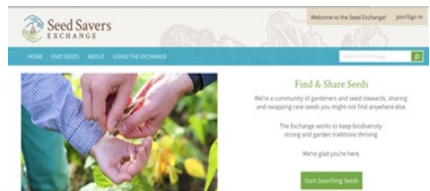
Established in 1911, this California-based resource offers in-depth online/print catalogs. J. L. Hudson's motto is "preservation through dissemination."

## Seed Libraries <http://seedlibraries.weebly.com>



Among its resources are how-to steps on starting a community seed library, a *Cool Beans!* Newsletter, and COVID-19 resources on sharing seeds safely.

## Seed Savers Exchange (SSE) <https://www.seedsavers.org>



SSE's Iowa-based seed bank houses 20,000-plus rare, open-pollinated seed varieties. The website gives details on requesting and listing seeds.

## Wild Seed Project <https://wildseedproject.net>



Subtitled "Returning native plants to the Maine landscape," this site offers links on growing native plants from seed, what natives to plant, and much more. This nonprofit's staff urges readers to "Take the Pledge to Rewild."

# 2020 Master Gardener Graduates

## New Haven/ North Haven

Diana Anton  
Nancy Bailey  
Jane Brokaw  
Kathleen Cassidy  
Ryan Cyr  
Patricia Dray  
Betsy Goldberg  
Robin Hochstrasser  
Denise Horan  
Julie Jirikowic  
Jaime Kriksciun  
Datrice Kristof  
Hannah Larkin-Wells  
Cheramie Lee  
Millie Legenhausen  
James Louey  
Kira Miranda  
Yashmun James-Morisseau  
Cornelia Olsen  
Mary Jane Potter  
Nancy Saravis-Foote  
Stacey Smith  
Mary Jane Toomey  
Dylan Vitale  
Catherine Williams

## Litchfield/ Torrington

Sarah Bell  
Rick Brinsmade  
Kevin Capobianco  
Matt Chabot  
Tracy Dalzell-Hill  
Caitlin Fogerty  
Cinthya Font  
Mariah Green  
Julia Green  
Michele Jenks  
Clasina Jones  
Jennifer Lei-Cohn  
Norma Jean Macauto  
Louise Mango  
Anne Metzger  
Kelly Teddie-Ann Miner  
Sandra Myers  
Susan Olson  
Joyce Persing  
Melissa Porter  
Anastasia Porteus  
Laura Pratt  
Christine Rousseau  
Theresa Sullivan-Barger  
Alessandra Summa  
Patricia Turner-Massey  
Dee Walker

## Windham/Brooklyn

Priscilla Kessler  
Judith Stumpo  
James Schmartz  
Meaghan Strange  
Mary Terrance



## Norwich/ New London

Phyllis Berger  
Denise Brown  
Kathy Bryson  
Carol Chappell  
Christopher Dustin  
Amanda Hutchinson  
Amy Jones  
Martha Kelly  
Marcia Kettle  
Susan Kinsman  
James Matschulat  
Dustin Meadows  
Constance Perry  
Alexandra Riggio  
Sally Ruggeri  
Christine Stuetzel  
Jim Ward  
Barbara Wennerberg  
Audra William

## Tolland/Vernon

Laura Victoria Barrera  
Charles Brown  
Lisa Bunker  
Erin Calender  
Nicholas Clark  
Cynthia Couillard  
Jackie Crowley  
Mary Ann Deffley  
Melanie Desch  
Maureen Gould  
Seyra Hammond  
Terry Ladonne  
Sandra Mirtl  
Donna Murphy  
Madeline Oden  
Rebecca Parry  
Katie Pelkey  
Emily Phillips  
Aoife Ryle  
Tanica Thompson  
Sandra Tobin  
Chris Vials  
Jessica White  
Joanne White  
Megan Woytik

## Stamford/Lower Fairfield

Fern Blumenfeld Jaffe  
Sherry Briody  
Debbie Brown  
Jacqueline Cabrera  
Lori Constantine  
Cristen Cottrell  
Lauren Elliott  
Pamela Frame  
Joan Haddon  
Peggy Harwood  
Andrew Holmes  
Joanne Huntley

Mary Kestenbaum  
Christina Koether  
Paula Koffsky  
Caroline Moran  
Laura Mosher  
Pamela Nobumoto  
Mary Ellen Seuch  
Orna Stern  
Alissa Stoltz  
Diane Tamboia  
Michael Zap





# 2020 Master Gardener Advancements

## **Advanced Master Gardener**

Annemarie Reimer  
Beth Ann Loveland Sennett  
Gina Trusiewicz

## **Ruby Silver**

Marlene Mayes

## **Sapphire**

Jean Fletcher

## **Sapphire Silver**

Sarah Bailey

## **Trowel 100 hrs**

Mary Denise Horan  
Michele Jenks  
Ralph Kadden  
Diane Lemelin  
Nick Lorenzo  
Patricia Turner-Massey

## **Oak Leaf 250**

Suzanne Forand  
Janet Loynes  
Beth Ann Loveland Sennett  
Kathleen Cassidy  
Kathye Cipes  
Jane Comerford  
Susan Demuth  
Brenda Malack  
Laura Sorensen  
Susan St. John

## **Wheelbarrow 500**

Valerie Bryan  
Lisa Gould  
Christie Kuriger  
Deborah Pike

## **Pine Cone 750**

Jacqueline Wasta

## **Sunflower 1000**

Karen Berger  
Gloria Shusdock

## **Pruners 1500**

Karen Berger  
Jean Fletcher  
Marilynn Palmer

## **7000+**

Marlene Mayes





# The LAUREL

*Connecticut  
Master  
Gardener  
Association  
Newsletter*

Spring 2021 Volume 34, No. 2



## **Master Gardeners Sponsor Plant Sale and Exhibit at CT Science Center**

### **A Garden Like No Other**

If you haven't visited the plaza and green roof gardens at the Cesar Pelli designed Connecticut Science Center (CSC), you really should. With a view of the Connecticut River, this huge living landscape of blooming xeriscape perennials miraculously survive on 50% less water in just six inches of special growing materials.

Saturday, May 22nd is a great opportunity for an introduction to Family Gardening Day at the Center in Downtown Hartford. The event is [MakeFest: Make It Grow](#) and it will be held from 11:00AM – 3:00PM. CMGA is partnering with the Connecticut Science Center for the event by helping to manage a plant sale and pollinator exhibit.



### **A Fun Day, Learning Included**

In addition to the plant sale, you can attend, participate in or sponsor an exhibit! The Connecticut Science Center seeks local gardeners, farmers, makers, and artisans to serve as exhibitors. The event aims to highlight the importance of growing healthy, smart, green, and local through engaging on-site and virtual demonstrations, displays, or activities, all centered around Connecticut gardening and agriculture. (continue on page 7)

# Officers 2021

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**Treasurer:** Sue Demuth  
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**Secretary:** Carolyn Wilcox  
secretary@ctmga.org

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Ken Zacharias (Chair)

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Linette Branham (Chair)

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<b>Stamford:</b>	<b>Alicia Jacobsen</b>	203-322-6971 x18	alicia.jacobsen@uconn.edu
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<b>Sarah Bailey</b>		860-409-9053	sarah.bailey@uconn.edu

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## President's Message



Dear CMGA Members:

Happy Spring! The crocuses are up and daffodils are peeking through. I even saw the tops of my hyacinths yesterday. Many of us are fully vaccinated with more to follow. We're not quite ready to gather in person. But, hey! The light at the end of the tunnel is getting brighter, and more and more, I'm convinced it's daylight and not an oncoming freight train!

Our First Virtual Gardening Symposium was held on March 20<sup>th</sup>, and it was terrific! Yes, we had a few technical issues in the beginning, but worked through them. The speakers were first rate, and I learned so much. Assuming all goes well, we are going to plan on an in-person symposium for 2022. The location? We're going to try really hard to have it back at Manchester Community College. So, keep your fingers crossed!

In my last letter, I mentioned that we were considering having an outdoor flower show. Well, a better opportunity came up. We will be joining the Connecticut Science Center at their fabulous campus for their MakeFest: Make It Grow. See the event on May 22<sup>nd</sup> at <https://ctsciencecenter.org/makefest/>. We'll take part in their outdoor plant sale to benefit both CMGA and the CT Science Center.

We're having Nursery Day again! Mark your calendars for June 9<sup>th</sup>. You and your friends are invited to join us from 10am-3pm at McCue Gardens in Wethersfield. You will be hearing more through our various communication channels. I went for the first time last year. The pricing was advantageous and the plant choices were fabulous. You can be sure I've already started my plant list for this year!

The grant application process ended March 15<sup>th</sup>, with 18 applications received. The Grants Committee is hard at work evaluating the applications. If we initially can't fund all 18, there may be a second round, so stay tuned!

We have a new Membership Development Committee. More members mean more funds to support Master Gardener Community outreach projects. So, if you have Master Gardener friends who are not members, please ask them to check out our website [www.ctmga.org](http://www.ctmga.org) and join. If you have ideas on how to recruit more members, please contact me: [dprior@ctmga.org](mailto:dprior@ctmga.org).

And last, but not least, plans are underway for our Summer Safari and Semi-annual meeting in July or August. We have already secured a speaker! Watch your email, our website and our Facebook page as details emerge.

I'm so excited about the coming gardening season, our upcoming events and getting to see more of you in person! Again, I must give thanks to our dedicated and talented Board of Directors. They are making things happen for you, our incredible members.

