



# The LAUREL

Connecticut  
Master  
Gardener  
Association  
Newsletter

Winter 2022 Volume 35, No. 1



CMGA 2022 Virtual Garden Symposium

## 29<sup>th</sup> CMGA Garden Symposium Our third virtual event! Saturday, March 12th, 2022

2022 Connecticut Master Gardener  
Symposium to Feature  
**International Speakers**

Connecticut Master Gardeners, guests, and the public will have the opportunity to learn from international and national experts on the theme

**"Gardening For Good"**

On-line registration information for this virtual event is available at [www.ctmga.org](http://www.ctmga.org).

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

**Registration opens February 2, 2022**  
**\$30 for interns, \$60 for CMGA members, \$90 for non-members**



**Opening  
Speaker:**

**Noel Kingsbury**

**Closing  
Speaker:**

**Georgina Reid**

See page 4 for speaker descriptions



# Officers 2021

<b>President:</b>	Paula Russo, Interim president@ctmga.org	<b>Board of Directors:</b>	
<b>V-President:</b>	Kathye Cipes, Interim vicepres@ctmga.org	Vicky Ambrosey	Kathy Beaty
<b>Treasurer:</b>	Deb Prior, Interim treasurer@ctmga.org	Marge Bingham	Lin Branham
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		Susan St. John	Mary Ellen Seuch
		Mary Jane Toomey	Jim Ward

<b>CMGA website:</b>	<a href="http://www.ctmga.org">www.ctmga.org</a> jward@ctmga.org	Jim Ward (Editor)
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<b>New London:</b>	<b>G. Reynolds, Interim</b>	860-345-5234	gail.reynolds@uconn.edu
<b>Stamford:</b>	<b>Alicia Jacobsen</b>	203-322-6971 x18	alicia.jacobsen@uconn.edu
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<b>Windham:</b>	<b>John Lorusso</b>	860-774-9600	john.lorusso@uconn.edu
<b>UConn Home &amp; Garden Education Center:</b>		877-486-6271	www.ladybug.uconn.edu
<b>State Coordinator for the MG Program:</b>	<b>Sarah Bailey</b>	860-409-9053	sarah.bailey@uconn.edu

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**Connecticut Master Gardener Association**

## President's Message

Dear CMGA Members:



Happy 2022! In this my first letter as Interim President of CMGA I want to begin by thanking all of you for your continued support. Many small non-profit organizations like CMGA have struggled these last few years and it is because of our members that we have been able to continue our mission to support the Connecticut Master Gardener program as well the numerous master gardeners who volunteer their time to bring the joy of gardening to their local communities.

I know we all were hoping that by now the pandemic would be a thing of the past. Instead masks have become the new fashion statement and we regularly discuss Greek letters like delta and omicron as if they were household terms. In numerous ways we have learned as a community to adjust to the new normal and to continue to thrive. For example, CMGA successfully made the shift from its traditional in-person symposium to a virtual Garden Symposium for 2021 and will again be holding a virtual symposium on March 12, 2022 focused on the theme, "Gardening for Good." Not only do we have a great line-up of speakers this year, but the virtual platform has made it possible to showcase several international experts. For now, please save the date and watch your email for more information on the program and how to register for this exciting event.

As an organization, CMGA's success depends on its members and its energetic and dedicated board members. This year we are happy to welcome three new board members, Kathy Cassidy from Hartford County, Mary Jane Toomey from New Haven County and Jim Ward from New London County. At the same time, we say goodbye to former president Theresa Hennessy as well as Susan Demuth and Carolyn Wilcox. We are grateful the time and energy these women gave in service to CMGA and wish them well in their future endeavors. This week marked the start of the 2022 Master Gardener program with close to 200 interns enrolled. We wish the new interns success in the program and look forward to working side-by-side with them as they participate in the many community outreach projects across the state. For those of you with an idea for a new outreach project in your own community, we encourage you to look into the CMGA Grant Program. Last year CMGA provided funding for 25 different outreach projects across Connecticut. Funded projects ranged from a Permaculture Demonstration Garden and Edible Landscape in Brooklyn, CT to the Bethel School Student Raided Bed Garden.

So, as you mull over the seed catalogues and hope for an early spring, we hope you will consider joining us at one of this year's CMGA events. We are a great community of Master Gardeners with a keen interest in continuing the learning that began in the MG program. You can start by going to [ctmga.org](http://ctmga.org) and clicking on the Membership Tab to renew your membership. And of course, we hope to see you on March 12 for the CMGA Virtual Garden Symposium. Registration will open soon!

In closing, we are always interested in new ideas so I invite you to share your thoughts. You can reach me at [president@ctmga.org](mailto:president@ctmga.org). With best wishes for a healthy and happy spring!

Paula Russo, Interim President CMGA



## GARDENING WITH INTENTION

### Dr. Noel Kingsbury Opening Speaker

An early British advocate of naturalistic planting design and a leading figure in the New Perennial movement, Dr. Noel Kingsbury is an acclaimed international garden designer, best-selling author and collaborated for over 25 years with the renowned Dutch designer Piet Oudolf. With a doctorate from the University of Sheffield, Dr. Kingsbury writes and researches gardening and plant sciences.

Having been at the forefront of planting design with perennials, Noel will share his philosophy and practice of selecting plants with intention for the ecology of the site, including woody plants, often lacking in perennial gardens. Noel now lives and gardens in Portugal.



<https://www.noelkingsbury.com/>

## CELEBRATE GARDENING

### Georgina Reid Closing Speaker



Georgina Reid is an Australian writer, gardener and founding editor of The **Planthunter** online magazine and Wonderground print journal. In a recent article she shared: "As a gardener (and I am fully aware of what a privilege it is to be one) I am directly engaged with the health of the ground beneath my feet...I know from experience that a healthy garden requires attention, faith, action and care. Each day I am reminded to respect the laws and the whims of Mother Nature. I cannot ignore the beauty and wonder and madness and pain of the world because I am engaged in its care. I live in relation to it."

Georgina is passionate about telling meaningful stories that connect people, plants, and places and we look forward to hearing her unique perspective.

<http://www.georginareid.com>



## **PART OF SOMETHING BIGGER**

### **Owen Wormser**

Based in Western Massachusetts, Owen is the founder of Abound Design providing design and consulting for regenerative, sustainability-focused landscapes. In his work and in his book *Lawns Into Meadows*, Owen supports his lifelong understanding that the world naturally tends toward abundance. In his mind, the rich life that results from turning irrigated turf grass into the diversity and nurturing power of a meadow is the perfect illustration of how changing our view of our yards and gardens allows us to see them as part of the larger ecosystem.

He is also the co-founder, with traditional and clinical herbalist Chris Marano, of the non-profit Local Harmony, focused on encouraging and creating community driven regeneration. You can learn more at [Local Harmony](#) and at these links.



<https://awaytogarden.com/turning-lawns-into-meadows-with-owen-wormser/>

<https://www.owenwormser.net/about>

## **SHARING, MENTORING, TEACHING.**

### **Ken Greene**



Ken Greene was working as a librarian in Gardiner, New York when he decided to go beyond the bounds of his own personal garden and take his passion for seed saving into a more public, community-based arena. He began the [Hudson Valley Seed Library](#) (HVSL) out of the Gardiner Public Library, initially just adding the seed varieties to the library catalog as another item that patrons could "check out." In 2008 he and his business partner Doug Muller moved the HVSL onto a farm in Accord, New York where it has remained ever since as [Hudson Valley Seed Company](#). Today, the library catalog is online, and the library's membership boasts over 1,000 farmers and gardeners. Ken will share his journey and the evolution of his business as an outreach of his desire to share his knowledge with others.

<https://hudsonvalleyseed.com/pages/team>

# LYME-OLD LYME FOODSHARE COMMUNITY GARDEN

CMGA



Grant Recipient

by Kathye Cipes  
CMGA Communications Chair

Food insecurity, brought on by COVID, impacted the entire state of Connecticut, including the towns of Lyme and Old Lyme. In response to that need, an ambitious goal was set to establish a FoodShare garden to provide fresh produce to area food pantries.

Without as much as a place to plant, the initiative formed a 501(3) (c) non-profit organization with a Board of Directors. Next, they were able to secure land within a Lyme-Old Lyme recreation facility near a playground which has parking, restrooms, electricity, and plenty of sun and water. The CMGA grant of \$350 was the first step in a SustainableCT matching grant campaign. In total, \$7500 in donations from 42 supporters was matched by SustainableCT. Costs to plant and maintain a row are estimated at \$250 a year. An annual sustaining fundraising campaign has been launched to "Sponsor a Row."



June - prepping for fence and irrigation



With funding secured, deer fencing was installed and an irrigation system was connected to the recreation facilities irrigation system, 6 raised beds were built and 16 are ready for planting in 2022. A mailing list of 55 volunteers has resulted in a consistent crew of ten to fifteen volunteers for scheduled work days. Over twenty rows are committed for the 2022 planting season.

**HOW CMGA HELPED:**

The CMGA grant of \$350 was the first step in a Sustainable CT matching grant campaign and was used to create the community garden.



Irrigation being connected



First group of volunteers



# Birds Adapt to Climate Change

By Alicia Cornelio  
Editor, Laurel

Climate change and the warming of our planet is no longer a debatable issue. As habitats and natural cycles are transformed, animals will adapt, as they have over millions of years. However, the new study "Nature Communications" warns: "Modern plants and animals may not be able to adapt fast enough to survive the pace of human-driven climate change.



[www.encyclopedie-environnement.org](http://www.encyclopedie-environnement.org)

Animals generally adapt in one of two ways: either morphologically, such as increasing or decreasing in body mass to better regulate heat, or phenologically, such as adjusting the time they perform life events like mating, reproducing, hibernating, and migrating." (Daley, Jason)

The oft cited study "Nature Communications" by Ecologist Victoria Radchuk and her colleagues at the Leibniz Institute for Zoo and Wildlife Research evaluated 71 long-term, high-quality studies from the past 30 years. They chose birds because they are easiest to track due to many offspring in a length of time and their migratory behavior. According to their findings, the current pace of change in birds is not enough to keep pace with the expected rate of a changing climate. That is very troubling, since many of the bird species in the study are common to their regions. If they can't adapt, birds that are less common or geographically isolated will have an even harder time keeping up.

It seems to be a logical response by birds to move northward in latitude or upward in altitude to follow the movements of the climate. Indeed, the most immediately visible aspect of climate change consequences is the change in distribution areas. Since migratory behavior is a genetically determined and inheritable trait, it is expected to evolve under the effects of directional selection pressures exerted by current warming. Many partially migratory species can be expected to become resident. A local example in Connecticut is the American Robin. No longer a harbinger of spring, it is seen throughout the winter.

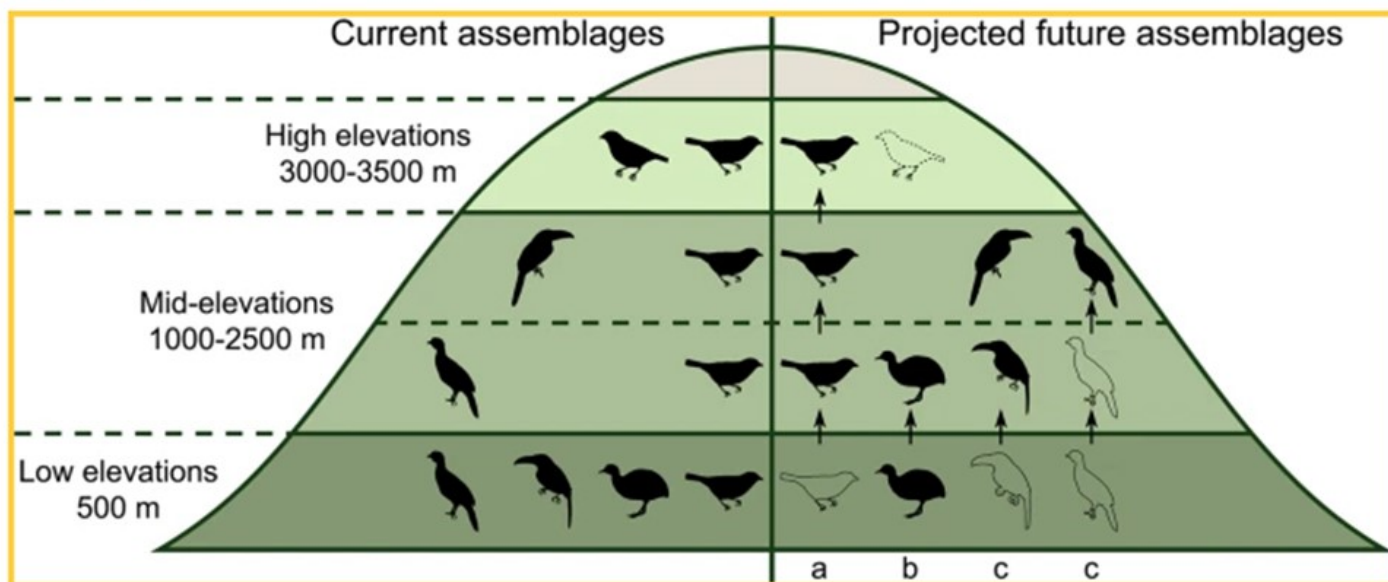
For many birds, insects are their food source. This means that "birds time their egg laying to correspond to the peak of prey abundance so their chicks have lots of food," says Radchuk. Some birds have shifted to earlier dates according to the study.

