



# The LAUREL

Connecticut  
Master  
Gardener  
Association  
Newsletter

Winter 2023 Volume 36, No. 1

## 30<sup>th</sup> Connecticut Master Gardener Association Garden Symposium



**Our fourth virtual event  
Saturday, March 11th, 2023**

**2023 CMGA 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

**"Full Circle Gardening"**

**Symposium Event Information & Registration Here**  
<https://ctmga.org/symposium-23event>



**William Bryant Logan**



**Niki Jabbour**



**Jeff Lorenz**



**Ian Stewart**

*See page 4 for speaker descriptions*

# Officers 2023

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

**V-President:** Mary Ellen Seuch  
vicepres@ctmga.org

**Treasurer:** Deb Prior  
treasurer@ctmga.org

**Secretary:** Jean Fletcher  
secretary@ctmga.org

## Board of Directors:

|                    |              |
|--------------------|--------------|
| Kathy Beaty        | Lin Branham  |
| Valerie Bryan      | Lisa Doggart |
| Susan Eisenhandler | Ed Hopkins   |
| Cheryl Johnson     |              |
| Kim Kelly          | Beth Marsh   |
| Caroline Moran     | Debbye Rosen |
| Susan St. John     | Jim Ward     |

**CMGA website:** [www.ctmga.org](http://www.ctmga.org)

webmaster@ctmga.org

Jim Ward (Webmaster)

**The Laurel:** cmganews@ctmga.org

Alicia Cornelio (Editor)

**Membership:** membership@ctmga.org

Deb Prior (Chair)

**Grants:** grants@ctmga.org

Linette Branham (Chair)

## UConn Extension Center Coordinators

**Fairfield**     **Sandi Wilson**     203-207-3262     sandra.wilson@uconn.edu

**Hartford:**     **Sarah Bailey**     860-409-9050     sarah.bailey@uconn.edu

**Litchfield:**     **Michelle Winkler**     860-626-6240     michelle.winkler@uconn.edu

**Middlesex:**     **Gail Kalison Reynolds**     860-345-5234     gail.reynolds@uconn.edu

**New Haven:**     **Eric Larson**     203-407-3161     roderick.larson@uconn.edu

**New London:**     **Christopher Dustin**     860-3887-1608     Christopher.dustin@uconn.edu

**Stamford:**     **Pat Carroll**     203-322-6971 x 18     patc.mgcoord@gmail.com

**Tolland:**     **John Lorusso (int)**     860-875-3331     john.lorusso@uconn.edu

**Windham:**     **John Lorusso**     860-774-9600     john.lorusso@uconn.edu

**UConn Home & Garden Education Ctr:**     877-486-6271     www.ladybug.uconn.edu

**State Coordinator for the MG Program: TBD**     860-409-9053

*The Laurel* is published quarterly for CMGA members.  
Please send information by email to [cmganews@ctmga.org](mailto:cmganews@ctmga.org).  
**Deadlines for publication are January 1, April 1, July 1, and October 1.**  
Copyright © 2023 by the  
**Connecticut Master Gardener Association**

# President's Message



Dear CMGA Members:

Happy 2023! I want to begin by thanking all of you for your continued support. Last year we were pleased to see an increase in the number of CMGA members and the additional funds generated by your dues will allow us to continue our support of the UCONN Master Gardener program and the many amazing Outreach projects in which the master gardener community is involved.

It seems that each time we begin to emerge from the Covid-19 pandemic, we learn of a new variant that has managed to take hold, impacting our lives in a multitude of ways. For CMGA, the continued uncertainty means that we will continue to hold our annual Garden Symposium virtually. The good news is that the virtual setting has allowed us to bring in speakers from inside as well as outside of New England. This year, our amazing program is focused on the broad theme of "Gardening for Good – Full Circle Gardening," and the day will start with our keynote speaker, **William Bryant "Bill" Logan**, an arborist and instructor at the New York Botanical Garden and an award-winning author. For now, please consider joining us on March 11, 2023. You may register for the event at <https://ctmga.org/symposium-23event>.

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, Cheryl Johnson from Litchfield County, Beth March from Stamford, and Edward Hopkins from New Haven County. At the same time, we thank former board members Kathy Cipes, Vicky Ambrosey, Kathy Cassidy and Christine Maszta. We are grateful for the time and energy these women have given in service to CMGA and are grateful they are willing to continue to work with CMGA in a volunteer capacity. We wish them well in all of their future endeavors.

This month marked the start of the 2023 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 16 different outreach projects across Connecticut. Funded projects ranged from an Auer Farm Medicinal Garden in Hartford County to a Pollinator Garden at Great Plains School in Fairfield County.

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 11 for the CMGA Virtual Garden Symposium.

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). In the meantime, take pleasure in perusing the new seed catalogues, planning for your spring garden and catching up on your reading.