Deb Prior  
President CMGA



# CMGA News

## UCONN Gives



Once again, CMGA members were critical in supporting the Master Gardener Program in the UCONN Gives competition. With our help, the UCONN Extension Master Gardener Program raised \$21,248 in donations and took second place in the leaderboard challenge with 613 donors. This means an additional \$6,000, plus an additional \$500 for the highest number of donors within the College of Agriculture. The grand total was \$27,748! Funds raised and total donors are also substantially higher than last time.

## The Symposium VIRTUAL EVENT BAG Launches with Flying Colors!

This year we added a new feature to the symposium, the Virtual Event Bag (VEB). This online marketplace stood in for the collection of vendors' and societies' display tables we usually have at an in-person event.

Although nothing can replace the one-on-one interaction of a real shopping experience, we're thrilled that so many vendors, organizations and symposium attendees took a chance on this new format. In total, 26 vendors and societies placed an ad in the VEB, and 43% of attendees visited the VEB at least once. The full list of participating vendors and organizations can be found at our website [ctmga.org](http://ctmga.org). Special thanks to Natureworks in Northford, CT for being a Premium Sponsor of the CMGA symposium.

Thanks to your participation, we can deem this maiden voyage of the VEB a success! We will plan on including a Virtual Event Bag in future symposia, be they virtual or in-person events.

## Spring Grants Awarded

Spring grants have been awarded.  
Summer grant cycle will begin in mid June.  
Check the CMGA website soon for more information!

**Ordering from Amazon???** Please remember to use the Amazon Smile website ([smile.amazon.com](https://smile.amazon.com)), and select CT Master Gardener Association as your charity. Amazon will donate 0.5% of the price of your eligible AmazonSmile purchases directly to CMGA. Thank you for your support!



# CMGA Nursery Day at McCue Gardens

**June 9, 2021**



**WHERE:** McCue Nursery, 47 Hartford Ave., Wethersfield, CT

**WHEN:** Wednesday, June 9, 2021, 10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. Rain or shine!

Since 1967, McCue Gardens has been growing an impressive selection of perennials and wildflowers. They are now a leading wholesale distributor of quality perennials and wildflowers in New England.

This will be an opportunity for all Master Gardeners, MG Interns, plus their friends and family to buy perennials, natives and woodland plants grown at this family nursery operated by Bruce and Cindy McCue. CMGA will receive 20% of the purchase price of each plant purchased on that day.

Follow McCue Gardens on FaceBook: <https://www.facebook.com/mccuegardens/>



# Safari and Semi-Annual Meeting Update

Although we cannot schedule a date or location for this annual event yet, due to the ongoing COVID-19 restrictions, we're waiting and watching for the day when large outdoor gatherings will be permitted. Keep checking our website [ctmga.org](http://ctmga.org) for all the latest news and information.

In the meantime, we have secured an exciting new presentation for this event. We're looking forward to Tovah Martin's newest lecture, "Awakening Your Senses." This live presentation will remind us that we benefit from more than just the visual aspects of our gardens. Our gardens can ignite all of our senses: sight, sound, touch, smell, and taste as they come into play throughout the seasons. Tovah will help us rediscover the unexpected delights that are waiting for us in our garden spaces.

## **Awakening Your Senses**

A Live Outdoor Lecture by Tovah Martin

A garden offers a world of wonders for your senses. And so often, we focus on duties and chores rather than reaping the rewards of what we have sown and planted. On all levels and in many layers, there is so much to discover when you begin to plug your senses into the garden. In this live lecture, everything from the pace of pathways to the secrets of gardening without sustaining injuries will be examined. In the process, we'll broaden our senses as they come into play throughout the day and seasons. And as a result, we'll discover how to create habitats that benefit all creatures great and small. Come and become more aware!



Alicia Cornelio's garden



## MakeFest *continued from Page 1*

### Some topics to be explored at **MakeFest: Make It Grow**, on-site and virtually:

Gardening	Farming	Beekeeping
Upcycled furniture or clothing	Floral Arranging	Local sustainability
Botanical artistry or making	Green Technology	

### The Master Gardener Connection

Since 2017, Kim Kelly, Master Gardener since 1998, CMGA Lifetime Award member and MG Coordinator at UCONN in 2001, has been the CSC's Horticulturist. Kim's background in botany and environmental science, coupled with her passion for education, made her a natural fit to activate and transform the extensive green roof systems that cover over 50,000 square feet. Kim also created the Butterfly Encounter exhibit and oversees the team that cares for the 100 plus species of butterflies and more than 30 species of plants in this tropical habitat. Supporting Kim one day a week is the "Green Team," so named because of their official dark green CSC Volunteer shirts.



2018 MG Graduates Kathy Beaty and Kim Radda were joined in 2019 by Susan Demuth, Nick Lorenzo and Kathye Cipes; followed by Kathy Cassidy, Tanika Thompson, Joanne White, Sandy Mirtl and Laura Victoria Barrera in 2020. Each week, this group helps to nurture and grow this diverse botanical collection. **Kim's multi-year garden plan will be in bloom and the Green Team would love to share it.** There is parking in the building at 250 Columbus Blvd, Hartford, CT 06103. <https://ctsciencecenter.org/visit/> Or, you can approach the gardens from the street level by walking up towards the Riverfront.

### For the Plant Sale:

Sustainable and native plants will be donated by CSC, and CMGA will manage the sale and receive half of the profits. Plant donations (vegetables, herbs, natives preferred in 4" pots, each clearly labeled) can be dropped off at the Science Center loading dock on Thursday mornings in May, and each day of the week before the event. For information about donating or labeling your plants, email Kathye Cipes (KCipes@ctmga.org) or Kathy Beaty (KBeaty@ctmga.org). If you're interested in participating in the Master Gardener tent, please contact Deb Prior (DPrior@ctmga.org).

### To Exhibit:

Tables and space for **Makefest: Make it Grow** will be available within the galleries or on the plaza for on-site participants. Exhibitors are encouraged to include a family-friendly demonstration or activity. The CSC team can assist with brainstorming and virtual demos can be included. COVID-19 "Safety at Play" guidelines are on their site. If you're interested in participating or showcasing your community organization, contact [KRogers@ctsciencecenter.org](mailto:KRogers@ctsciencecenter.org) For sponsorship information about, contact Whitney Gray at [wgray@CTScienceCenter.org](mailto:wgray@CTScienceCenter.org) or 860.520.2124.





# GARDENING

ANY TIME | ANY PLACE

2021 CMGA Virtual Garden Symposium

Saturday, March 20, 2021

By Kathye Cipes, Theresa Hennessey

We did it! We held our first Virtual CMGA Garden Symposium on Saturday, March 20th. Nearly 300 gardening enthusiasts joined us online for this all-day event. We started the day with a warm welcome from Dean Indrajeet Chaubey of the UCONN College of Agriculture, Health and Natural Resources. This was followed by our two featured speakers in the morning session. After a lunch break, attendees could choose two of our five breakout speakers in the afternoon.

Although we had the cooperation of three of our most experienced Master Gardener Coordinators, and conducted almost a dozen practice sessions over the previous two weeks, we experienced technical difficulties early on when nearly 300 participants were signing on to the virtual platform. Nonetheless, in about 40 minutes we were able to start what turned out to be a great event.

First, we were treated to nationally-known gardener, author and *New York Times* garden columnist Margaret Roach's personal history with her garden in the Hudson Valley. In her presentation "**Non-Stop Plants: A Garden for 365 Days**" she told us the story of how her garden has transitioned to reflect her own changes in how she enjoys and appreciates nature. For example, she shared that she no longer mows to her property line but instead leaves a natural buffer to support natives, insects and wildlife. And, how she makes planting decisions based on views of the garden from inside her house. If you missed the Symposium, you can visit her website [awaytogarden.com](http://awaytogarden.com).



Next was Dan Benarcik's presentation "**Foliage First: Boom Without the Bloom.**" He shared how his designs with color, shape and pattern in the garden aren't limited to blooms and flowers. As a resident gardener at Chanticleer Gardens in Wayne, PA, Dan demonstrated how a strong foliage background of perennials, tropicals and subtropicals can carry the garden before and after blooms. Learn more at his website [danbenarcik.com](http://danbenarcik.com).



After lunch, Symposium attendees were given the opportunity to hear from five well known New England horticulturists.



**Lorraine Ballato**, who is an Advanced Master Gardener and also teaches at the New York Botanical Garden, shared her knowledge of **“Hydrangeas for Cold Climate Gardens.”** Lorraine’s newest book, “Success with Hydrangeas,” is available on her website [lorraineballato.com](http://lorraineballato.com).

**Irene Brady Barber**, **“Growing Vertically for Accessibility with Practicality in Mind”** showed us some new ways of thinking about vertical gardening, and shared the new “living wall” planting techniques. Learn more about Irene’s work at the Coastal Maine Botanical Gardens at [mainegardens.org](http://mainegardens.org).



**Gregory Bugbee** shared his scientific knowledge with us in his lecture



**“Improving Soil Fertility - A Soil Scientist’s Perspective.”** His lecture was based on his experience as a soil scientist and the head of the soil testing program at the Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station (CAES) in New Haven. See Greg’s extensive list of publications at [portal.ct.gov/CAES/ABOUT-CAES/Staff-Biographies/Gregory-J-Bugbee](http://portal.ct.gov/CAES/ABOUT-CAES/Staff-Biographies/Gregory-J-Bugbee).