Scientists are hopeful because birds have shown resilience in the past. A recent example is the Bald Eagle. Almost extinct due to DDT poisoning in the 1960s, they rebounded after the chemical was banned.

## What we are seeing in Connecticut

Migratory patterns can affect the region's ecosystem as a whole. The Greenwich Audubon Center has noted during its annual bird count that the Cardinal, Black Capped Chickadee, and Red Bellied Woodpecker have extended their northern ranges in the last 30 years. However, other species that rely on a particular habitat are more vulnerable. If sea levels rise and destroy Connecticut's salt marshes, the endangered saltmarsh sparrow could become extinct. Also, plants can't migrate quickly like birds. If the food birds eat are dying out in usual ranges and not growing quickly enough in new ranges, some birds will go extinct. The fastest declining birds in New England include those that nest in shrub habitat. Connecticut's Wildlife Action Plan is trying to save existing habitats to keep bird migration patterns stable.

Figure 1



www.nature.com

## What can we do?

- ◆ Supporting land preservation by protecting forests and grasslands locks up carbon in plants and trees to keep it out of the atmosphere.
- ◆ Three quarters of all emissions from Connecticut are from transportation and from buildings, including houses. Consider an EV, when car shopping. Drive less and drive slower. Turn the thermostat down in winter and up in summer.
- ◆ Convince your town that birds matter. We had endangered chimney swifts in our chimney this summer. They eat thousands of mosquitoes. I have proposed building a chimney swift tower in town to help them.
- ◆ Grow a bird friendly garden. There has been much discussion about pollinator friendly gardens, but birds also need food and protection to thrive. For tips on making a bird friendly garden, see:

<https://www.audubon.org/news/how-make-your-yard-bird-friendly-0>



### Sources:

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# CMGA News



## CMGA Needs You...More than Ever!

Please consider joining the Board, join a committee, or volunteer to help the Symposium.

### There are currently four Officer openings on the Board

It is a friendly group with a common goal. And many hands make light work! CMGA does so much to promote its mission of gardening for health and joy!

Most of the work can be done at home. Another opportunity is to volunteer at the Symposium. The success of this important event depends on dozens of people to help with the many little tasks that must get done. No experience is necessary!

And, after the work is done, there are so many opportunities for comradery. Won't you get to know us better? We have a variety of tools and support to help you in your new role, including mentoring from previous Board members.

Contact Paula Russo at [president@ctmga.org](mailto:president@ctmga.org) or Susan Eisenhandler, chair of the nominations committee at [nominations@ctmga.org](mailto:nominations@ctmga.org). They will send you the description of the roles and responsibilities and the mentoring you will receive as you fill your position.

### *Will you help support CMGA??*



**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!

# 2021 Master Gardener Graduates

## Hartford

Darci Alves  
Colleen Quinn Amster  
Linda J. H. Aparo  
Jill Benson  
Phyllis Campbell  
Rebekah Chestna  
Linda "Cibby" Ciborowski  
Elizabeth Cleary  
Elena Silk Coffey  
Joanna deBear  
Hera Doceti  
Joanne Eudy  
Deanna Fontaine-Motyl  
Jaymie Frederick  
Dennis Gallant  
Deborah Gosselin  
Holly Hambleton  
Jill E. Harvey  
Kim Hughes  
Donna Maine Kaffenberger  
Rebecca L. Kowalski  
Kasandra Lambert  
Penelope Leitner Lisi  
Laura Jean Lundgren  
Margaret M. Lynch  
Rebecca Maloney  
Jeanne Merola  
Leah Moelling  
Anna Sava Namnoum  
Joan Noblet  
Laureen Relyea  
Donna Summers  
Sandra C. Tombaugh  
Cecily Vasington  
Nat Wyse

## Lower Fairfield

Catherine Agnelli  
Regan Avery  
DeeDee DeBartlo  
Kara Donahue  
Cindy Eadie  
Ann Flinn  
Joanne Hastings  
Christina Hennig  
Claire Hurley  
Alisa McNeille Kuhn  
Alysa Margolin  
Janet Marolda  
Beth Marsh  
Elizabeth Moyse  
Chhavi Punia  
Kelle Ruden  
Ann Sawyer  
Nancy Souza  
Megan Young  
Natalia Zhiltsova

## Fairfield

Chris Cunningham  
Caitlin deDufour  
Christine Dreher  
Mary Beth Gilbert  
Elizabeth Hendrick  
Sarah Jeffrey  
Jean Kreizinger  
Althea Langer  
Joe Langer  
Jamie McDonald  
Ann Mead  
Carolyn Morin  
Aleksandra Mrvaljevic  
Daisy Okas  
Kristy Ouellette  
Carrie Priano  
Jason Priano  
Mary Jane Reis  
M. Josephine Robinson-  
Fisher  
Maria Rodriguez De Arraiz  
Sibylle Saewe  
Martin Schneider  
Amy Sorensen  
Ralph Stein  
Christine Winner



# 2021 Master Gardener Graduates

## Middlesex

Fareena Alam  
Debra Anastasio  
Lucia Brea  
Lise Brule  
Amy Butler  
Lori Chadwick  
Elizabeth Cooley  
Susan Aezza Cope  
Molly Deegan  
Danielle DiBella  
Ken DiVito  
Luke Fatsy  
Theresa Fox  
Pamela Gallagher  
Diane Gawronski  
Richard Gill  
Jennifer Gill  
Becky Gladych  
Mary Gratton  
Mary Griskewicz  
Mary Hall  
Kierra Holroyd  
Michelle Kutz  
Kathleen Lowe  
Karen McAllister  
Patrick McIntosh  
Ingrid Menon  
Roslyn Reeps  
Joanna Reindel  
Mary Richardson  
Paul Rossi  
Nancy Russo  
Joanne Schmaltz  
Katherine Scott  
Aaron Smith  
Tracy Stella  
Amanda Stern  
Loretta Tafuri  
Robert J Tafuri, M.D.  
Brett Thompson

Renee Tschopp  
Elizabeth Vinick  
Elaine Wilson  
Rosemary Ostfeld  
Matan Ackelsberg  
Ethan Barrett  
Ella Doherty  
Karlus Felix  
Madisyn Gomez  
Maya Hall  
Mairead Kennedy  
Bryan Osorio  
Adam Sussbauer  
Sabrina Tian

## Windham

Larry Bibri  
Diane Blume  
Monique M. Dutram  
Kristen G. Kaiser  
Alison Lewis  
Dave Miller  
Katie Morneault  
Becky Nichols  
Carolyn Otto  
JoAnn Sandgren  
Stacey Simpson  
Bill Singer  
Jan Sousa  
Juan Torres  
Steven Williamson  
Steven Zoni





# 2021 Master Gardener Advancements

## Advanced Master Gardener

### **Bartlett:**

Laura Cunningham  
Tara Forschino  
Christina Koether  
Pamela Nobumoto  
Mary Verel

### **Bethel /New Haven:**

Joan Cominski  
Lou Denaro  
Christine DeCrescenzo  
Alicia Jacobsen  
Jane Jawlik  
Norma Jean Macauto  
Sue Rubin  
Ron Switzer  
Nancy Zychek  
Samantha Pullaro

### **Windham/Tolland:**

Heather Zevetchin

### **Litchfield/Hartford:**

Ginni Block  
Lisa Cushman  
Sarah Hsieh  
Janet Loynes  
Annmarie Riemer  
Jennifer Sherman  
Beth Ann Loveland Sennett  
Gina Trusiewicz  
Sandra Cady  
Louise Mango  
Jennifer Sherman  
Theresa Sullivan-Barger

### **Haddam/New London:**

Susan Hally  
Susan Kinsman  
James Matschulat  
Ruth Riggs  
Malaine Trecoske

## AMG Bronze

### **Bartlett:**

Betsy Bilus  
Pat Carroll  
Susan Hawley

Patricia Morris  
Lucille Oricchio  
Michele Sorensen  
Mary Verel  
Dana Weinberg  
Diane Wilson

### **Bethel/New Haven:**

Christine DeCrescenzo  
Lindy Hennessy  
Diane Ryan  
Tamira Montorsi  
Elaine Piraino-Holovoet  
Samantha Pullaro  
Pat Sabosik  
Celeste Suggs  
Susan Turner

### **Litchfield/Hartford**

Debra Barberi  
Lea Anne Moran  
Mary Dombrowski  
Christine Kuriger  
Janet Loynes (also AMG)  
Beth Ann Loveland Sennett  
Gloria Shusdock  
Carolyn Wilcox

### **Haddam/New London:**

Sue Augustiniak  
Lynn Keller

## AMG Silver

### **Bartlett:**

Jane Alpert  
Greg Moonie  
Margaret Eustace  
Eva Mullervy-Klatt  
Marie Gross  
Toni Simonetti

### **Bethel /New Haven:**

Henry Bissonnette  
Elizabeth Craig  
Kim Doyle  
Carol Hamilton  
Holly Kocet  
Robin Michalak  
Rosemary Volpe  
Serena Guerrette  
Tamira Montorsi  
Elaine Piraino-Holovoet  
Samantha Pullaro  
Pat Sabosik  
Celeste Suggs  
Sarah Torff  
Susan Turner

### **Litchfield/Hartford:**

Suzi Diehl  
Faith Geist  
Diana Simoni  
Janice Sniffin  
Jackie Wasta

### **Haddam/New London:**

Joan Lazar  
Jack Leary

## **AMG Gold**

### **Bartlett:**

Frances Bright  
Daniel Schiefferle

### **Bethel/New Haven:**

Barbara Stauder  
Flo Vannoni  
Cheryl Cappiali  
Jim Sicilia

### **Windham/Tolland:**

Mary Cross

### **Litchfield/Hartford:**

David Lewis  
Deb Pike

### **Haddam/New London:**

Joan Lazar  
Sherry Smith

## **AMG Ruby**

### **Bartlett:**

Linda Albanese  
Nathalie Gavrilovic  
Martina Doshan  
Phyllis Padro

### **Bethel /New Haven:**

Margot Abrams  
Lorraine Ballato  
Thomas MacGregor  
Adelle Hack

### **Haddam/New London:**

RoseMarie Bagioni  
Joanne Lukasevic  
Sylvia Delson  
Ginni Donovan

## **AMG Ruby Bronze**

### **Bartlett:**

Nancy McClelland

### **Bethel/New Haven:**

Fran Litwin  
Tim Ohsann

### **Litchfield/Hartford:**

Sandy Ingellis

### **Haddam/New London:**

Ginni Donovan

## **AMG Ruby Silver**

### **Litchfield/Hartford:**

Marlene Mayes

## **AMG Ruby Gold**

### **Litchfield/Hartford:**

Marilynn Palmer

## **AMG Sapphire**

### **Bartlett:**

Carrie Sears

### **Litchfield/Hartford:**

Rebecca Martorelli

## **AMG Sapphire Bronze**

### **Litchfield/Hartford:**

Jean Fletcher

## **AMG Sapphire Silver**

### **Bartlett:**

Dawn Fiss  
Janet Kruse

## **AMG Sapphire Gold**

### **Bethel/New Haven:**

Allan Brown

### **Litchfield/Hartford:**

Sarah Bailey

## **AMG Emerald**

### **Bartlett:**

Beth Miller

### **Litchfield/Hartford:**

Sarah Bailey  
Steve Kovack Jr.