With best wishes for a healthy and happy spring!  
Paula Russo, President CMGA

# 2023 CMGA Annual Symposium

## March 11, 2023 - 9:00 AM

We are excited to take advantage of the virtual technology to offer a day filled with national experts to discuss:

- how we can use our gardens and outdoor spaces to form deeper relationships with the outside world
- how to appreciate and interact with these spaces year round
- how to reflect those relationships in our garden designs

On-line registration information for this virtual event is available at

<https://ctmga.org/symposium-23event>

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



Keynote speaker is **William Bryant "Bill" Logan** who will share his perspective of the "Endless Gift of Trees." Bill is a certified arborist and award winning author whose most recent book, *Dirt: The Ecstatic Skin of the Earth*, was made into an award-winning documentary. A faculty member of the New York Botanical Garden, Bill has won numerous Quill and Trowel Awards from the Garden Writers of American and has written for the New York Times, House Beautiful, House and Garden, and Garden Design. He has spent the last three decades working in trees and will share thoughts from his recent book *Sprout Lands: Tending the Endless Gift of Trees*



Our second morning speaker and first afternoon speaker will focus on how our landscape choices impact the natural world.



**Ian Stewart**, PhD, was raised in Newcastle, England and received a doctorate in ornithology from the University of Leicester. He has conducted research on tree swallows and bluebirds and how local land management activities are affecting bird numbers and diversity throughout the year. Ian is currently an Ornithologist at the Delaware Nature Society. Ian is currently studying the effects of non-native plants on birds.



**Jeff Lorenz** is the founder of Refugia Design, an ecological landscape design/build and stewardship firm. Since 2015, Refugia has designed native landscapes for both residential and commercial green spaces in the Jersey Shore and Greater Philadelphia. Refugia is known for an immersive, naturalistic design aesthetic and meadow expertise. They have mapped the impact of their 120+ native habitats via the Ecological Greenway Network. They also have an additional 47 “stepping stone” gardens in 2021. The Greenway Network is an ecological corridor for native plants designed to promote connectivity for wildlife and restore ecosystem function.

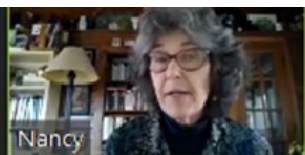
Our closing speaker is **Niki Jabbour**. Completing our day with a literal interpretation of our theme “Full Circle Gardening,” gardener and writer Niki Jabbour will describe how she has become a year-round vegetable gardener, despite living in Nova Scotia. The award winning author of “The Year-Round Vegetable Gardener” and “Growing Under Cover”, in which she describes her use of cold frames, cloches, and polytunnels, will talk about how she extends her growing seasons year round.



# 2022 Annual Meeting Recap

Our Virtual CMGA 2022 Annual Meeting was well attended with seventy participants. During the business meeting, new officers and board members were elected, the budget was passed, and changes to the bylaws were adopted.

Nancy DuBrule-Clemente gave a very informative presentation on using native and useful non-native plants to support pollinators, birds, and animals in our gardens.



Mix it up!



Rudbeckia 'Goldsturm', Hydrangea serrata 'Acuminata Preziosa',  
Panicum 'Shenandoah'



'Lauren's Grape' breadseed poppy with  
Hydrangea arborescens 'Bella Anna'





# Why I am a Connecticut Master Gardener

Katherine M. Kosiba  
Master Gardener 2007, Haddam  
Advanced Master Gardener 2009  
CMGA Lifetime Member, 2022

Before I became a Master Gardener, I was invited to the annual March symposium for a day long learning event – I LOVED IT – the speakers, the displays, the comradery of hundreds of gardeners evident through all the conversations and interactions.

Later, with the complimentary membership as a Master Gardener Intern, I again attended the Symposium and now felt more engaged knowing a few other classmates and again enjoying this special education event.

Upon graduation in 2007, I became a CMGA member, volunteering for a task or two at subsequent symposiums. I have been a member ever since. Actively gardening in my community, the CMGA has funded numerous grants that I and other Master Gardeners in our garden club applied for and were awarded. These CMGA grants contributed to the accomplishment of very worthwhile projects, for which I am very grateful.

I heard the CMGA was in need of members to join the board, which had declined near to their lower bylaw limit, so I applied and was elected. The three years on the board were personally enriching and rewarding, to work with other dedicated Master Gardeners to help lead the organization forward, contributing to the delivery of several Summer Safari Tours again bringing members together, creating additional fundraisers to help ensure grant funding and scholarships continued, and planning and delivery of the annual symposium to continue the learning and camaraderie.

Becoming a Master Gardener changed my life by connecting me to my community through gardening and community projects. Now I would add that the CMGA has changed my life by further enhancing that gardening experience through membership and engagement in the CMGA.



# Upcoming Events

## Membership Development and Events are making plans for 2023!

As a state-wide organization, COVID has had an impact on our ability to come together as gardeners and as an alumni group.

This year, our Member Development and Events Committee is planning a wonderful mixture of small and large in-person and virtual events. Several events are for members only and all members receive discounted or free events as part of their membership, so **make sure you've renewed your membership for 2023.** [Renew Membership here](#)



To see what's happening in person and virtually, visit our [Events Page](#) or visit our Facebook Page or Instagram account. Both are updated twice a week.