**Nancy DuBrule-Clemente**, founder of Natureworks Horticultural Services in Northford, CT chronicled her experience with **“Mulch vs. Groundcovers: A Garden Experiment,”** her multi-year transition from cleaning beds, mulching and fertilizing to using hardy, native plants--albeit more of them-- to self-compost, thrive and fill in space naturally. Follow Nancy’s blog at [naturework.com](http://naturework.com).



**Tovah Martin**, an award-winning gardening author and lecturer, shared her expertise with "The New Terrarium," on how to work with glass enclosures of all types to create lovely terrariums to be enjoyed anytime, anywhere. See all of Tovah’s books and lecture dates at [tovahmartin.com](http://tovahmartin.com).

Although we missed the vitality and synergy of a live event, we’re thankful that so many of our loyal CMGA members and friends embraced this new virtual format. And thanks to multiple cost savings in travel, food and facilities expenses, we were able to raise over \$10,000 in profits, making this our most financially successful symposium ever. Proceeds from this event will support CMGA grants for community outreach projects, scholarships for UConn Master Gardener interns and support for local MG county offices.

Special thanks to everyone who supported the event with ideas, attendance, donations and enthusiasm, especially the Symposium Committee (Chairman Theresa Hennessey, Kathy Beaty, Susan St. John, Carolyn Wilcox, Stuart Fisher, Caroline Moran); our UCONN Coordinators (Sarah Bailey, Gail Reynolds, Michelle Winkler); members of the Communications Committee who did dual duty (Christine Maszta, Kathye Cipes, Victoria Ambrosey, Ken Zacharias and Lisa Doggart); and our Speaker Chairman Marge Bingham who sought out and recruited our talented speakers.

# Connect with Us

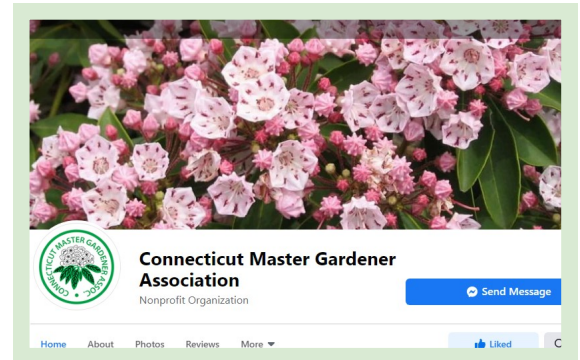
## Take CMGA with you, any time, any place!

By Vicky Ambrosey and Lisa Doggart

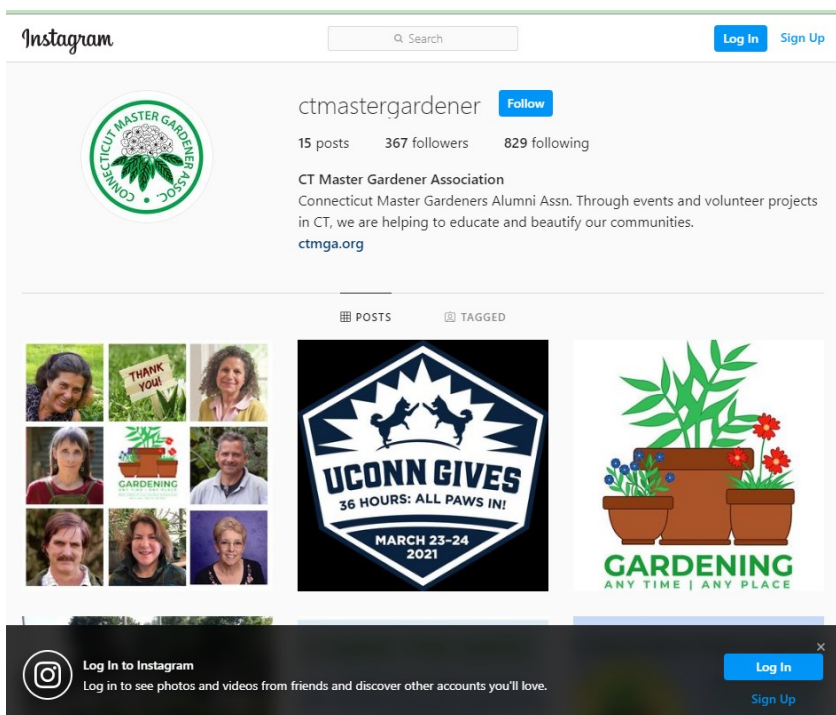
CMGA can now easily fit into your busy schedules via our social media outlets: Facebook, Instagram, YouTube and our website blog. You can view the latest news and information about CMGA happenings on all mobile and desktop devices.

### Facebook since 2010 - [Follow CMGA & Like Our Page](#)

We celebrate 11 years with Facebook, since Earth Day, April 22, 2010. Our intent with Facebook is to share our CMGA activities and events, along with other state and local activities that might be of interest to our members and our UConn Master Gardeners. Like our page and look forward to timely updates and information about our state.



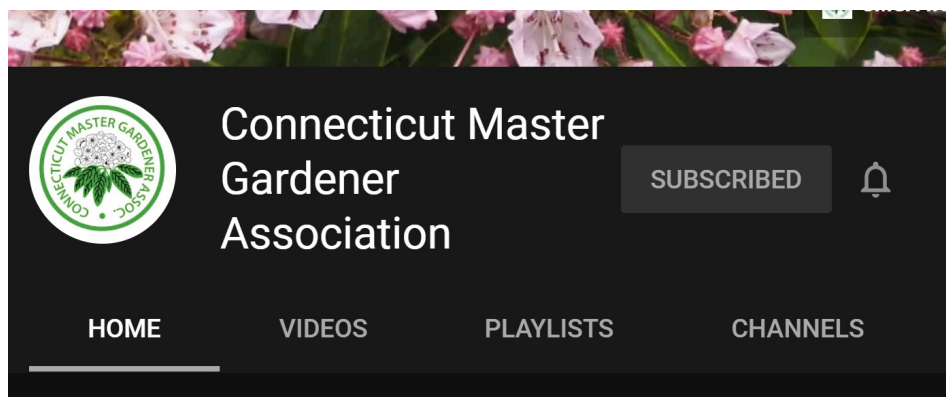
### Instagram since 2021 - [Follow us at @ctmastergardener](#)



With Instagram, we enjoy sharing our stories and pictures of our outreach projects, activities and events. If a picture is worth a thousand words; gardening pictures are worth a million words! **#ctmastergardener**

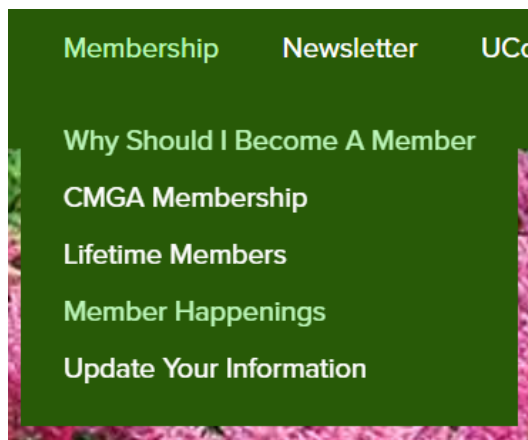
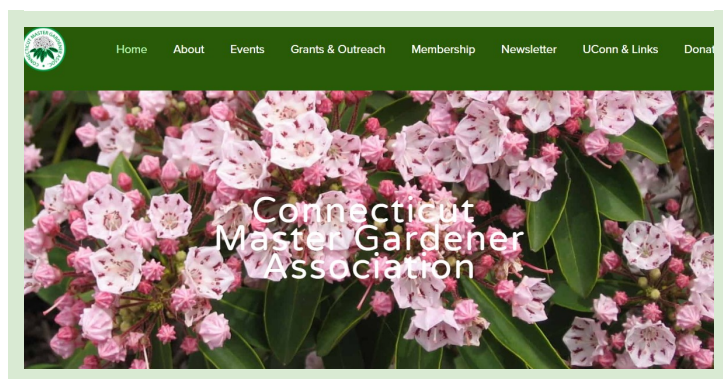
## YouTube since 2020 - [See Our CMGA Channel](#)

We have established a CMGA YouTube channel where you can view videos of our events, projects and activities plus other tours and interviews of interest to our members. There will be public videos as well as unlisted links - accessible through your email communications - to our membership & event attendees.



## Website since 2005, updated 2019 - [ctmga.org](http://ctmga.org)

Our recently renovated website is our official place to visit CMGA online. For the most complete information and access to Membership, Grants & Events, we have all the News, **Member Happenings** Blog, Forms & Details about what's happening and when. For our UConn Master Gardeners and Interns, it's a great place to read and learn what CMGA is all about!



## Mailchimp since 2021

***You are receiving this email because you opted in for communications when you became a member of the CMGA organization.***

Mailchimp is our new tool for email communications to our membership. CMGA uses only official organizational emails to communicate with our members- **@ctmga.org** - Please consider adding these emails to your safe list so they will not be considered as spam. **We don't want you to miss out on your CMGA News!**



# Hop Brook Landing

CMGA



Grant Recipient

By Marilyn Palmer  
CMGA Member

Hop Brook Landing at the Flower Bridge, a new town park located at the site of the Old Drake Hill Flower Bridge in Simsbury, was completed in the late fall of 2019. I was propelled by the environmental movement to eliminate invasive plants and replace them with pollinator friendly native plants. While walking the site, I saw an opportunity to create what would actually be an ambitious plan. It included clearing of invasive plants along the meadow edge and the planting of native trees, shrubs, and perennials along the surrounding edges of the meadow to create a self-sustaining pollinator pathway link.