## **AMG Emerald Gold**

Pete Russell

## **AMG Topaz**

### **Haddam/New London:**

Ken Sherrick





# The LAUREL

*Connecticut  
Master  
Gardener  
Association  
Newsletter*

Spring 2022 Volume 35, No. 2

## **2022 CMGA Grants**

### ***Looking Forward To A Very Active Year!***

Each organization has its focus and of course, as the alumni association for certified Connecticut Master Gardeners, ours is all about gardening! Unique to CMGA is our leadership in providing grants to help Master Gardeners start and sustain gardening projects. Yearly, we raise funds, primarily through our membership dues, to support all types of gardens and education projects throughout the state. In 2021, we awarded \$5,000 in grants to support 17 projects statewide.

This year's grants process opened on February 15, 2022 and we received 29 applications. Grants are for up to \$350. Past projects have included irrigation systems, brochures, and children's programs. All certified Master Gardeners, Interns and Extension Coordinators are eligible to apply for a grant. To ensure the grants make a specific contribution to a project, grant requests must be approved before the project is undertaken.

To see the grant review and evaluation process with sample applications: <http://ctmga.org/grant-review-evaluation>  
For questions: [grants@ctmga.org](mailto:grants@ctmga.org). Also, the Grants Committee has offered virtual coaching sessions to answer questions and guide new applicants.

Visit our website to see the new map that our webmaster, Jim Ward, has created at [2021 Grants](#). You'll get a quick thumbnail of each grant recipient's project and see how our grants span the entire state!



**Storywalk Children's Garden in Colchester**

# Officers 2022

<b>President:</b>	Paula Russo, Interim president@ctmga.org	<b>Board of Directors:</b>	
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## UConn Extension Center Coordinators

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**Connecticut Master Gardener Association**



# President's Message



Dear CMGA Members:

Spring has finally arrived! Crocus, daffodils, and many other major and minor bulbs are now visible wherever you look. Stellar magnolia are in full bloom and the flowering cherries are not far behind. What a wonderful time of year!

I hope that many of you were able to attend our Second Virtual Gardening Symposium on March 12. The virtual platform allowed us to include several international speakers this year and I was very inspired by what I learned. I can't wait to get a chance to get into the garden to put what I learned into practice!

In fact, one of our keynote speakers has offered a unique opportunity to all CMGA members. Check the article about the Symposium to find out how to receive an exclusive discount on world renowned writer and teacher Noel Kingsbury's Garden Masterclass.

Looking ahead to the coming months, we have several exciting events coming up for our members. On May 21, CMGA is again partnering with the Connecticut Science Center for MakeFest/Make it Grow. Included in this educational event will be a plant sale featuring native plants and vegetables. We welcome your plant donations and hope to see you there!

On May 23rd, the first of several nursery visits will be held at Cricket Hill Garden, one of the first nurseries in the U.S. to sell true-to-name varieties of Chinese tree peonies. Stay tuned for more information about these unique opportunities to visit some of the amazing plant specialists around the state. other

On June 15 we will return to McCue Gardens of Wethersfield for our annual Plant sale. Once again, owners Cindy and Bruce McCue will donate 10% of all sales that day to CMGA. We hope to see you there!

In closing, I want to thank all of our members for their continued support of our organization. The money we raise through fund-raising efforts such as the plant sales mentioned above and from membership dues allows us to support outreach projects around the state. In fact, the first grant proposal cycle ended on March 15 with a total of 29 proposals requesting funding. We were able to fund a good portion of these proposal with existing funds and hope that the success of the upcoming plant sales will allow us to offer a second round later this summer. Check our website to learn more about these exciting projects. Best wishes to all for a happy and healthy gardening season!

Paula Russo, Interim President, CMGA

# Journey of a CMGA Founding Member

Interview with Shirley Mitsko Member 1978  
by Alicia Cornelio and

Shirley Mitsko, still an active member today, was a graduate of the very first Master Gardener Class in 1978. She saw an article in the New London Day newspaper with an appeal from UCONN looking for volunteers to exchange education for volunteer hours. The class was \$40 with 40 hours of required of volunteering. Shirley trained in the Norwich Office. The office, in the same location, hasn't changed very much. Russell Hubbard was first instructor. It wasn't a big class, about 20 interested students.

The course was tough, intensive and highly educational. Shirley still remembers the question she got wrong on the test: What fertilizer was applied to strawberries in the fall? No matter, she passed and proceeded to spend 40 hours "in office" answering phones. This requirement is the same today. What has changed is the additional requirement of a leaf identification notebook. Graduation was a wonderful buffet prepared by the county coordinator from his own garden.

After graduation, Shirley became involved in Camp Harkness. Julian Griswold ran programs cultivating raised garden beds with a green house donated by a CMGA member, Mary Smeraldi.





In the 1980s, Shirley moved to Hawaii. She decided to *Bloom Where You Are Planted!* She enrolled in Hawaii's MG program to familiarize herself with tropical flora. Basically, it was the same curriculum. Classes were in tents! Shirley then continued with the Advanced Master Gardener certification.

In Hawaii, as an AMG, Shirley helped design and install gardens in a new educational development for the public at the University of Hawaii in Pearl City. Master Gardeners created a hibiscus garden, herb garden, ground cover collection, and the Hedge Maze. The Hedge Maze is an educational exhibit where the public can browse through the maze to look at a variety of hedge plants to help in selecting a hedge plant to plant at home. What a great idea!

In the early 1990s, Shirley returned to seasonal Connecticut. She chose to recertify as a Master Gardener at the Middlesex office in Connecticut. She wanted to refamiliarize herself with the flora of Connecticut.

Shirley has attended many national and international Master Gardener conferences through the years and is always willing to learn more about horticulture. Thank you for your continued support!



# Connect with Us

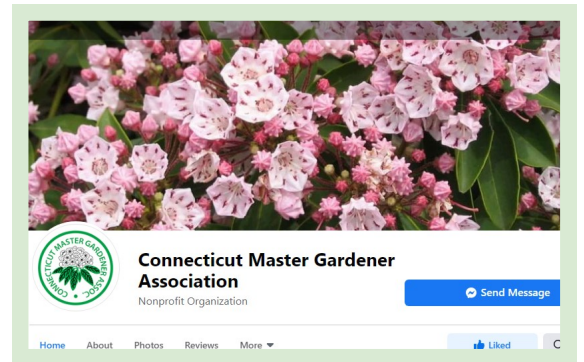
## Take CMGA with you, any time, any place!

By Vicky Ambrosey and Lisa Doggart

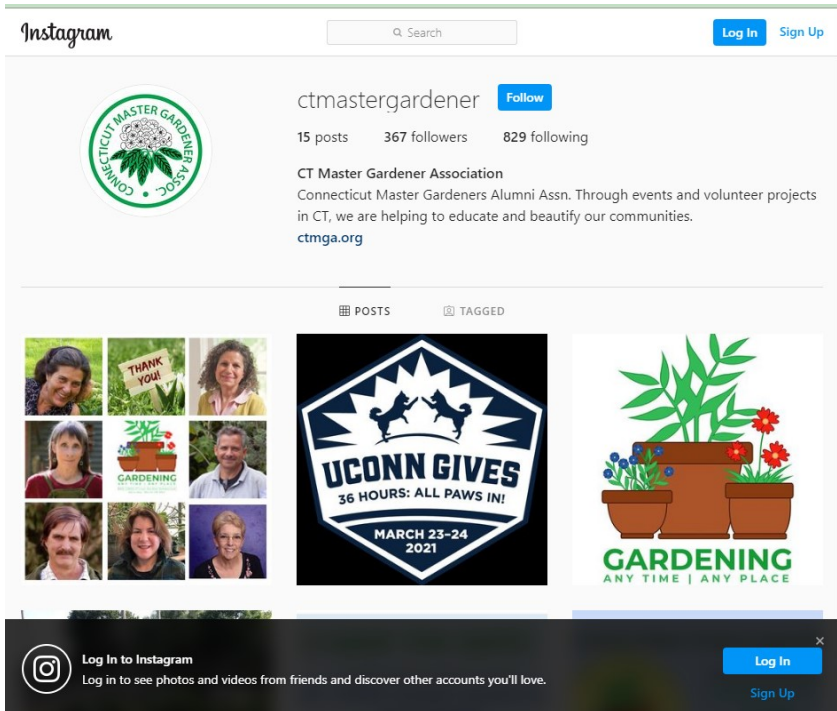
CMGA can now easily fit into your busy schedules via our social media outlets: Facebook, Instagram, YouTube and our website blog. You can view the latest news and information about CMGA happenings on all mobile and desktop devices.

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

We celebrate 12 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](#)



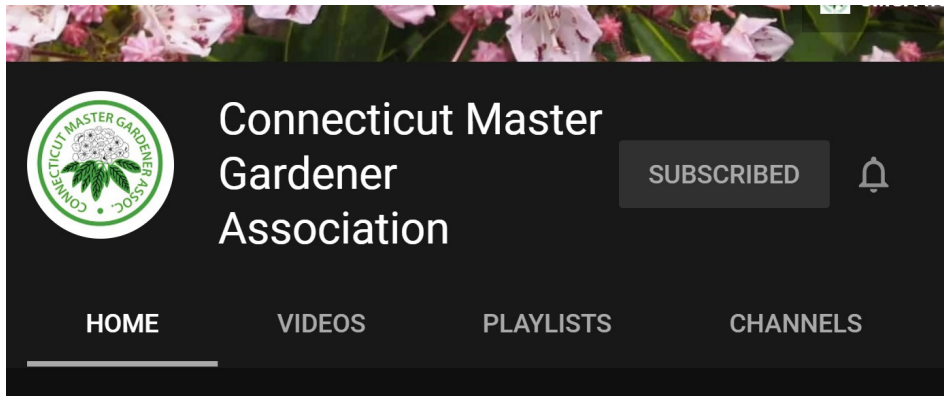
With Instagram, we enjoy sharing our stories and pictures of our outreach projects, activities and events. If a picture is worth a thousand words; gardening pictures are worth a million words!

**#ctmastergardener**



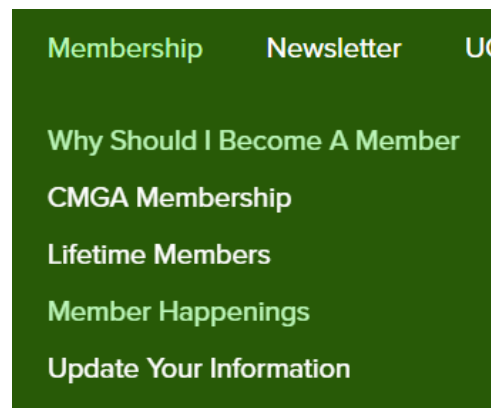
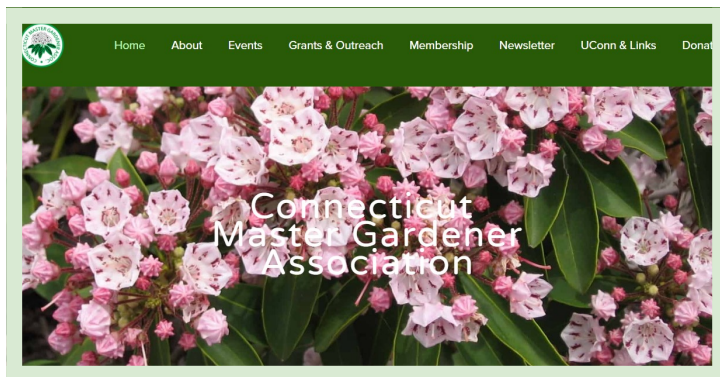
## YouTube since 2020 - [See Our CMGA Channel](#)

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, major update 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!*

# Connect with Us—Do you know??

## Tips and Frequently Asked Questions

**CMGA communications are sent regularly to our current and past members.**

CMGA Communications will always come from our organizational domain. Please consider adding **@ctmga.org** to your safe list and check your spam if you are not receiving our email communications.