In March of 2020, I met with Jan Lintner, Chairperson of the Flower Bridge Basket Committee, and with staff from the Simsbury Town Parks and Recreation Department to discuss the plan. This project is in keeping with the mission statements of the Old Drake Hill Flower Bridge Committee, the Simsbury Garden Club, the Connecticut Federated Garden Club Presidents Project, and the Uconn Master Garden Program. So, I invited each of these groups to participate!

By the end of May, autumn olive, Japanese barberry, bittersweet, poison ivy, and scrub brush were removed from the site. Volunteers from all of these organizations as well as volunteers from town spent better parts of Saturdays removing rocks, amending soil, and planting. During the growing season, five redbud trees, nine summersweet shrubs, 12 winterberry shrubs, 14 diervilla shrubs, 120 ferns, and 108 perennials were planted. All of the plants were generously donated.

Because of the severe drought during the summer, tireless volunteers watered the area almost daily for the entire growing season. The shrubs and trees survived and flowered. A grant from the Master Gardener Association provided plantings, edging, and soil amendments for a rock wall on the property.

Future plans for the 2021 season include planting of daffodil bulbs, additional perennials, and ground covers along the meadow edge.





The plan was ambitious. So were the volunteers! The new Hop Brook Landing at the flower Bridge Park is beautiful and the addition of the new garden plans has enhanced this site and created a haven for our pollinators.

I am grateful for the support and hard work from the many volunteers from the UConn Extension Master Gardener Program of Hartford County, the Simsbury Garden Club, the ODHFB Committee, and from many volunteers from the Simsbury Community who came together to help make our community an even better place!



# Frogs and Toads

## How They Benefit Your Garden

By Alicia Cornelio  
Editor, Laurel

There are thousands of frog and toad species in the world. But like so many other animal species, they are suffering a decline in numbers. Environmental problems, climate change and human factors have contributed to the decline. The most common frogs and toads you are likely to see in Connecticut can be viewed at [Wildlife of Connecticut](#).

Toads and frogs are both amphibians that are closely related. Unlike aquatic frogs, toads are adapted to live in drier land environments. You are more likely to see a toad in your garden. Toads have drier skin with bumps. Contrary to myth, these aren't warts. They are called parotoid glands and they produce toxins that protect toads from predators. Some frogs also use poison as protection but there are no poisonous frogs in Connecticut.



*Pickerel Frog by Peabody Museum*

### Why Attract Frogs and Toads

Frogs and toads are an important part of the backyard ecosystem chain. It is a good idea to make space for them in your own garden. Their positive contribution far outweighs the little jump you see and "ribbit" you hear. They need our protection and shelter. If you provide the right conditions and garden features for these amphibious creatures, they should appear in your yard.

Frogs are good bioindicators. Frogs are often used by scientists to indicate if something is wrong in a surrounding area. Some are found with deformities that are thought to be associated with chemical pollution. You can use the indications from frogs to know if the conditions in your garden are safe and ecologically balanced.



*Bull Frog by Peabody Museum*

Frogs and toads are amazing at cleaning the garden of harmful insects. A single frog or toad can eat over 100 insects, such as caterpillars, sow bugs and cutworms and more. With frogs around, you won't need to use harmful pesticides.



## How to Attract Frogs and Toads



*American Toad by Amphibiancare.com*

### **Choose Native Plant Varieties**

Frogs and toads are tasty snacks to predators like birds, foxes, or even cats. Give them plenty of safe areas to hide. Plant shrubs, understory ferns, native wildflowers, grasses, and other native, leafy plants. Native plants attract the insects they like to eat, too.

### **Eliminate Pesticides**

Frogs and toads make very good substitutes for pesticides. If you must use chemicals on your garden, research the brands that are gentlest on the environment, and use them very sparingly on exactly the plants that need them.

### **Make a Friendly Water Environment or a Small Pond**

Frogs and toads need a moist home. One of the best ways to encourage them is to install a pond in your yard. Keep water out of direct sunlight for eggs and tadpoles. Water features sometimes breed insects like mosquitoes, but frogs and toads should quickly eat those pesky bugs.

### **Create Shaded Sleeping Places**

Make “toad abodes” to give the frogs and toads in your garden a few great hiding places where they can get out of the sun and sleep safely. You can make one by flipping a ceramic pot upside down and leaving a space on the bottom to allow a toad to scramble in and out of it.



*Fowlers Toad by Amphibianfact.com*

Sources:

“Connecticut Frogs and Toads.” Wildlife of Connecticut. <http://wildlifeofct.com/frogs%20and%20toads.html>.

Leavitt, Laura. “Encouraging Frogs to Live In Your Garden” January 19, 2018. Dave’s Garden. <https://davesgarden.com/guides/articles/encouraging-frogs-to-live-in-your-garden>.

“The Benefits of Frogs in Your Garden.” April 6, 2015. Frogs are green. <http://frogsaregreen.org/benefits-of-frogs-in-your-garden>.



# April is National Native Plant Month

By Carolyn Wilcox  
CMGA Member

Native plants found in the US before European settlement evolved within particular regions. A growing number of gardeners are focusing on the co-evolutionary relationships that have developed between these plants and regional animals, including pollinators. Native plants' usefulness in supporting biodiversity and alleviating climate change is leading to widespread enthusiasm for restoring native habitats. This selective list of resources should be helpful in finding beautiful and sustainable plants that will work well in a natural landscape.

## General resources:

Audubon Native Plants Database - <https://www.audubon.org/native-plants>

Enter a zip code to bring up a list of native plants attractive to birds in your area. Audubon will send additional information on bird-friendly habitats to your email address.



Connecticut Botanical Society - <http://www.ct-botanical-society.org/>

Includes a "Gardening with Natives" section and links to electronic versions of the Native and Naturalized Vascular Plants of Connecticut Checklist (2014). Also featured is Connecticut's Notable Trees Database.



Connecticut College Arboretum's Native Plant Collection - <https://www.conncoll.edu/the-arboretum/plant-collections/the-native-plant-collection/>

Features an interactive map, checklist, and self-guided tour information for a collection of 2,400+ trees, shrubs, and vines.



Ecological Landscape Alliance - <https://www.ecolandscaping.org/>

Promotes ecological landscape practices through a wide array of educational offerings, including conferences, webinars, articles, and a newsletter. An Eco-Directory leads to extensive resources and a virtual marketplace.



Grow Native Massachusetts - <https://www.grownativemass.org/>

This website's outstanding "Great Resources" section includes annotated "Best Books," "Flora & Fauna Databases," "Articles and Downloads," "Our Experts Videos," and much more.



Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center - <https://www.wildflower.org/plants/> Search for 25,000+ plants by scientific or common name, consult a complete species list, explore native plants by state, or view images of what's in bloom by month.



The Native Plant Center at Westchester Community College - <https://www.sunywcc.edu/about/npc/>

The Center features events including a landscape conference; plant lists and newsletters; and information on self-guided tours of several gardens. The college's Go Native U offers classes and a certificate program on native plant gardening.



Native Plant Finder - <https://www.nwf.org/NativePlantFinder/>

With this National Wildlife Federation database, locate native plants by region according to the host butterfly and moth species that use them.



Native Plant Trust - <http://www.nativeplanttrust.org/>

Formerly the New England Wildflower Society, the Trust is known for its "Go Botany" database, which allows identification of 1,200+ "common native and naturalized New England plants." Its many field trips and classes (many are online) range from garden design to environmental justice.

Native Plant Trust

Plants Database (USDA) - <https://plants.sc.egov.usda.gov/java/>

This vast database offers detailed data, via U.S. regional maps, for native and introduced species. The many featured topics include "Culturally Significant," "Introduced, Invasive, and Noxious Plants," and "Threatened and Endangered." An Images database holds 50,000+ drawings and photos.



### Sources for plants:

American Beauties Native Plants - <https://abnativeplants.com>

Search by type (perennials, trees, etc.), bloom time, sun exposure, critter resistance, soil type, and other criteria to find plants of interest; then find a local garden center. Participates in the Pollinator Partnership.



Connecticut Conservation Districts - <https://www.conservect.org>

Consult the individual conservation district links for information on plant sales that focus on native plants and plugs--from trees and shrubs to grasses and edibles.



Grow Native Massachusetts: Nurseries and Seed Sources - <https://grownativemass.org/Great-Resources/nurseries-seed>



A comprehensive list of retail sources, seeds and plugs, wholesale nurseries, and annual plant sales of note. Included are exclusively native nurseries in CT and nearby states.

Native Plant Trust: Garden in the Woods and Nasami Farm - <http://www.nativeplanttrust.org/for-your-garden/buy-native-plants>





# The LAUREL

Connecticut  
Master  
Gardener  
Association  
Newsletter

Summer 2021 Volume 34, No. 3

## Summer Garden Safari

### Connecticut Master Gardener Association

*presents our semi-annual*

### Summer Safari & Meeting Event

at Lockwood Farm in Hamden, CT

**Friday, August 13, 2021 at 9:00 am**



**Tovah Martin** "Awakening Your Senses"

**Dr. Charles Vossbrinck (CAES)**  
"Growing Figs in Connecticut".

**Open to the public. Walk-ins accepted.**

**Registration** \$20 CMGA Members  
\$25 for non-members, walk-ins.

**Online Registration & Information here at**  
<https://ctmga.org/summer-safari-2021-event>

***Details page 5***



# Officers 2021

<b>President:</b>	Deb Prior president@ctmga.org	<b>Board of Directors:</b>	Vicky Ambrosey	Kathy Beaty
<b>V-President:</b>	Paula Russo vicepres@ctmga.org	Marge Bingham	Lin Branham	
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		Susan Eisenhandler	Jean Fletcher	
		Theresa Hennessey	Kim Kelly	
		Christine Masztal	Natasha Muttukumaru	
		Caroline Moran	Debbye Rosen	
		Mary Ellen Seuch	Susan St. John	

<b>CMGA website:</b>	<a href="http://www.ctmga.org">www.ctmga.org</a> cmgaweb@ctmga.org	Vicky Ambrosey (Editor)
<b>The Laurel:</b>	cmganews@ctmga.org	Alicia Cornelio (Editor)
<b>Membership:</b>	membership@ctmga.org	Ken Zacharias (Chair)
<b>Grants:</b>	grants@ctmga.org	Linette Branham (Chair)

## UConn Extension Center Coordinators

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<b>Hartford:</b>	<b>Sarah Bailey</b>	860-409-9050	sarah.bailey@uconn.edu
<b>Litchfield:</b>	<b>Michelle Winkler</b>	860-626-6240	michelle.winkler@uconn.edu
<b>Middlesex:</b>	<b>Gail Kalison Reynolds</b>	860-345-5234	gail.reynolds@uconn.edu
<b>New Haven:</b>	<b>Eric Larson</b>	203-407-3161	roderick.larson@uconn.edu
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**Deadlines for publication are January 1, April 1, July 1, and October 1.**  
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**Connecticut Master Gardener Association**

## President's Message



Dear CMGA Members:

Ah, SUMMER! It's my favorite season. The gardens are in full bloom, and my viburnum is putting on its second show of the year- the one with an abundance of bright red berries. How about those hydrangeas this year?

As usual, your Board of Directors has been very busy the last few months. We added a new event in May in partnership with the Connecticut Science Center at their MakeFest: Make It Grow event. Our volunteers joined the Green Team in putting on a plant sale to benefit both of our organizations. For a first effort, it went pretty well, and we were able to raise some more dollars to help fund grants and scholarships.

Nursery Day in June was bigger and better than last year, despite the brutal heat. Roughly, 60 members and friends attended, and it was a delight to have CMGA members from Fairfield County join us! Of those, about 20 took advantage of a tour of the nearby Colonial Revival Garden at the Webb-Deane-Stevens Museum in Old Wethersfield.

Up next is our August 13th Annual Summer Safari at Lockwood Farm in Hamden with guest speaker, Tovah Martin and her presentation titled "Awakening Your Senses." In this issue of the Laurel, you'll find information about registration and a new service we are offering from Panera Bread Catering for those who prefer not to bring their own picnic lunch.

As we carefully emerge from the pandemic, which sadly is not quite over, planning events is almost as challenging in 2021 as it was in 2020. Locating a venue for our Symposium is usually completed by now. However, the various higher education facilities we target are solely focused on re-opening for their fall semesters. Needless to say, a lot of uncertainty lies ahead with the new variants and developing guidelines.

The survey results from our first ever virtual Symposium were quite favorable with many participants indicating that they would attend another in the virtual format. Sure, there were some technical issues, but I can assure you: Learning has occurred! So, if we have to go virtually we won't encounter the same issues. We will have to wait and see for now, but the Symposium must go on!

Don't forget to register for the Summer Safari, and enjoy the rest of your summer!

Deb Prior  
President CMGA



# CMGA News

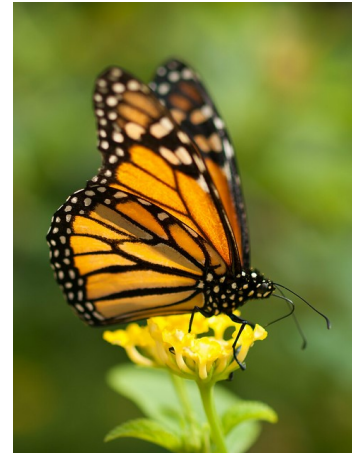
## Bug Out with UConn Extension

UConn Extension is hosting the 6th Annual Bug Month virtually in July. Keep checking the website to see what's buzzing!

<https://bugs.uconn.edu/>

July 21 - 27: Bug week at the Connecticut Science Center  
All ages are welcome to explore the activities dedicated to insects and their relatives.

<https://ctsciencecenter.org/blog/insects-in-your-backyard-celebrating-bug-week/>



## Hiking Connecticut

After a very challenging year and a half, it is **time to get out there** and enjoy a hiking trail in the many state parks of Connecticut. DEEP has a wonderful website that lists all the parks and their trails. Each trail is described with its history, level of difficulty, and types of activities available. There are downloadable maps and directions to each trail.

<https://portal.ct.gov/DEEP/State-Parks/Explore/Hiking>



**Ordering from Amazon???** Please remember to use the Amazon Smile website ([smile.amazon.com](https://smile.amazon.com)), and select CT Master Gardener Association as your charity. Amazon will donate 0.5% of the price of your eligible AmazonSmile purchases directly to CMGA. Thank you for your support!



# Safari and Semi-Annual Meeting

**Don't miss the Summer Safari on August 13 at Lockwood Farm, Hamden**

On Friday, August 13, our Summer Safari is going to include our semi-annual business meeting followed by two guest speakers at the beautiful Lockwood Farm, 890 Evergreen Ave, Hamden, CT 06518. The day will open with a continental breakfast at 9:00 am followed by our Semi-Annual Meeting at 9:30.



After the business meeting, Connecticut author Tovah Martin will present "A Live Outdoor Lecture: Awakening Your Senses" that should be informative and fun. Tovah is a delight to hear and shared this description of her new lecture. Tovah's presentation is based on her book, *The Garden in Every Sense and Season: A Year of Insights from my Garden*, which will be available for signing and purchase.

A garden offers a world of wonders for your senses. And so often, we focus on duties and chores rather than reaping the rewards of what we have sown and planted. On all levels and in many layers, there is so much to discover when you begin to plug your senses into the garden. In this live lecture, everything from the pace of pathways to the secrets of gardening without sustaining injuries will be examined. In the process, we'll broaden our senses as they come into play throughout the day and seasons. And as a result, we'll discover how to create habitats that benefit all creatures great and small. Come and become more aware!

Following lunch, CAES scientist Dr. Charles Vossbrinck will present a lecture and demo on "Growing Figs in Connecticut" including a tour of his fig tree greenhouse and container growing system. He is growing 6 cultivars of figs in 25 gallon self-watering pots, both outdoors and in high tunnels. The pots are stored indoors during the winter.

Ticket price for CMGA members is \$20.00, and non-members pay \$25.00. Members may also invite one guest to attend the event with them for a total of \$40 (2 tickets @ \$20 each). This price covers the cost of a Continental breakfast, beverages and Ben and Jerry's ice cream. Walk-ins are welcome and will be asked to pay the non-member price (\$25) regardless of their membership status, and to be responsible for their own lunch.

No food will be available for sale at the meeting. You may bring your own picnic lunch, or pre-order a Panera box lunch from a special link for our CMGA Event. Panera will deliver prepaid lunches to Lockwood Farm.



CMGA members are welcome to attend the Semi-Annual Meeting portion of the event at no charge. Please register and pay by **August 9, 2021** on the CMGA website. **We hope to see you!**

# Nursery Day and First MakeFest Day

## Plant Sales a Success



CMGA Members enjoyed two plant sales in May and June in conjunction with the Connecticut Science Center and McCue Gardens in Wethersfield, Ct.

Saturday, May 22, 2021 was the first of a series MakeFest: Make It Grow, part of Family Gardening Day at the Connecticut Science Center in Downtown Hartford. The event was a partnership of CMGA, the Science Center and the Petit Foundation. CMGA members do-

noted plants and the Science Center shared perennials from their green roof gardens. CMGA received \$444 from the total sales.

More important than generating sales was the opportunity to give the public information about gardening and plants. Outreach was provided by CMGA Volunteers and members of the CSC "Green Team" that volunteers each week at the 50,000 square feet of green roof gardens. Everyone agreed it was a great first effort.







Saturday, June 9, 2021 was Nursery Day at McCue Gardens. OK, we'll admit it. It was hot! But that didn't stop CMGA members and friends from supporting this popular annual event. And the sixty-six individuals who attended were happy that they came!

Bruce and Cindy McCue's nursery in Old Wethersfield is just such a special place and an amazing experience in such a beautiful New England setting.

We received 20% of the sales for the day. Your support of events like these means so much to our organization's ability to support Master Gardeners across the state. So far this year, we have provided grants for 12 gardens and educational programs, and have announced a second cycle of grants that started June 15 and will be awarded in August.