**Your CMGA membership status can be found in your CMGA communications emails.**

The CMGA communications sent to you in mailchimp use your current email address on record. You can always find your latest membership status **at the end of your communication emails**, letting you know if you are current with your membership. There is also an opportunity to renew your membership with links provided in the email.

This example shows that Master Gardener Grady last renewed his membership in 2021. So he is not a current member.

**Grady Gardener**

Email: [ggardener@gmail.com](mailto:ggardener@gmail.com)

Extension: New Haven/North Haven

Member Status: 2021 Member

## Symposium is Well Attended Virtually

CMGA offered another successful Symposium on March 12, 2022. About 150 participated in our second annual event held virtually due to Covid-19. While a virtual event has fewer opportunities for socialization, it allowed CMGA to offer international speakers. Using Zoom technology proved to be easy and successful for participants, speakers and new, live discussion groups. A special thanks is due to the Symposium Committee, especially (in alphabetical order) Vicky Ambrosey, Linette Branham, Lisa Doggert, Kim Kelly, Paula Russo and Jim Ward. Lifetime Memberships were awarded at the event to Alicia Cornelio, Katherine Kosiba and Ken Zacharias. Congratulations!

Our speakers this year included Hudson Valley Seed Company's K Greene; "Lawns Into Meadows" author and advocate Owen Wormser; Australian publisher Georgina Reid and international garden designer and author Dr. Noel Kingsbury from Great Britain.

**Special for CMGA:** Dr. Kingsbury is inviting our members to join his **Garden Masterclass**, [www.garden-masterclass.org](http://www.garden-masterclass.org) a British-based gardening educational resource that includes a vast archive of recordings from leading garden experts as well as live events. To receive a discounted membership for CMGA Members only, use this special link: <https://members.gardenmasterclass.org/member/plans/6530ec9afp>



The CMGA Board is considering a hybrid model for 2023, combining a live and virtual event. Thanks to those who made 2022 a success and to those who supported CMGA with their attendance.

## CMGA News

### UCONN Gives

The *UCONN Gives* Promotion occurred March 30-31, 2022. 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 \$28,000 from 530 donors. \$5,000 was added for our first place showing for a total of \$33,717 in donations. Funds raised and total donors are also substantially higher than last year. Congratulations to all of us!

## TSV Tree ID Tour Program for MG Interns

*Look for sign up information in your email, coming soon*

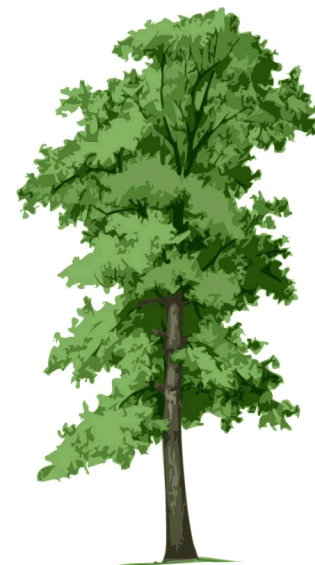
Spring is here and the CMGA Membership & Events Committee is launching its first TSV TreeID Tour Program for the UCONN Master Gardener interns of 2022.

Our goal is two-fold: first, to help the interns identify native trees and shrubs for their TSV project; and second, to increase awareness of the CMGA's commitment to our Master Gardeners through grants, supporting education and other important contributions to the gardening community.

Once the interns have finished their midterms in April, we will be offering a FREE Tree ID Tour in five areas of the state during the months of May and June. These venues include:

Connecticut College Arboretum - New London - Wed, May 4  
Cedar Hill Cemetery - Hartford - Thurs, May 12  
Sherwood Island State Park - Westport - Tuesday May 24  
James L. Goodwin State Forest - Hampton - Thurs, June 9  
Edgerton Park - New Haven - Sat, June 11

Interns will be able to register through the CMGA website. Information will include location, date, facilitator's name, time, # of slots available, and parking info. Since space is limited this event is limited to *MG Interns only*.





## CMGA Events

### Cricket Hill Nursery "Peony Heaven" Garden Tour

*Check the website to register*

**WHERE:** Cricket Hill Garden, 670 Walnut Hill Rd., Thomaston CT 06787

**WHEN:** Monday, May 23, 2022, 10:00 a.m. – Noon. **Rain Date:** Tuesday, June 1st



If you love peonies, you don't want to miss this members event to tour a premier peony nursery. In Kasha and David Furman founded Cricket Hill Garden in 1989 with a focus on Chinese tree peonies. It was one of the first nurseries in the U.S. to sell true-to-name varieties of these rare plants, and to this day, they continue to grow high-quality plants with beautiful blooms. Cricket Hill also sells fruit trees, ornamental trees and shrubs and dahlias.

This event is free; however capacity is limited to no more than 20 cars. We encourage you to register for one of two time slots ranging from 10 - 11 a.m. or 11 a.m. to Noon; and bring your friends.

### Connecticut Science Center *MakeFest Make It Grow!*

**WHERE:** Connecticut Science Center, 47 Hartford Ave., Hartford, CT

**WHEN:** Saturday, May 21, 2022, 11:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. Rain or shine!

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.

CMGA is partnering with the Connecticut Science Center for the event by helping to manage a plant sale. This an approved event for CMGA hours. It was a very popular event last year and we hope to see you again!



If you wish to donate plants or volunteer at the plant sale please email Kim Kelly at: [kkelly@ctmag.org](mailto:kkelly@ctmag.org)

## CMGA Nursery Day at McCue Gardens Back by Popular Demand!



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

**WHEN:** Wednesday, June 15, 2022, 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/>

## CT Daylily Tour

*Check the website to register*

**WHERE:** CT Daylily, 76 Anderson Rd, Wallingford , CT

**WHEN:** Wednesday, July 13, 2022, 10:00 a.m. – Noon. **Rain Date:** July 14th

### **Who doesn't welcome the explosive display of vibrant colored daylilies in mid-July?**

CT Daylily, located on 76 Anderson Rd, Wallingford is a hidden gem with some of the most unique and glorious, award-winning daylilies in the Northeast. Primarily a mail-order nursery that is not set up for on-site customers, Rich Howard, breeder of Northern-grown daylilies, invites us to walk around and take in the extraordinary burst of color variations.



Plants in the ground and greenhouse are not for sale, but there are plenty of pots available for purchase. Checks, cash, and Paypal are accepted.

Street parking is limited to 12 cars. Look for a big sign at the top of the driveway with a "76" and a daylily picture on it. Walk down the driveway and start looking around. Rich will be around, and his assistants will be available to look up prices on the pots.

# Bees in Your Pollinator Garden

by Linette Branham  
CMGA Member



## Can pollinators become 'frenemies?'

As gardeners, we love our pollinators, and welcome them every spring to spend time in our gardens and work their magic. We try to lure and protect them, even at times, providing bee houses to encourage them to stay with us for the season. We know and love the role they play in pollinating our plants and keeping insect pests under control.

But our bees and wasps can turn on us.....and become a 'frenemy,' a threat to our health. Let's explore how we can maintain our good relationship with bees and wasps, while still protecting ourselves. But first, a bit of background.....

## When 'friends' can become 'frenemies'

Bees and wasps become aggressive and may sting if they feel their colonies are in danger. Honeybees, paper wasps, yellow jackets, and hornets are the species most likely to attack humans. Males of the species lack a stinger, leaving the job of defense to the females. Honeybees can sting a person only once, because the stinger lodges in the victim and tears loose from the bee's abdomen, causing damage to the bee that leads to the bee's death. Wasps, however, can sting multiple times. In addition, when they sting their prey, the venom glands of both bees and wasps release pheromones that 'call out' to others in their colony to join the attack.

Bees and wasps can be a serious threat to our health. Approximately 16 million Americans live with a bee sting allergy (the term 'bee sting' is often used to include stings from wasps and other stinging insects). Each year, hospitals across the country see approximately 220,000 cases of bee stings that relate to anaphylaxis, a life-threatening reaction to a bee sting. And each year, approximately 60 people die from a severe bee sting reaction.

When you are stung by a bee or wasp, the reaction you have may fall into one of three categories, depending on its severity. A **mild** reaction occurs *only at the site of the sting*, and usually includes a sharp, burning pain, a red welt, and slight swelling. These symptoms usually fade within a few hours. When you have a **moderate** reaction to a bee or wasp sting, the symptoms *generally occur at the site of the sting*: it becomes extremely red, and the swelling at the site of the sting grows bigger over the next 1-2 days. The symptoms from a moderate sting reaction take 5-10 days to dissipate.



Treatment of mild to moderate stings is fairly easy: use a pair of tweezers to remove the stinger (be careful not to squeeze it, since the venom sac is attached and will pump out more venom if squeezed); use cold compresses, a steroid cream or ointment, and antihistamines (like Benadryl) to control the itch and inflammation.

While the great majority of us will have only mild or moderate reactions to bee or wasp stings, a small percentage (5-7.5%) of us will have a **severe** reaction, with multiple symptoms that can be life-threatening. This is called anaphylaxis. A severe reaction can occur within minutes of being stung, and the symptoms can escalate quickly, becoming systemic. One important sign that a reaction may be severe is that itching occurs in other areas of the body than where the sting was made. The symptoms can include hives, redness, or flushed skin; swelling of other areas of the body, including the tongue, throat, hands, or feet; feeling dizzy or lightheaded; difficulty breathing; a weak, rapid pulse; vomiting; and loss of consciousness.

**These are symptoms that require immediate medical attention.** If you have a severe reaction to a bee or wasp sting, your doctor might prescribe an EpiPen for you to carry, so you can provide more effective medical care for yourself if you need it in the future, and while you wait for professional medical help to arrive.



Affordable Healthcare Coalition of North Carolina

There are things to keep in mind if you get stung by a bee or wasp, whether it's the first time this happens to you, or you've been stung many times in the past:

1. As we age, our body's natural ability to handle the venom of a sting may lessen, and the reactions we suffer may become more severe.
2. Your body might respond to stings differently each time you get stung.
3. If you get stung, apply treatment as soon as possible, and closely watch the amount of time that passes, noting if the symptoms change.
4. If the symptoms change rapidly, don't assume they will quickly subside, even if you've applied treatment.....call 911.
5. Calling 911 for medical attention is often a better decision than trying to get to a walk-in care facility or ER on your own. If you're starting to have a severe reaction, trying to drive to get medical care can become impossible. 911 professionals prefer that you call them.

## ***An ounce of prevention.....***

One of the best things we can do is protect ourselves against bee and wasp stings *without* having to chase our beloved pollinators away. Some suggestions for 'controlling' bees and wasps, which really result in preventing them from coming around our grounds, include using wasp traps to catch and kill them; putting out decoy nests, since some species won't nest close to other stinging insects; or planting plants such as citronella or eucalyptus.

But the goal is to *protect* yourself, not repel the pollinators completely, so what can you do? One of the easiest solutions is to buy or make a simple repellent to spray on your clothes when you go out to work in the garden. A simple internet search can guide you to make your own wasp and bee repellent. Using essential oils, whether you buy or make your own repellent, is effective and won't cause harm to the pollinators. The most effective essential oils include peppermint, eucalyptus, citronella, cedar wood, orange, clove, geranium, lemongrass, rosemary, and tea tree oil. Essential oils can be mixed together, and always require a carrier liquid, such as distilled water, witch hazel, glycerin, or another oil such as grapeseed or almond oil. If you choose to buy a repellent, look in your local health food store for those that are made only from essential oils and don't include harsh chemicals.

Other tips for protecting yourself from bees and wasps while you work outdoors include: wear dark colored clothing, since bright colors mimic those of flowers, and may attract bees and wasps to you; wear close-toed shoes, socks, and when possible, long pants and long-sleeved shirts; secure your clothes so that bees or wasps can't get between the clothing and your skin; be careful with drinks you might have outside with you, checking before you drink that a bee or wasp hasn't gotten inside the cup or straw; if you encounter bees or wasps near you, slowly walk away, rather than swat at them.

Being aware of all the possible impacts - both positive and negative - that bees and wasps can bring will help you be a smarter, more protected gardener. So continue to love your pollinators as you have, and learn to work *with* them, not *against* them.

### Sources:

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*Learning the Symptoms of Bee Stings*. 2021. Bee Aware Allergy

# MARK TWAIN HOUSE DEMONSTRATION GARDENS

by Alicia Cornelio  
Editor, Laurel



Grant Recipient

When visitors to the Mark Twain House and Museum in Hartford travel up the pathway to enter the building, they will now be able to enjoy a series of new gardens.

"Children of all ages" will be able to enjoy and learn from the multiple, handicapped accessible, demonstration and experimental gardens that will change annually. Garden plans include Victorian designs, sensory gardens, square foot gardens, children's gardens (pizza garden, kindness garden) and a monochromatic garden.

Started in 2020, Master Gardeners removed weeds, rocks, and debris from the area. Ready for planting, Master Gardener Interns and other volunteers were invited to collaborate, plan and plant. Six foot square wooden raised beds were installed and surrounded by shrubs and perennials.



These gardens are visited by many school groups, families, and organizations. Youth as well as interested adults are encouraged to participate in a "scavenger hunt" as they go through the house and museum. It is anticipated the gardens will be included in the near future. A comprehensive garden guide is in development and future plans will include reaching out to schools to provide service learning projects.

## HOW CMGA HELPED:

The CMGA grant of \$350 was added to a Sustainable CT matching grant to create the community gardens.



# Water Wick and Seed Block Workshop

by Alicia Cornelio  
Editor, Laurel

On March 15, 2022, Linette Branham lead a workshop on making a Self-Wicking watering system with hand made soil blocks. The workshop was held at the Northwest Park Nature Center.

CMGA members learned how to save money by making their own soil blocks for seed starting with simple materials that can be found at home or at a discount store.



Linette Branham

Linette also showed participants how a self-wicking watering system for seedlings leads to more effective watering and better root development. Everyone left with one soil block maker and a self-wicking watering tray system and the know-how to make more!

Diane Blume





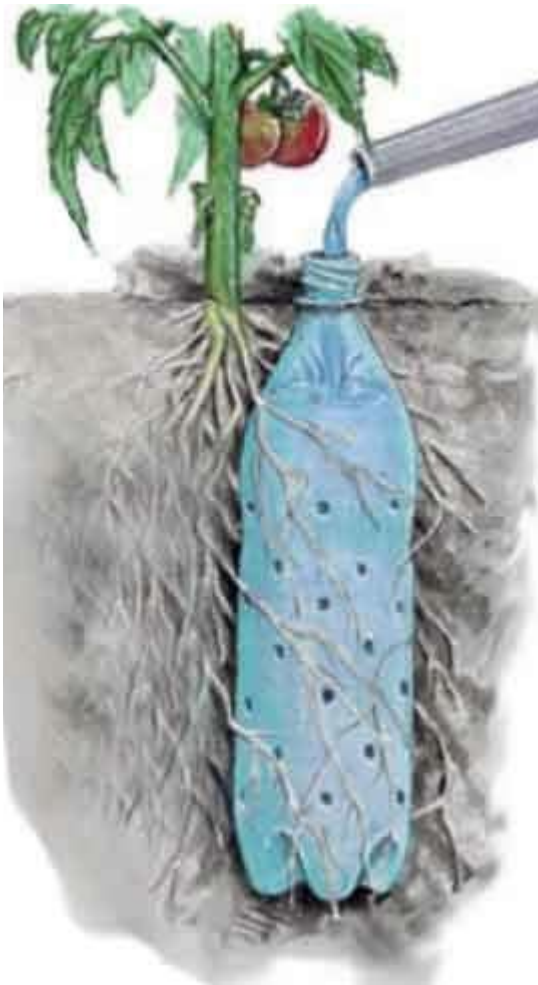
# Self Watering Garden Systems

By Alicia Cornelio  
Editor, Laurel

With pandemic restrictions lifted after two long years, we are all excited to travel again. Some of us have extended trips planned. So how can a gardener have a garden and travel, too??

The biggest challenge is keeping the garden hydrated. We can't rely on the weather. If your trip happens during a heat wave or dry spell, your plants, especially those in pots, may be in bad shape on your return.

Yes, you can ask your patient neighbor to water your garden. But there are some ingenious, inexpensive methods to make your watering more independent.



Most methods require the collection of two liter soda bottles or wine bottles. The easiest method is to poke holes in a bottle and bury it by the plants you wish to water. Keep the top just above the soil line. It takes more work to bury the bottles but isn't as unsightly. Just before you leave on your trip, fill the bottle with water. The water will seep slowly by the plant's roots and keep your plant hydrated.

Another method is to buy very inexpensive plastic valves with a screw to slowly seep water by your plants. The bottles are very visible and I recommend this method just for going away on vacation. The bottles can be installed very quickly and easily just before leave and pulled up for a prettier sight when you come home. Valves are a common garden supply item that can be found in many garden catalogs or websites.







Using a wine bottle is a durable, easy method. Make sure the valves you purchase fit on the top of a wine bottle. If not, just fill the wine bottle with water and shove it into the ground next to your plant. The water will ooze out slowly. It is not as efficient as having a valve, but can keep your plants happy for a few days.

For larger gardens, you may find it beneficial to expend the time and energy installing a drip hose. It is less complicated than a drip irrigation system. Simply place the drip hose strategically along your garden rows. Multiple drip hoses can be attached together using a timer. First, the timer

attaches to your house outdoor water spigot. The next hose, attaches to the timer, without holes, to bring your water to your garden site. The next set of hoses are your drip hoses in your garden. Set a daily time and length the water will run. Once set up, you are free to travel as long as you wish!!

**You can have  
your travel  
and eat your  
vegetables,  
too!!**





# The LAUREL

Connecticut  
Master  
Gardener  
Association  
Newsletter

Summer 2022 Volume 35, No. 3

## *Bursting with Events* *CMGA Members Step Out in 2022*



***TSV Intern Tours***



***Cricket Hill  
Peony Tour***



***CT Daylily Tour***



***Semi-Annual Meeting  
and Speaker***



## Officers 2022

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<b>Middlesex:</b>	<b>Gail Kalison Reynolds</b>	860-345-5234	gail.reynolds@uconn.edu
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<b>New London:</b>	<b>Christopher Dustin</b>	860-3887-1608	Christopher.dustin@uconn.edu
<b>Stamford:</b>	<b>Alicia Jacobsen</b>	203-322-6971 x18	alicia.jacobsen@uconn.edu
<b>Tolland:</b>	<b>Annabelle Caswell</b>	860-875-3331	Annabelle.caswell@uconn.edu
<b>Windham:</b>	<b>John Lorusso</b>	860-774-9600	john.lorusso@uconn.edu
<b>UConn Home &amp; Garden Education Ctr:</b>		877-486-6271	www.ladybug.uconn.edu
<b>State Coordinator for the MG Program:</b>			
<b>Sarah Bailey</b>		860-409-9053	sarah.bailey@uconn.edu

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**Deadlines for publication are January 1, April 1, July 1, and October 1.**  
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## President's Message



Dear CMGA Members:

As I write this I am grateful for the gentle rain falling outside. The month of July has been so dry that it has been a challenge to keep all of the plants sufficiently watered, especially the tomatoes and other veggies that need consistent moisture. I hope you have managed to keep all of your plants healthy!

Speaking of plants, I hope you were able to join us for one of the wonderful garden visits CMGA organized for its members this year. We had a chance to see the beautiful peonies in full bloom at **Cricket Hill** in May and just last week, members learned how to hybridize daylilies from Richard Howard at **CT Daylily**. Of course, most of us went home with plants for our own gardens as well! In addition to these visits, we had an amazing turnout at our annual **McCue Gardens** plant sale in June. A big thank you to Cindy and Bruce McCue who not only welcome our members each year, but donate a portion of the sales to CMGA. This year, we received \$800 which will allow us to fund several more outreach grants later this summer.

In addition to these member events, this year CMGA sponsored a series of TSV workshops for Master Gardener interns. The guided workshops gave interns hands-on experience with plant identification which will be invaluable as they create their own TSV project. The workshops were very well received with over 80 interns attending in five different locations across the state. CMGA plans to continue these workshops in the future and is grateful for the cooperation of Sarah Bailey and all of the MG coordinators.

Looking ahead to the coming months, we have several exciting events coming up for our members. On August 13<sup>th</sup> we hope you will join us for our virtual **Semi-Annual Meeting**. Following a brief business meeting, Sandra Wilson, MG coordinator for Fairfield county, will be speaking on "*Native Trees: Why We Need To Plant More Now.*" And, in September, we will have another garden tour at **Broken Arrow Nursery** in Hamden, CT. Finally, we will be hosting our virtual **Annual Meeting** on November 5<sup>th</sup> with Connecticut's own "Garden Lady," Nancy DeBrule Clemente. Stay tuned for more information.

In closing, I want to thank all of our members for their continued support of our organization. The money we raise through fund-raising efforts such as the plant sale mentioned above and from membership dues allows us to support outreach projects around the state. We will soon be notifying those individuals who submitted a second round of grant proposal. Check our website to learn more about these exciting projects.

Best wishes to all for a happy and healthy gardening season!  
Paula Russo, Interim President, CMGA

# CMGA Members Step Out

After a long, two years of lockdowns and virtual events due to the Covid pandemic, CMGA pulled out all the stops to plan events for its members this year.

Saturday, May 21, 2022 was **MakeFest: Make It Grow**, part of Family Gardening Day at the Connecticut Science Center in Downtown Hartford. Again, CMGA members donated plants and the Science Center shared perennials from their green roof gardens for a plant sale.



Wednesday, June 15, 2022, CMGA members took advantage of the very popular garden sale at McCue Gardens. McCue specializes in perennials and the selection is extensive. The CMGA received a percentage on the sales of all purchases.

Monday, May 23, 2022, ten CMGA members took part in a tour of the peonies at **Cricket Hill Farm** in Torrington. Dan Furman gave a 45 minute tour of the fabulous gardens with special focus on the various types of peonies, and how he cultivates them. CMGA members received a discount on all purchases.







The Membership Development and Events Committee facilitated its first joint venture with UCONN Master Garden Program for interns. The committee offered a series of five tours throughout the state in May and June, 2022 to assist them with their **TSV** (trees, shrubs, and vines) projects. The committee's goal was to interact with the interns to familiarize them with the CMGA and to encourage them to become members upon graduation.

While the total number of registrants was 80, there were occasions in which the interns registered for the same tour multiple times. The total number of attendees was 54. The feedback from the interns was extremely positive. The interns found the tours both informative and helpful. Interns were allowed to take clippings for their TSV sample portfolio.

Wednesday, July 13, 2022, Rich Howard conducted a tour of his extensive daylily farm, **CT Daylily**, in Wallingford, CT. He sells daylilies all over the world and has many special varieties.

CMGA members received a discount on all purchases.





# 2022 Semi-Annual Meeting

## **Connecticut Master Gardener Association**

*Invites you to join our*

### **Virtual Semi Meeting**

**Saturday, August 13, 2022 at 9:00 am**

**Sandi Wilson Speaks on**

**Native Trees: Why we need to plant more now**

**Registration: free CMGA Members, \$10 for non-members**

**Online Registration and Information:**

<https://ctmaga.org/summer-safari-2022-event>

Join us for our 2022 VIRTUAL Semi-Annual Meeting! It will start with a recap of CMGA accomplishments to date including comments from Paula Russo, interim President, Kathy Beaty, who organized the recent TSV Tours for Master Gardener Interns and Deb Prior who will give us a recap of our Member Events. Please register at our website [ctmaga.org](https://ctmaga.org) by August 10.

Our speaker, Sandra "Sandi" Wilson is the Fairfield County Master Gardener Program Coordinator and an Advanced Master Gardener. She has been involved with the program for over 21 years, coordinating the Fairfield County program for 17 of them. After finding her passion and leaving the corporate world, she earned a degree in horticulture from NVCC and became a NOFA Certified Organic Land Care Professional and licensed arborist with the CT DEEP. Sandi's presentation is:

***Native Trees,  
Why We Need to Plant More Now.***



### **Schedule of events:**

9:00 a.m. – A brief business meeting will be held. CMGA members will be able to discuss / vote on several items in relevant documents made available prior to the meeting.