# Connect with Us

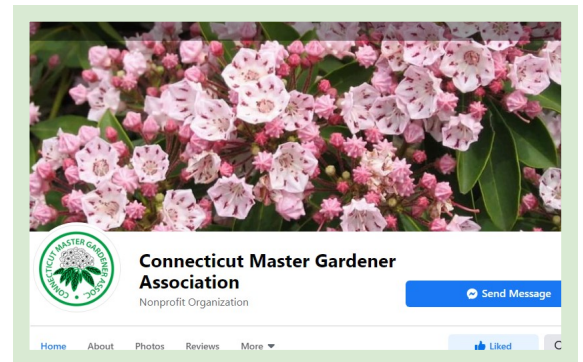
## Take CMGA with you, any time, any place!

By Vicky Ambrosey and Lisa Doggart

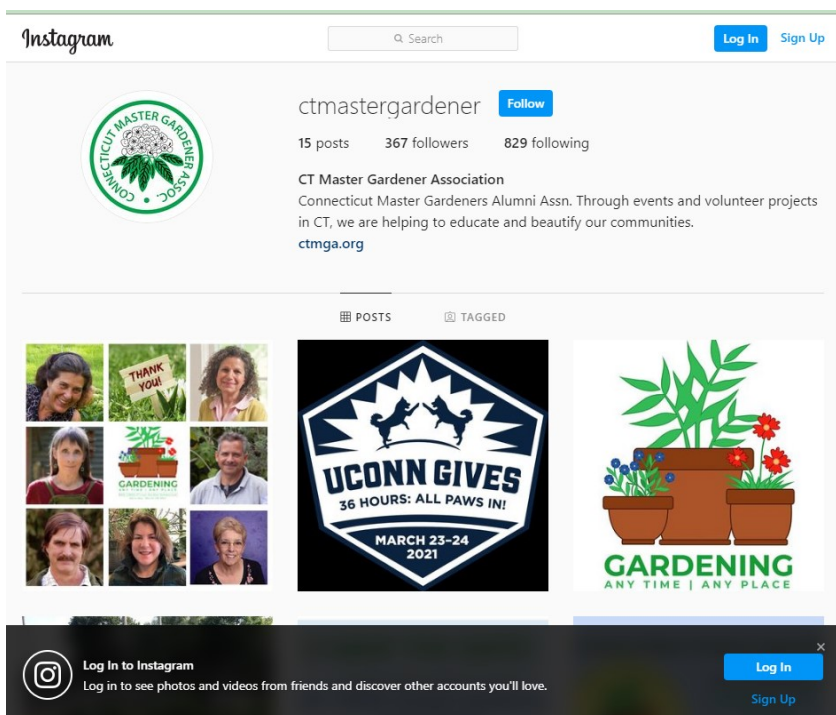
CMGA can now easily fit into your busy schedules via our social media outlets: Facebook, Instagram, YouTube and our website blog. You can view the latest news and information about CMGA happenings on all mobile and desktop devices.

### Facebook since 2010 - [Follow CMGA & Like Our Page](#)

We celebrate 11 years with Facebook, since Earth Day, April 22, 2010. Our intent with Facebook is to share our CMGA activities and events, along with other state and local activities that might be of interest to our members and our UConn Master Gardeners. Like our page and look forward to timely updates and information about our state.



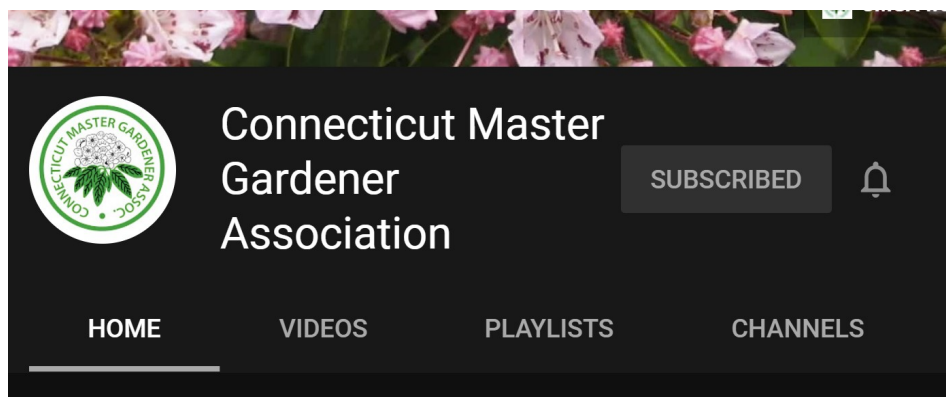
### Instagram since 2021 - [Follow us at @ctmastergardener](#)



With Instagram, we enjoy sharing our stories and pictures of our outreach projects, activities and events. If a picture is worth a thousand words; gardening pictures are worth a million words! **#ctmastergardener**

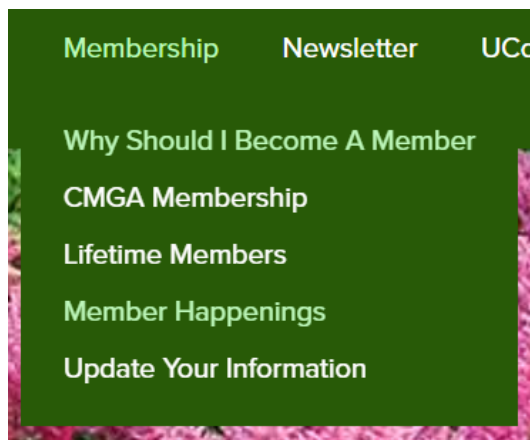
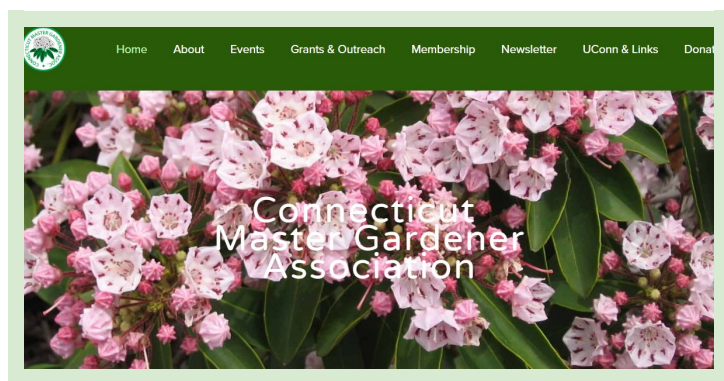
## YouTube since 2020 - [See Our CMGA Channel](#)

We have established a CMGA YouTube channel where you can view videos of our events, projects and activities plus other tours and interviews of interest to our members. There will be public videos as well as unlisted links - accessible through your email communications - to our membership & event attendees.



## Website since 2005, updated 2019 - [ctmga.org](http://ctmga.org)

Our recently renovated website is our official place to visit CMGA online. For the most complete information and access to Membership, Grants & Events, we have all the News, **Member Happenings** Blog, Forms & Details about what's happening and when. For our UConn Master Gardeners and Interns, it's a great place to read and learn what CMGA is all about!



## Mailchimp since 2021

***You are receiving this email because you opted in for communications when you became a member of the CMGA organization.***

Mailchimp is our new tool for email communications to our membership. CMGA uses only official organizational emails to communicate with our members- **@ctmga.org** - Please consider adding these emails to your safe list so they will not be considered as spam. **We don't want you to miss out on your CMGA News!**



# Fernridge Park Pollinator Garden



Submitted by Debbye Rosen, CMGA Member  
Written by Owen MacDonald

My name is Owen MacDonald. I am a Boy Scout with Troop 146 in West Hartford, as well as a Freshman at Conard High School. I currently serve as the Senior Patrol Leader for Troop 146 and I am a candidate for Eagle Scout. I started my scouting career at Duffy Elementary Pack 161.

Grant Recipient

My recently completed Eagle Scout project was to build a Pollinator Garden at Fernridge Park in West Hartford. The Pollinator Garden is contained in a 10x4 foot raised garden bed that was built on-site near the tennis courts at Fernridge Park. This raised garden bed is now filled with a variety of pollinator-friendly plants and it is the first garden bed in Fernridge Park dedicated to providing a protected habitat to support pollinators. I am happy to have my project contribute to the growth of the Pollinator Pathway here in West Hartford.



I was interested in a project that would benefit Fernridge Park, because it is my neighborhood park. Since I grew up nearby I have spent countless hours at Fernridge Park's playground, pool and ball field and I wanted a project that would help contribute to the health of the park.

The project was a collaboration between the Town of West Hartford, the Friends of Fernridge Park, the Connecticut Master Gardener Association, and myself.

Mr. Douglas Jackson, Park Naturalist at Westmoor Park, has been integral in

assisting with the sponsorship of this project and helping to coordinate approval of my building plan and obtaining some essential supplies, like the soil for the garden bed



which was provided by the Town of West Hartford.

Ms. Debbye Rosen, a Master Gardener, had a grant from the CT Master Gardener Association which provided financial support for the building materials used in the construction of the raised garden bed as well as the plants to be installed in the garden.

Ms. Rosen also helped with the selection of the plants to be included in the garden. The plants chosen for the sunny location of the garden bed site include the following:



Clethra Ruby Spice  
Liatris Floristan White  
Phlox Paniculata Laura  
Echinacea Wild Berry  
Salvia May Night  
Coreopsis Moonbeam

These plants should be well adapted for the local climate and will have a variety of bloom times over the spring and summer once they are established in the garden.

We started construction of the garden on May 29, 2021 which was the Saturday of Memorial Day weekend. You might recall that was a fairly miserable cold and rainy Saturday. We were fortunate though with our timing and were rain-free for the first half of our build time. We used pop-up tents borrowed from a neighbor to protect the buildsite.

I was assisted on the building portion of the project by a dedicated team of helpers which included some troopmates (Nathan Refici and Jacob Mooney), a classmate (Jack Doyle), family members (my parents Edward Macdonald and Megan Dunphy and sister, Emma Macdonald), and two additional adult volunteers (Brian Refici and Mike Dalton). Mr. Dalton is my Eagle Scout project mentor and is also an Assistant Scout Master with Troop 146. Ms. Debbye Rosen, the Master Gardener assisting with the project also stopped by to cheer us on as well.

# Ideal Small Lawn Trees

## How They Benefit Your Garden

By Alicia Cornelio  
Editor, Laurel

Trees add beauty and value to a home property. When homeowners wish to plant a new tree, there may not enough space in their yards to accommodate a large tree. But no worries! There are many small trees that are just as useful and lovely.

Smaller trees are often referred to as ornamental trees. Unlike large trees, these smaller trees often have visibly beautiful flowers and leaves. They are large enough to provide food and nesting places for birds and insects. And, many ornamental trees grow quickly to their ultimate size.

With an average height and width of 25 feet, an ornamental tree provides privacy, reduces noise, cleans the air, and prevents soil erosion. Plus, it will fit better in a smaller yard and be easier to prune and maintain.



### ***Japanese Maple***

There are over 1,000 varieties of Japanese maple trees, which make them one of the most popular ornamental trees. They can be dwarf to 25 feet tall but are slow growing, so buy the biggest tree you can afford. The leaves come in many different colors. Some are fringed. This tree is ideal for zone 5.





### **Redbud**

A native tree to the Eastern United States, the Redbud flowers on stems and branches before the heart shaped leaves appear in early spring. The Redbud has an umbrella shaped canopy and is stunning planted in groups. Grows moderately fast.



### **Stewartia**

One of the few ornamental trees that blooms in summer, it is slow growing to a pyramid shape of 25 feet. It has beautiful purple and bronze foliage in the fall. Plant in the front yard for a season long display.





***Kousa Dogwood***

Unlike the native Eastern Dogwood, this tree blooms longer and later in the spring and withstands full sun. It has a unique mottled, peeling bark and round seeds loved by birds. Its shallow roots benefit from a layer of mulch.



***Downy Serviceberry***

A perfect tree! It is native, has very early white blossoms, dark blue fruit loved by birds, and brilliant fall foliage. Serviceberry is adaptable to many kinds of soils and grows moderately fast.





**Sargent Cherry**

This tree is an upright-spreading to rounded tree, with deep reddish brown, polished bark. Grows at a moderate rate to 25 feet high. Fruit are edible if you can get them away from the birds. Beautiful deep pink flowers bloom in the spring.



**Paperbark Maple**

This is a relatively small tree for a maple that provides interesting peeling copper-orange to reddish-brown bark. It is slow growing to 30 feet with seeds that seem large for the size of the tree.





# The LAUREL

*Connecticut  
Master  
Gardener  
Association  
Newsletter*

Autumn 2021 Volume 34, No. 4

## **CMGA VIRTUAL ANNUAL MEETING**

**Saturday, November 13, 2021**

**Online Registration is required - by November 7, 2021**

**Look in your email for  
registration and detailed information.**

**Presenting: Tovah Martin**

**Maximizing Space in the Garden:  
Creating More of a Good Thing**



### **Schedule of events:**

All are welcome to attend this Zoom meeting.

9:00 am - A brief business meeting will be held to review CMGA's 2021 highlights and plans for 2022. Only CMGA members will be able to vote on several items and elect new Board Members and Executive Officers.

10:15 am - Presentation by Tovah Martin, on "Maximizing Space in the Garden: Creating More of a Good Thing," with Q&A after the lecture.



# Officers 2021

**President:** Paula Russo, Interim  
president@ctmga.org

**V-President:** Jean Fletcher, Interim  
vicepres@ctmga.org

**Treasurer:** Sue Demuth  
treasurer@ctmga.org

**Secretary:** Carolyn Wilcox  
secretary@ctmga.org

## Board of Directors:

Vicky Ambrosey	Kathy Beaty
Marge Bingham	Lin Branham
Valerie Bryan	Kathye Cipes
Lisa Doggart	Susan Eisenhandler
Theresa Hennessey	Kim Kelly
Christine Maszta	Caroline Moran
Deb Prior	Debbye Rosen
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# President's Message



To My Dear CMGA Members:

During 2021, your Board of Directors has continued to work tirelessly behind the scenes to make our organization stronger, technically up to date, and to develop more opportunities for membership engagement. For instance, we have a new CMGA YouTube channel where you can view videos of our events, projects and activities. In fact, our upcoming Annual Meeting in November will be available for your viewing there.

Our 2022 membership drive kicks off this month, so you will be seeing communications about renewing your annual membership. We also enthusiastically welcome any Master Gardeners who have not yet joined us. CMGA is open to all Master Gardeners, regardless of when or where they graduated.

Our Annual Meeting will be held virtually again this year on Saturday, November 13<sup>th</sup> from 9:00 am to 12:00 pm. The business portion of the meeting will feature a review of the year's events and accomplishments, and we will also be voting on the budget and officers for 2022. I'm excited to say that in addition to our returning Board members, we will be voting on 2 NEW Board members! I am excited that in 2021, CMGA was able to distribute \$11,975 for grants to community projects, Master Gardener Extension Offices and Scholarships to the UConn Master Gardener Program.

We will be using the ZOOM platform for the Annual Meeting. Since you will be voting, your attendance at this meeting is especially important. Our special guest speaker will be Tovah Martin, and the title of her presentation is Maximizing Space in The Garden: Creating More of a Good Thing.

In closing, I encourage you to renew your 2022 membership today and invite your Master Gardener friends to join us as well. Our planet is in peril. We need all local hands-on-deck to change direction in order to save our Earth home.

As I end my term as Interim President, it is an honor and privilege to continue to serve this organization as a member of the Board. Because I am committed to CMGA, I will continue to serve as a member of the Board of Directors and past president. I couldn't be more delighted to turn the position of Interim President over to the competent hands of Paula Russo.

All My Best to You ALL! I'll see you in the garden!

Deb Prior



# CMGA News

## Giving Garden of Weston

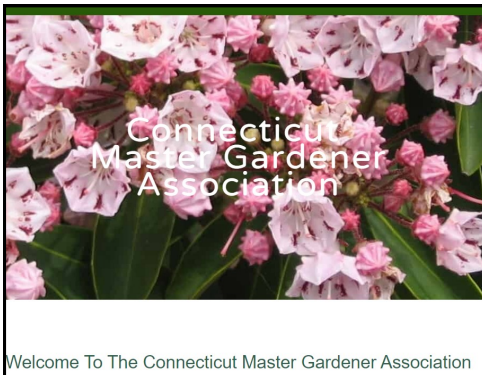
Lachat Farm's Giving Garden in Weston has been providing food pantries with an abundance of healthy, fresh food for the past decade. The garden is mostly funded by donations from the public and a grant from the non-profit Sustainable Connecticut. Thanks to CMGA Master Gardeners Terry Cho and Christina Koether, and all the gardeners for sharing in the goodness from Giving Garden.

See the News 12 video [HERE](#).



## Web Skills Needed

**WE NEED YOUR WEB SKILLS TO HELP WITH [ctmga.org](http://ctmga.org)**



Do you have web skills to help keep our [ctmga.org](http://ctmga.org) website attractive and up-to-date?

We are looking for a CMGA member or intern to help us post content on [ctmga.org](http://ctmga.org) and to support our communications to members.

You will need to be familiar with the SquareSpace platform.

If that's you, contact Kathye Cipes, Communications Committee Chair, [kcipes@ctmga.org](mailto:kcipes@ctmga.org) or 860 918 0231



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# CMGA Annual Meeting Program

## Maximizing Space in the Garden: Creating More of a Good Thing

A Lecture by Tovah Martin

No matter whether you are gardening in a close-knit neighborhood or a sprawling estate, you want to garden efficiently, prolifically, sustainably, and beautifully. You need to garden smartly and you've got to conserve your resources. This lecture focuses on all the points on your checklist. When you layer a garden, not only do you maximize space, but you can also create hard-working habitats. You can fulfill a balance between what you need and what nature needs. Using my own garden that I call Furthermore as an example, I describe how to create layers in varied habitats including the perennial, berry, and vegetable gardens. The result is visually fulfilling, low maintenance, and mulch-eliminating when plants go wall-to-wall. This lecture shares how that shakes down to serve our needs as well as the needs of pollinators and other creatures. You can expect to hear many innovative ideas beyond the usual solutions.