10:00 a.m. – Sandi Wilson, "Native Trees, Why We Need to Plant More Now" with Q&A afterwards.

# Lockwood Farm Tour

On Tuesday, August 9, 2022, from 1 to 3 PM. there will be a tour of **Lockwood Farm** located at 890 Evergreen Avenue, Hamden, CT 06158. Rain date is Thursday, August 11, 2022 from 1 to 3 PM. Operating since 1900, Lockwood Farm is approximately 57 acres in Hampden. This tour is free to CMGA members and the public. Registration is not required.

Farm Manager Richard Cecarelli will be our guide for a tour of Lockwood Farm, the research farm that is part of the UConn Agricultural Experimental Station, the oldest in the nation (founded 1875.) This promises to be a fascinating opportunity to see how research experiments are conducted that protect agriculture, public health and the environment. Lockwood Farm's mission is to improve agricultural productivity while preserving environmental quality, protect plants and enhance human health and wellbeing for research.



[Speaker information and handouts](#)

# Broken Arrow Nursery Tour

On Thursday, September 29, 2022, from 1 to 2 PM. there will be a tour of **Broken Arrow Nursery** located at 13 Broken Arrow Road, Hamden, CT 06518. Rain date is Thursday, October 6, 2022 from 1 to 2 PM. This tour is free to CMGA members and the public. Registration is not required.



What do you do after 25 years as researcher with the Connecticut Agricultural Experimental Station? For Dick Jaynes and his wife Sally, they opened a nursery. They first specialized in *Kalmia latifolia*. Today, Broken Arrow Nursery is known for developing, acquiring and growing rare and unusual plants and is one of the few retail nurseries in CT that propagate and grow most of the plants they sell.

Broken Arrow advocates and follows ethically responsible growing practices built on sound nursery methodology and appreciation for the environment. The result is a spectacular variety of what they call "garden worthy plants. If you're looking for something specific, you can also find plant lists for 2022 at <https://www.brokenarrownursery.com/plant-lists>

# Spring 2022 Grant Recipients

Eleven community gardening projects are the recipients of CMGA outreach grants for the first grant cycle of 2022. Similar to our 2021 grants cycles, the Grant Committee's review and rating process focused on the educational and community value of each project. We are pleased that three of the recipients are Master Gardener Interns! The Summer grants cycle deadline was June 30 and applicants are currently being reviewed.



Congratulations to our Spring Grant Recipients:

<b>Grant project</b>	<b>Master Gardener</b>	<b>Extension County Office</b>
Wilton Seed Library	Elizabeth Craig	Fairfield
Hebron Interfaith Human Services Pantry	Jan Sousa	Tolland
Auerfarm Medicinal Garden	Joanne Eudy	Hartford
The Homestead Project	Vilma Gregoropoulos	New London
Hamden Seed Library	Diane Dynia - Intern	New Haven
Creation of an Active Teaching and Learning Composting System	John Daly - Intern	Tolland
Healing Garden Project/ Chesterfields Health Care Center	Kathleen Lowe	Hamden
Bacon Academy Auditorium Entrance Sign Garden	Sue Hickey	Haddam
Pollinator Garden at Great Plain School	Anne Mead	Fairfield
Tomato Trellis Supports and Repairs to Handicapped Accessible Raised Beds	Flora Drapeau	New London



# CMGA Communications Survey

## We want your opinions!

We want to make sure CMGA's communications efforts are effective. This is the first of a few short surveys. [See Survey One Here.](#)

We will be asking your thoughts about some important topics for CMGA, starting with our website. Please take a few minutes to answer eight quick questions and if you are willing, tell us what you like or don't like about **ctmga.org**. You will be providing valuable information that we need to make better informed decisions. Your responses are anonymous unless you ask us to reach out to you.



**Thank you.**

## Banff National Park

This June, Alicia Cornelio traveled to Banff National Park in Alberta, Canada. The park is best known for its turquoise colored glacial lakes, such as Lake Louise, due to sediment from glacial silt. The park is also filled with wildflowers in late spring. Below is Emerald Lake and a bunch of Indian Pink wildflowers.



# Permaculture Demonstration Garden And Edible Landscape of Pomfret



Grant Recipient

By Alicia Cornelio  
Editor, Laurel

Now in its third year, this demonstration garden's volunteers continued their planting of native trees, woody perennials and smaller perennials to attract pollinators with the overall goals of soil building, wildlife support and increasing biodiversity with the use of "live mulch" and other sustainable practices. Since the location was originally overgrown, maintenance, clearing and improving access to the site continue to be a focus. Volunteer support from a mason allowed the installation of concrete steps.

Deer have also noticed the work that is being done and the Permaculture team is starting to "cage" small bushes and change their plant choice to include more "deer tolerant" perennials and trees.

## HOW DID CMGA HELP?

The CMGA grant was used to cover material costs for the concrete steps, as well as the installation of a gutter and rain barrel on a storage building. Remaining funds will be used for very early spring planting of trees, shrubs and perennials.





# A Therapist's Garden

By Alicia Cornelio  
Editor, Laurel

Master Gardeners are a group with many talents. Erik Keller, class of 2000, has written a book where he shares his experiences as a horticultural therapist.

Erik began his journey by taking the Master Gardener course in Bethel in 2000. He had just left his job in Information Technology. He had learned about the program from a friend of his wife.

Part of the Master Gardener certification process is the outreach activities. Erik started by volunteering at a juvenile detention center. Erik found a group of imprisoned girls in a lock-down facility adjacent to an incredible greenhouse. His project was to clean up and use the greenhouse as well as create gardens outside the area. The girls were initially cautious to participate, but within weeks he was able to gain their confidence by introducing them to the joy and beauty of gardening. A few months later most of the young women became enthusiastic gardeners while enjoying the beauty of nature and the outdoors.



Due to this personally enriching experience, Erik decided to supplement his education with a certification in horticultural therapy by the New York Botanical Garden. This had led to working with over 1,000 clients in all sorts of venues including Green Chimneys, Brewster, NY; Meadow Ridge, Redding, CT; and Ann's Place, Danbury, CT. Each of these places presented him with many different clients all with many different needs and challenges.

Erik has kept a blog called Girl Happy for many years to relate his experiences in horticultural therapy. *A Therapist's Garden* recounts the author's many adventures with interesting stories about the healing power of gardening.

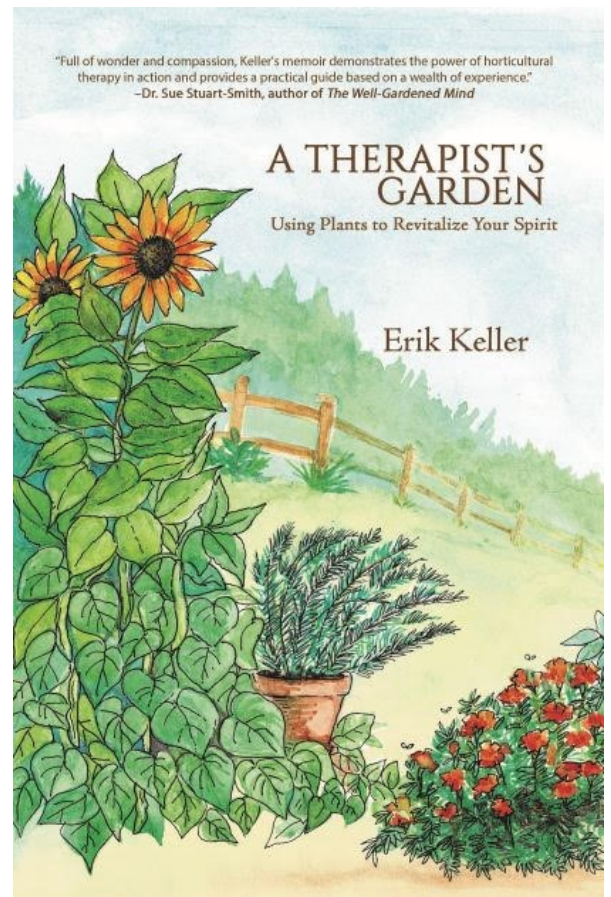
You can read about Erik's daily experiences with horticultural therapy and gardening on Instagram ([#grohappy\\_ct](#)), Facebook or his website [www.grohappy.com](http://www.grohappy.com).



*A Therapist's Garden* is unique in portraying how gardening, nature-based arts, plants and horticulture can revitalize the spirit of people. It encompasses over 20 years of experiences seeing the healing power of horticultural therapy.

*A Therapist's Garden* takes readers on a journey of how interacting with plants and nature can help heal mental, emotional, and physical trauma.

Following the calendar from January to December in a New England landscape, readers discover how horticultural therapy improves the lives of those in pain including special-needs children, cancer patients, and disabled seniors. You can read about the Zen of mixing mud with seniors; crafting surprising salads out of weeds; and a hidden rabbit bringing joy to girls in a juvenile detention center, and many more. In addition, each chapter or month has a unique horticultural craft and outing for readers to try.



You can find Erik's book on Amazon, Barnes & Noble website, and at Books on the Common in Ridgefield, CT.

Ann's Place of Danbury, CT has a variety of healing Gardens for visitors to enjoy.

There is a Pollinator Garden, an Herb garden, a Wisteria Garden, a sampling of mints, thousands of daffodils, and native carnivorous plants.

Check out this worthwhile book on the healing power of horticultural therapy.



# Connect with Us

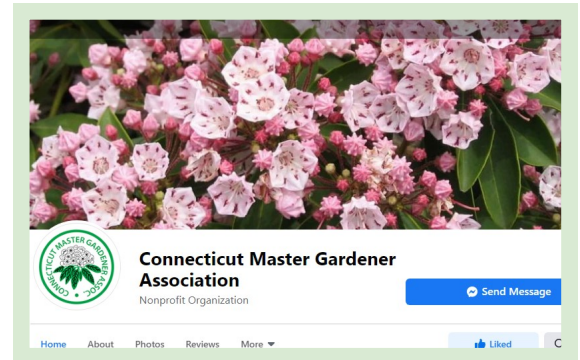
## Take CMGA with you, any time, any place!

By Vicky Ambrosey and Lisa Doggart

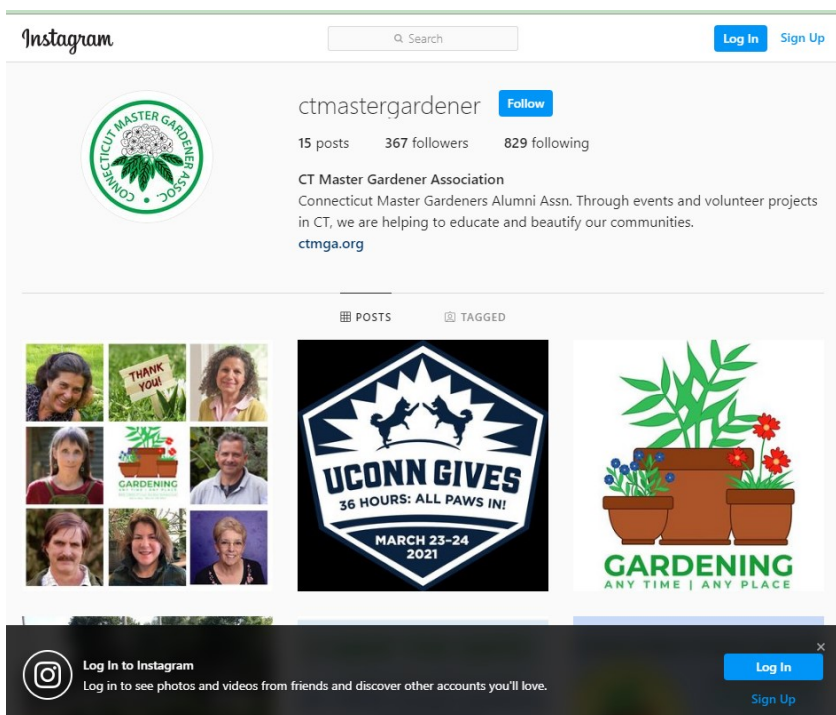
CMGA can now easily fit into your busy schedules via our social media outlets: Facebook, Instagram, YouTube and our website blog. You can view the latest news and information about CMGA happenings on all mobile and desktop devices.