### Meet Tovah Martin

An avid (verging on obsessed) gardener indoors and outside, Tovah Martin is the author of many gardening books. Her newly published title, *The Garden in Every Sense and Season* received GardenComm's Gold Medal Media Award in 2019. That book follows *The Indestructible Houseplant*, *The Unexpected Houseplant*, and *The New Terrarium* as well as *Tasha Tudor's Garden*. A freelance writer, her articles have appeared in publications throughout the country including *Country Home*, *Traditional Home*, *Martha Stewart Living*, *New England Home*, *Flower*, *Cottage Journal*, *Milieu*, *Yankee*, *Con-*

*necticut Cottages & Gardens* as well as *Gardens Illustrated* and *The Daily Telegraph* in Europe and *Morning Calm*—the Korean Airlines inflight magazine. She is an accredited Organic Land Care Professional through NOFA, an honorary member of the Garden Club of America and the recipient of their medal for outstanding literary achievement. In 2013, she received the Gustav Mehlquist Award—the highest honor bestowed by the Connecticut Horticultural Society. She has appeared on the *Martha Stewart Show*, PBS television series and the CBS *Sunday Early Show* as well as many other television and radio broadcasts. She speaks throughout the country and has lectured aboard the QE2. With lifelong experience with indoor gardening, she also serves as a houseplant coach. For more information on Tovah see [www.tovahmartin.com](http://www.tovahmartin.com), on Facebook at *Plantwise by Tovah Martin*, and on Instagram @tovah1.

# Torrington Community Gardens

CMGA



Grant Recipient

Submitted by Mary Guilfoile and Michelle Winkler  
CMGA Member 2014

Master Gardener Mary Guilfoile won a CMGA grant for two community garden improvement projects in Torrington's Jiggs Donahue Park and Borzani Park. She is the founder and steady guide of the Borzani community garden project.

The Torrington Community Gardens' main focus is to provide fresh vegetables to food-insecure individuals and families throughout the growing season.

The Jiggs Donahue Park Garden is located in the north end of Torrington. This 30 x 20 foot plot has been in operation for a few years. The produce from this garden is given to the social workers from the Nurturing Families program to distribute during their home visits to pregnant women and their families in Torrington and Winchester.



The Borzani Park garden, also a 30 x 20 foot plot, was begun last year by the Litchfield Master Gardener office at the request of the mayor. The produce from this garden is donated to the Friendly Hands Food Bank which distributes food throughout Northwest Connecticut. Friendly Hands Food Bank has seen the need for their services triple since the pandemic. In one month they provided 34,000 meals. Being able to provide fresh vegetables with non-perishable items will benefit their clients.

The project also provides practice opportunities to Master Gardeners and Master Gardener interns so they may apply the skills they learned in the classroom to the field.

Michelle Winkler





The Borzani garden was begun this year, 2021, on a very cold Memorial Day. There was even snow!

The Litchfield County coordinator, Michelle Winkler, brought a pop up tent which really helped. We worked with Mariah Green, a Master Gardener, who grew the tomatoes from seed. Darci Alves, a Master Gardener intern, Teresa Krulicki, who lives in the neighborhood, and Lynda Nielsen, a Master Gardener, also helped.

Rebekah Chestna donated pepper plants and helped with planting the garden. Carolyn Morin, a Master Gardener intern, has been a consistent volunteer who built the bean trellis, helped with planting, harvested the crops, and implemented insect controls.

Mary Guilfoile





# Storm Proofing Your Garden

By Alicia Cornelio  
Editor, Laurel

Is anyone else tired of hearing your TV weather reporter declare that we broke another record in Connecticut? I seem to hear it every week! Weather extremes have become the norm and we need to adapt our gardening practices to protect our plants. Wind, hail, heavy rains, cold snaps, and extreme heat can destroy your garden in a single day. Here's how to protect your bounty from some of our weather's sudden extreme conditions.

## High Winds

Hurricanes are not the only weather events with damaging winds. Microbursts and severe sudden thunderstorms can catch a gardener off guard. But the most damaging winds are winter winds blowing cold air relentlessly. Notice which direction the wind blows during most storms.

For long term wind damage:

- ◆ plant by a windbreak or protective wall
- ◆ grow on the calmer side of your home
- ◆ stake tall plants that may suffer breakage and keep them staked all season

If you have notice of an oncoming storm:

- ◆ move hanging baskets and containers to sheltered areas
- ◆ wrap large plants and shrubs in burlap and secure with twine
- ◆ take down cold frames, hoop tunnels, and portable greenhouses that could blow away



## Heavy Rains

It doesn't have to be a major flood for water to damage your plants. A heavy rain may drain away, but seedlings can wash away, tall plants can bend and break, and fungus can form on wet leaves.

I lost my autumn lettuce this year when it all washed away during a tropical storm. I thought the seedlings would pop up again like the sun, but they were gone. Row cover frames can be expensive to buy. But an easy, reasonable solution is to buy hula hoops from a discount store. Cut the hoops in half, fasten the open hoops over stakes, and cover when needed. These structures can be left up during the entire growing season.



- ◆ lay row cover fabric or plastic over frames and secure the edges with pegs
- ◆ Mulch beds with straw or other organic material to keep exposed soil from compacting from hard rain and protect the root systems of plants
- ◆ Stake tall plants to help keep them from breaking
- ◆ Improve soil drainage by using raised garden beds



## Hail

Hail during a severe rain storm can be one of the most damaging weather events for a farmer. But home gardeners can suffer, too. By installing hoops over your vegetable gardens permanently, it will take little effort to run out and cover them.

If you have advanced notice of possible hail:

- ◆ overturn buckets and tubs on top of flowering plants and weigh them down with rocks
- ◆ cover hoop tunnels with high-grade row cover fabric to provide a barrier to all but the largest (and rare) hailstones.
- ◆ stake burlap or other fabric in a teepee-like fashion over large beds or small trees, shrubs, climbers, and tall herbaceous perennials
- ◆ plants in containers should be tucked into sheltered areas beneath the deck or placed inside the garage



## Heatwave

It doesn't take many days of excessive heat to wilt your plants. Leaves can scorch



in the searing sun even if the soil is hydrated. Note the amount of sun a certain spot in your yard receives in a given day. That is the place where your plants will suffer the most during a heatwave. Plant only sun loving plants in that spot. Water deeply and regularly, preferably during the early morning to diminish evaporation. Be careful not to over-water, as this may encourage plant diseases.





For sudden temporary heat:

- ◆ consider putting a timer on a water spigot if vacationing and move containers near an in-ground garden to catch the same water
- ◆ move containers to a shaded area to combat heat stress
- ◆ hoop tunnels over in-ground and raised garden beds can be covered with a lightweight fabric and secured with twine to provide temporary shade
- ◆ apply mulch to the base of your plants to keep moisture near the roots of your plants

## Drought

Drought is different from a heatwave because it lasts longer. During a drought, most plants react with their own conservation. Towns will be conserving water, so homeowners will not be able to water lawns and plants regularly, if at all. There will be some excess blooms, because most plants as they stress, produce bloom for seed, to preserve the generations.

As a result, treat your plants differently.

- ◆ Avoid fertilizing. Established plants will start going through a dormant period and interruption of photosynthesis “shutdown” will cause plants to go into a reverse shock.
- ◆ Watering every day should be avoided. Plants will get used to having to conserve so that when the drought is actually occurring, they don’t need as much. Watering during a drought can kill the plant.
- ◆ Prune selectively at the onset of drought to help in the dormancy period. The plant will actually let you know, as it rebounds.
- ◆ When the drought ends, depending on the seasonality of the plant, refurbish by watering every three days to help it along.



## Flood

Wind and heat can cause sudden damage but don't have the lasting effect of flood water. It may take weeks for the water, which can be filled with sewage and disease pathogens, to recede. Covering beds and moving pots is often ineffective with such widespread damage.



- Drainage can be helped by applying Gypsum or leaf mold around the base of a plant, which will help keep the soil perking.
- Container plants should not use any mixes that help retain moisture, as they will never dry out. Moving to a high area (as with furniture) is a good idea.
- After heavy rain, small plants may need to have their leaves washed off. The muddy covering will halt photosynthesis of plants because the sun cannot reach them, as well as harbor oncoming fungus.
- ♦ Do not feed plants as the rootballs cannot take up any nutrients because of the excess moisture. Wait a couple of weeks, let plants rebound, and if there are any new shoots or blooms, that's an indication that your plant is feeding again.

Sources:

"Protect Your Garden From Severe Weather!" Farmers' Almanac Staff. June 13, 2021.  
<https://www.farmersalmanac.com/protect-garden-weather-extremes-31986>.



Help CMGA Accomplish Our Goals for 2022

## Membership Drive

CMGA is the alumni association for Connecticut Master Gardeners, providing opportunities to share our knowledge and love of gardening throughout the state. Through sponsorship of events and leadership of volunteer projects, our members help to educate and beautify our communities.

Today, like other nonprofit organizations, we must balance that mission with responsibly meeting state guidelines for COVID-19.

**We rely on membership dues and event attendance to fund Master Gardener-led community projects, support the UConn Master Gardener Extension offices and provide scholarships for interns.**

Your \$30 annual membership dues helped us support UConn Extension Master Gardeners in 2021 including funding some \$4,600 in grant requests for horticultural education projects in every corner of the state; \$4,000 in Master Gardener scholarships; and \$3,375 in grants to county MG Extension offices.

**Membership for 2022 is \$30. This year, more than ever, CMGA needs your support and welcomes your involvement. To enjoy member benefits and events, please [renew your CMGA membership](#) today!**

Your membership dues are critical to help CMGA to **Educate:**

- November 2021 virtual Annual Meeting Event with guest speaker, Tovah Martin
- 2022 Spring Garden Symposium
- 2022 Summer Safari
- Future educational and social events
- [The Laurel quarterly newsletter](#)

Contribute to beautiful and sustainable communities:

- [State-wide grants for MG community gardening projects](#)

**Please consider using our secure online application and payment process by visiting our website at [Membership > CMGA Membership](#). Thank you.**