### 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](#)

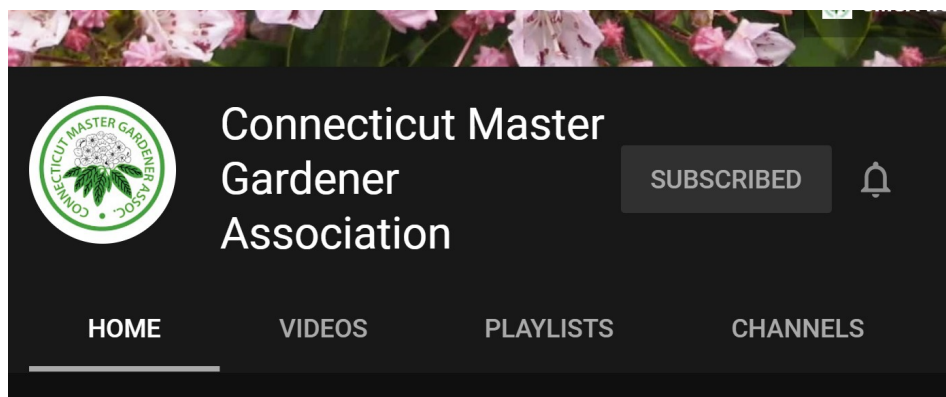


With Instagram, we enjoy sharing our stories and pictures of our outreach projects, activities and events. If a picture is worth a thousand words; gardening pictures are worth a million words! **#ctmastergardener**



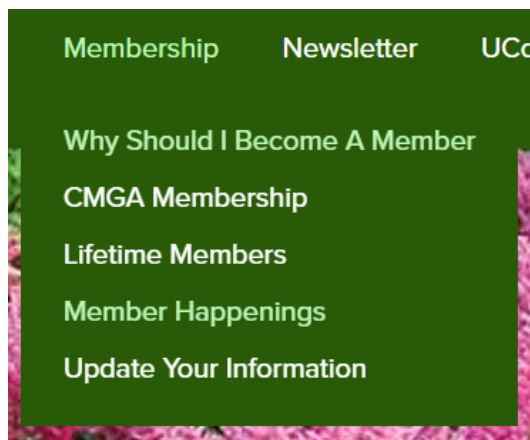
## YouTube since 2020 - [See Our CMGA Channel](#)

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!**







# The LAUREL

Connecticut  
Master  
Gardener  
Association  
Newsletter

Autumn 2022 Volume 35, No. 4

## *CMGA Annual Meeting*

**Join us for our Live 2022 *Virtual* Annual Meeting  
Saturday, November 5, 2022**



**This Live Event meeting is free of charge to CMGA members and friends and family are welcome to register to attend our speaker's presentation.**

**Online Registration is required by October 30, 2022**

**Presenting Nancy DeBrule-Clementi**

**Native and Non-Native Plants for Sustainable Landscapes**

Nancy DuBrule-Clemente is the founder of Natureworks Horticultural Services. It is an organic garden center with landscape design, consultation, installation and maintenance services in Northford, CT. Started in 1983, she is a pioneer in organic gardening practices and continues to advocate regional native plants in her landscape designs and installations that use "green mulch." Nancy also has a degree in Floriculture from the University of Connecticut.



**Visit our website: [Events > CMGA](#) events for registration and information.**

## Officers 2022

<b>President:</b>	Paula Russo, Interim president@ctmga.org
<b>V-President:</b>	Kathye Cipes, Interim vicepres@ctmga.org
<b>Treasurer:</b>	Deb Prior, Interim treasurer@ctmga.org
<b>Secretary:</b>	Jean Fletcher, Interim secretary@ctmga.org

### Board of Directors:

Vicky Ambrosey	Kathy Beaty
Marge Bingham	Lin Branham
Valerie Bryan	Kathy Cassidy
Kathye Cipes	Lisa Doggart
Susan Eisenhandler	Kim Kelly
Christine Masztal	Caroline Moran
Debbye Rosen	
Susan St. John	Mary Ellen Seuch
Mary Jane Toomey	Jim Ward

<b>CMGA website:</b>	<a href="http://www.ctmga.org">www.ctmga.org</a> jward@ctmga.org	Jim Ward (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
<b>New London:</b>	<b>Christopher Dustin</b>	860-3887-1608	Christopher.dustin@uconn.edu
<b>Stamford:</b>	<b>Alicia Jacobsen</b>	203-322-6971 x18	alicia.jacobsen@uconn.edu
<b>Tolland:</b>	<b>Annabelle Caswell</b>	860-875-3331	Annabelle.caswell@uconn.edu
<b>Windham:</b>	<b>John Lorusso</b>	860-774-9600	john.lorusso@uconn.edu
<b>UConn Home &amp; Garden Education Ctr:</b>		877-486-6271	www.ladybug.uconn.edu
<b>State Coordinator for the MG Program:</b>			
<b>Sarah Bailey</b>		860-409-9053	sarah.bailey@uconn.edu

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**Connecticut Master Gardener Association**

## President's Message



Dear CMGA Members:

We have been enjoying a glorious warm autumn this year. Many of our gardens are still producing vegetables and a last bloom of flowers. We gardeners are enjoying every moment, knowing that winter is just around the corner.

Our Annual Meeting will be held virtually again this year on Saturday, November 5th 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 new officers for 2023. We will be using the ZOOM platform for the Annual Meeting. It has been a popular, easy way to attend this meeting. Since you will be voting, your attendance at this meeting is especially important.

Our special guest speaker will be Nancy DeBrule-Clementi, and the title of her presentation is Native and Non-Native Plants for Sustainable Landscapes. This is a topic of great relevancy as we face changes in our climate.

Our 2023 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.

In closing, I encourage you to renew your 2023 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.

Best wishes to all for a happy and healthy gardening season!  
Paula Russo, Interim President, CMGA





# 2022 Annual Meeting

## **Connecticut Master Gardener Association**

*Invites you to join our*

### **Virtual Annual Meeting**

**Saturday, November 5, 2022 at 9:00 am**

### **Nancy DeBrule-Clementi Speaks on Native and Non-Native Plants for Sustainable Landscapes**

**Registration: free CMGA Members, \$10 for non-members**

**Online Registration and Information:**

<https://ctmga.org/cmga-events>

Join us for our 2022 VIRTUAL Annual Meeting! It will start with a recap of CMGA accomplishments to date and plans for 2023. Only CMGA members will be able to vote on several items, including election of new Board Members and Executive Officers. Please register at our website link above by October 30.

Our speaker is Nancy DuBrule-Clemente, founder of Natureworks Horticultural Services of Northford, CT. Learn how Nancy creates a happy habitat in her home garden and in those of her clients using a mixture of native and select non-native plants that support pollinators, birds, animals and all the life we share in our yards.

#### **Schedule of events:**

**9:00 a.m. – Annual Meeting** – All are welcome to attend. A brief business meeting will be held to review CMGA's 2022 highlights and plans for 2023. CMGA 2022 members will vote on new business.  
in relevant documents

**10:00 a.m. – Break** – If you are attending the Speaker Presentation only, please join us during the break.

**10:15 am - Speaker Presentation** by Nancy DeBrule-Clementi  
Native and Non-Native Plants for Sustainable Landscapes

# Once you're a Connecticut Master Gardener, How do you stay involved?

It's time to renew your membership for 2023! We hope this illustration helps to clarify how your \$30 annual CMGA dues will do so much to support Master Gardeners' in our communities state-wide in 2023. And, as an alumni association, it shows how we support future Master Gardeners. Renew or begin your membership here:

<https://ctmga.org/cmga-membership>



## Stay Actively Certified as a UConn Extension Master Gardener:

- **\$10 Annual Fee**
- **Volunteer in the community and UConn Extension Offices**
- **Stay informed with "Hot Topics"**
- **Earn milestone awards for service**
- **Advanced Certification opportunities**

## Support UConn's MG Program by Joining our Alumni Organization

### **\$30 Annual Dues to CMGA Support:**

- **grants for community garden projects**
- **Fund MG Intern Scholarships**
- **Funding for Extension Office Coordinators**
- **Annual Symposium and events**

**Join the Board or Committee activities**

# Skrudur

## A Garden on the Edge of the Arctic Circle

By Alicia Cornelio  
Editor, Laurel

There is a joke in Iceland: “If you get lost in a forest in Iceland, just stand up.” This joke reflects the landscape of Iceland. Only two percent of its territory is covered with trees. But it wasn’t always like this. When the first Norwegians arrived by sea around 874, birch forests covered almost 40% percent of the island’s surface. Over the centuries, the trees were slowly felled to build ships and houses and to make way for pastures. Only in the last 50 years has there been political pressure for reforestation. So, it’s strange to spot greenery in Iceland’s almost desert-like scenery. For this reason the little oasis of Skrudur stands out even more.



The garden was founded in 1909 by Sigtryggur Guðlaugsson, a Protestant pastor and teacher in the nearby boarding school of Núpur. The purpose of the garden was to educate the school’s students in the care of plants. Sigtryggur and his students slowly erected an enclosure, removed the stones, dug the ground, and planted trees that still flourish today. Iceland experiences winter conditions ten months of the year, which makes this garden a unique wonder.

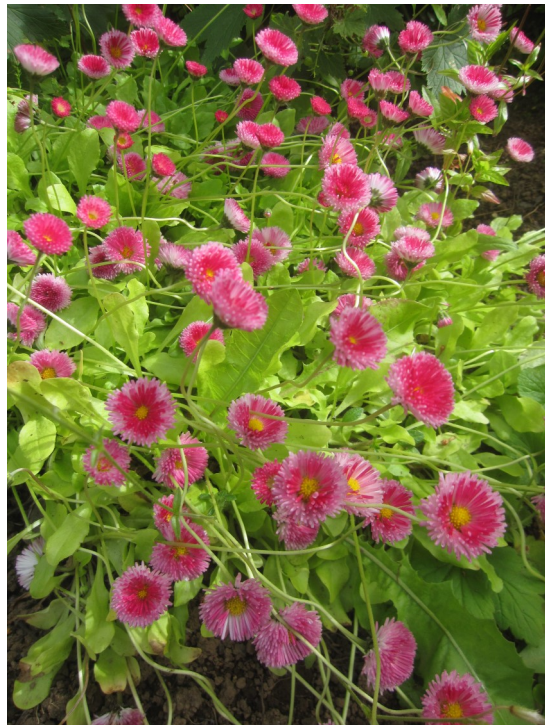
*Ancient whale jaw creates a gateway.*





*Reclaiming Iceland's lost birch trees, Skrudur garden has a perimeter of birches.*

*Pink Asters*







*Balloon flower*



*Lewisia*



*Yellow Pansy*



*Sea Lavender*



# Hamden Seed Library

By Alicia Cornelio  
Editor, Laurel



Grant Recipient



Tucked in a corner behind a bookshelf in the Hamden Miller Library is a very special collection. Stocked between February and June, there is a collection of seed packets with an assortment of vegetables, flowers, and herbs. But this is not a borrowing collection. Instead, patrons can take as many as five packets to bring home.

## Why do we need a Seed Library in our communities?

- ◆ More people are interested in **growing** their own food
- ◆ Planting **native plants** to support pollinators and other beneficial insects helps our vegetable, flower, and herb gardens *and* our local ecosystems.
- ◆ **Native birds** need native insects to feed their nestlings (as many as 6000 caterpillars per nesting!) and we need birds!

- ◆ Because the seeds are **free**, anyone can grow plants around their home.

The Hamden Seed Library relies upon donations from patrons and other local citizens. Many seeds are collected from their gardens. Some are donated by local seed companies.

To entice patrons to take and grow the seeds, the library offers programs to educate the public on how to take care of the plants and maintain their gardens. Topics include:

- ◆ Starting a garden of various types of plants
- ◆ Maintaining a garden and pruning
- ◆ Saving seeds
- ◆ Soil structure and fertility, Rain gardens, composting
- ◆ Insect ID and control







Children learn about the benefits of butterflies in the garden

## How did CMGA help?

Diane Dynia, a CMGA intern, received a grant from CMGA this year to create a publicity brochure for the seed library and to promote the library's associated programs. Two such programs will educate the public about pollinators and native plants.

Diane also manned a booth at the weekly Hamden farmers' market to bring awareness of the seed library and the programs offered to create a garden with the seeds. 750 professionally printed copies of the brochure were created and 200 have already been distributed.



A booth visitor learns how to create a bird using Origami.



# Saving Your Outside Tomato Seedlings

By Alicia Cornelio  
Editor, Laurel

Every year I see tomato seedlings in my garden that were not planted. Seeds drop from the mouths of thieving chipmunks, sprout up from a spot where I grew tomatoes before, and any number of other reasons. Usually I ignore these seedlings because I know Jack Frost is going to nip these plants before they have a chance to produce any tomatoes.

This year I am going to try to save some. How nice is it to pick a fresh tomato from a plant growing on your window sill while the snow is falling?

## Choose your tomato plant variety

The space you have available indoors to grow a tomato will determine which tomato variety to choose. A slicing tomato that grows five or six feet tall may not be a good choice. You will need a very large pot and a support system to manage the long vines. The most manageable and prolific tomato varieties are cherry and grape tomatoes. The plants are often smaller in size and can thrive in a smaller pot.



## Choose your tomato plant maturity

Tomatoes have a maturity date of around 60 to 100 days, if *started from seed*. The best variety to start from seed in the fall are miniature tomatoes. They mature the fastest and produce little tomatoes continually.

Tomatoes that are grown outside and have produced all summer are ready to shut down, especially determinate varieties. If you are very ambitious and love the variety you have enjoyed all summer, you can *take a cutting*. Put the tip you cut into water almost to the leaves. In two to four weeks you will see roots sprouting from the stem. Roots can grow quickly. Once you see roots, the cutting is ready to plant into your container of choice.

The easiest method to grow a winter tomato is to *transplant the seedlings* sprouting in your outdoor garden at the end of the growing season. If you are lucky enough to see these tomatoes sprouting among your other vegetables or flowers and you have a pretty good idea of the variety, choose them. In my case, I know I grew cherry tomatoes last year in a spot I grew squash this year. The probability that I'm transplanting a cherry tomato is good, but you never know!! You may compare the leaves of the sprout with a mature tomato in your outdoor garden to determine the variety.

## Choose the right soil and pot

You will need a good soil mix for your pot. There are fancy blends for tomatoes that include fertilizer. Instead, you can use a potting soil mix with compost.

For maximum production of slicing tomatoes, the ideal pot size is 18-inch diameter for determinate tomatoes and 24-inch diameter for indeterminate tomatoes. However, you can use a smaller pot for cherry and grape tomatoes, if you water regularly. Make sure your container has good drainage or your tomatoes will not do well. You will probably need to put something underneath to catch the drainage water.



## Choose your indoor spot

Find a south facing sunny window to place the pot. Tomatoes are a summer crop and need lots of sunlight in order to grow and produce fruit. If they do not have enough sun hours, the plants will not die but will not produce good fruit either. Tomatoes need six to eight hours of direct sunlight.

If you bring a plant indoors in the fall, make sure not to take in many bugs as well.

Wash the leaves gently and take as little outdoor soil with the plant when you transplant it into an indoor pot.



Tomatoes love warm temperatures. Choose a room you know will provide the warmth tomatoes need. If you can't provide optimal conditions for tomatoes in the winter months, the plants are usually less productive.



John Carlson observes (see his article on page 14) that direct and indirect sunlight in Connecticut during the winter months is insufficient. Artificial lighting is required for most plants if it is intended to have these plants keep producing fruit, specifically the tomato plant. John suggests full spectrum LED grow light fixtures. There are many to choose from within a huge price range. Proper wattage is necessary to keep your tomato plants producing. John uses 45W to 75W fixtures. More powerful lighting, like 300W, can sunburn plant leaves. These lower wattage fixtures are safer. Also, maintaining a safe distance between leaf and fixture is important. Therefore, your lighting setup should be adjustable. Commercial grow light stands are available but these stands are easy to build yourself. Building your own has the advantage of maximizing the space available to you.

A good selection of low wattage grow light fixtures for indoor plants are available for the home grower. Amazon has a good selection to choose from at affordable prices.

## Daily care

Since tomatoes are heavy feeders, you will need to fertilize them monthly. A great natural fertilizer is Bone Meal.

Tomatoes require a lot of water so keeping pots watered is especially important indoors. At a sunny window, plants dry out quickly in pots. Make sure to water regularly.

Tomatoes are pollinated by wind. Just checking the plant every few days by tapping the stems is enough to achieve pollination.

Tomatoes need support, even inside. The best supports are tomato cages because they can be inserted around the perimeter of the container. Stakes will not stay up in the loose soil of a container. The roundness of the tomato cage will support all the stems without any need to tie up with twine.



### Sources:

- "How to move your favorite tomato plant indoors for the winter. The Real Farmhouse. 2022. <https://www.therealfarmhouse.com/how-to-move-your-favorite-tomato-plant-indoors-for-the-winter/>
- "How to Grow Tomatoes Indoors." The Northern Homestead. 2002. <https://northernhomestead.com/how-to-grow-tomatoes-indoors/>

## Orange Hat

By John Carlson

It has begun, my new dwarf tomato patch. On October 4th, seven medium size Solo cups were filled with seed starting soil where one Orange Hat tomato seed was inserted. The cups were placed under an LED grow light fixture to germinate. On October 11th, seeds broke through the soil surface in five of the seven cups. One of those cups produced two plants. It isn't unusual to have this happen because, in preparing the seeds for sale, sometimes two seeds stick together and it is not unusual to miss seeing this when planting the seeds. As a result six seedlings have appeared. These two will be left to grow in its cup until it comes time to transplant, when these two seedlings will be gently separated to grow in it's own larger Solo beer cup.



As insignificant as this gardening adventure is, it is a small happening that brings a smile to my face and joy during these trying years. (I'm now into enjoying gardening in my ninth decade). This isn't my first try at growing a dwarf tomato patch. Five years ago, I began my first attempt at growing indoor winter tomatoes using dwarf 'Minibel' tomato seeds. Both my wife and I enjoyed the tomatoes from the six plants grown during those five years. They produced a small, constant number of tomatoes. We treated them as snack food. Easy picking, because the patch between first and last frost dates was in the front bay window with a southeast exposure. In the warmer time the plants remained in their half gallon pots outdoors in the sun. I enjoyed good success with this new indoor gardening experiment, only to forget to bring in these plants indoors before the frost last fall.

Something somewhat unusual was noticed during the second year with the tomatoes one plant was producing. They were sweeter tasting than tomatoes from the other plants. I took cuttings from this plant to preserve this strain. 4" cuttings were taken to replace the other plants. Unfortunately, they didn't survive the frost. Too bad, for this was a very delightful tasting sweet red cherry tomato.

I mentioned earlier about finding a different flavored tomato among the plants I was growing. In the real world this is not that unusual at all. During that CMGA Regional Conference, I struck up a conversation with a master gardener from New Jersey and somehow we got talking about flavors of tomatoes existing within the same tomato variety. As it turned out, this master gardener has been taking advantage of this phenomena for ten years. In each of those successive years, he carefully found a tomato flavor from the plants he grew each of those prior years and grew that strain each successive year and isolated a tomato he deemed to produce the best tomato sauce flavor. His believes no tomato variety on the market can match the flavor of the tomato he is growing.. Proof of his success was the large number of tomato grower friends that each year asked for his tomato seeds.

So, you Master Gardener tomato lover aficionados out there, don't be afraid to give this a try. Although this takes years in time, I believe it is the well spent because the end product is worth the effort.

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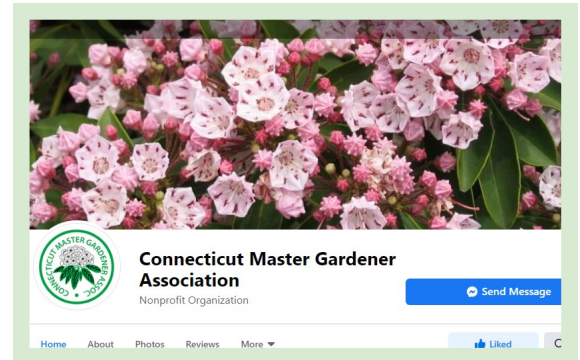
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By Vicky Ambrosey and Lisa Doggart

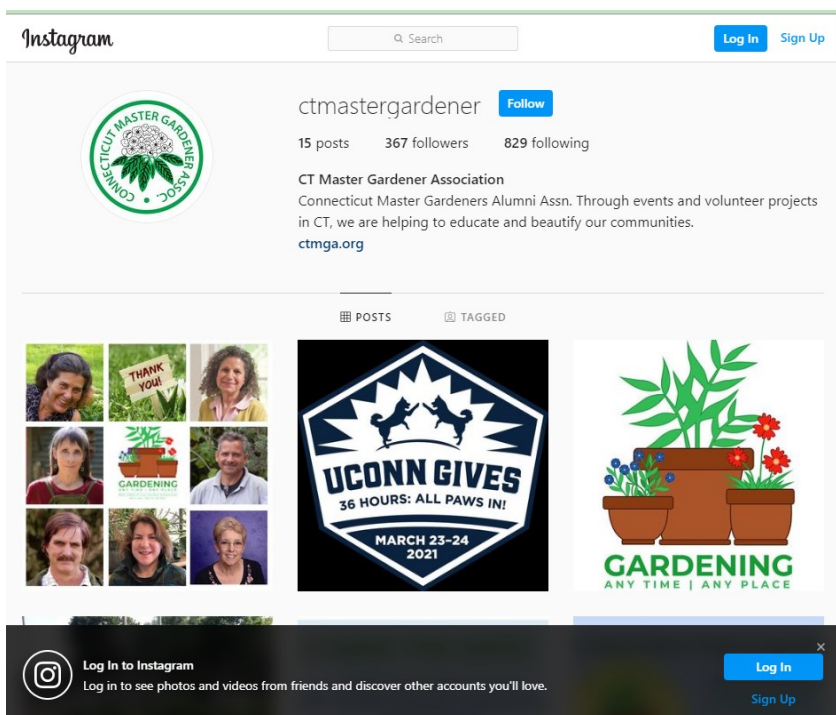
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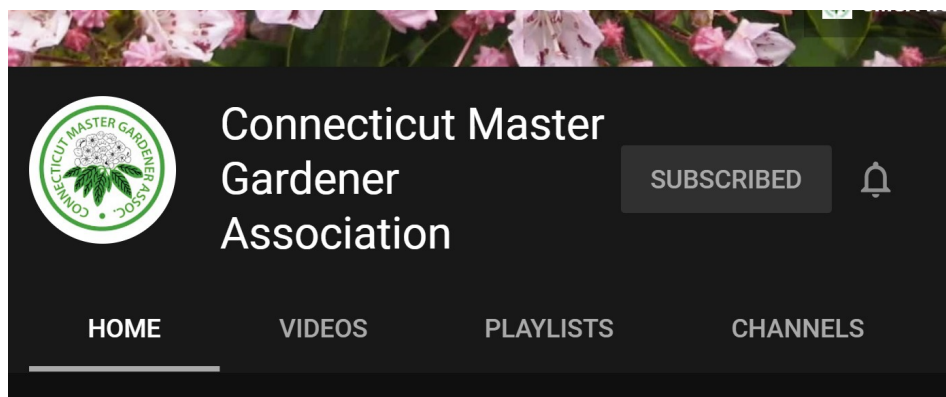


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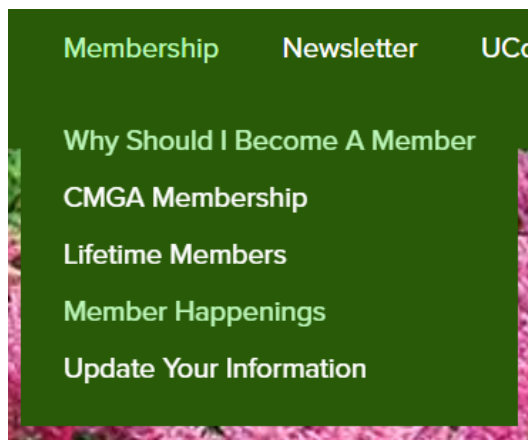
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## Website since 2005, updated 2019 - [ctmga.org](http://ctmga.org)

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!



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