### **Seed Blocking Workshop**

Tue February 7, 2023  
10 am—Noon  
Northwest Park Nature Center  
140 Lang Rd. Windsor, CT. 09095  
\$20 fee, limited to 20 participants  
Linette Branham, Facilitator

### **Winter Tree Walk**

Sat February 18, 2023  
Snow Date: Sat February 25, 2023  
10 am—Noon  
Marsh Botanical Garden  
No fee, limited to 50 participants  
Eric Larson, Facilitator

### **Invasive to Native: A Connecticut Backyard Renovation**

Virtual Presentation on Zoom  
Thur February 9, 2023  
7—8 pm  
Free and Open to the Public  
Registration required  
Pam Roman, Facilitator

### **Logee's Tropical Plants**

Walking Tour  
Date and Time TBD  
Logee's Garden Center  
141 North St, Danielson, CT 06239  
\$10 fee, limited to 30 participants  
Eliza Travesano, Facilitator



# Taking Care of the Pests Challenges of Indoor Gardening

By Alicia Cornelio  
Editor, Laurel

In the previous issue, I described how I brought in some seedlings just before the frost. And, the plants are doing very well, including the unintended insects that came along.

Not only are the pests annoying and unsightly, they can wreak havoc in your home. A home has a warmer and more controlled temperature than the outdoors. And, there are probably no beneficial insects inside a home to help control the pest population, as they do outside. So, homeowners who start with just a few pesky insects on their indoor plants may find themselves facing a huge infestation after just a short period of time.

Avoid using insecticides inside your home. Chemicals found in insecticides can be toxic to humans and pets. According to the EPA, use in the home can have an adverse effect on indoor air quality because the sprays have nowhere to dissipate. Individuals exposed to insecticides may experience unhealthy effects.

## Neem Oil

Neem oil is a natural insecticide used to fight both indoor and outdoor pests. The oil, derived from the leaves and seeds of the *Azadirachta Indica* tree from South Asia, helps to control many insects including moths, spider mites, aphids, and whiteflies. With smaller pests like aphids, the thick substances will coat the bug's body and cause suffocation and immediate death. With other insects, it can suppress their hormones and desire to feed, or it may interfere with their reproductive cycles.



Spray the liquid directly on the leaves. Mornings and evenings are the best time of the day to spray the leaves, especially for plants in direct sunlight. Otherwise, the hot sun combined with the oil may leave burn marks on the leaves. In addition to working as a natural insecticide, neem oil can also prevent mildew and fungus from growing on a plant.



## Soap and Water

Mixing gentle dish soap with water and spraying it on the insects will break down the protective skin that covers the insect. When this cuticle breaks down, the insect will die. In order for dish soap to be effective, it will need to come into direct contact with the insects. So, when possible, spray it directly on the pests that you can see along with the plant's leaves. Caution: just as dish soap can break down a bug's cuticle, it may also break down a plant's cuticle. Also, avoid any dish soaps formulated with antibacterial agents or degreasers that will reduce the effectiveness of the soap.

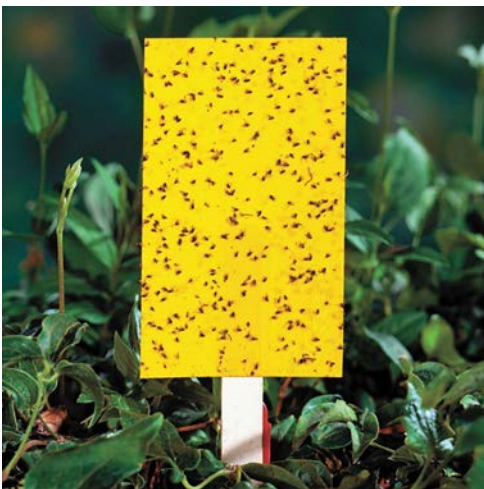
## Apple Cider Vinegar

Vinegar has many uses. One benefit of this liquid is to repel a variety of pests such as ants, flies, snails, and slugs. It is easy to mix up a basic apple cider or white vinegar solution and use it to treat your plants. Combine apple cider vinegar and water in a 1:3 ratio. Then, add 2 or 3 drops of mild liquid dish soap to the mixture and pour the solution into a spray bottle.

You can also use it to make a trap for fungus gnats by filling a shallow bowl with a 1:1 ratio of apple cider vinegar and water and a few drops of liquid dish soap. Leave the traps near each affected plant or on top of the soil. Dump out and replace the mixture approximately every other day.



## Sticky Traps



While using a natural insecticide, it is beneficial to trap bugs as they move between or around your house-plants. Sticky traps use glue to catch bugs that pass over them. Placing sticky traps around your indoor plants can help prevent pests from moving from infested plants to a healthy plant. If you've recently cleared up an infestation, placing sticky traps around the plant can prevent a future re-infestation.

## **Diatomaceous earth,**

DE as it is often called, is another option to consider when you're trying to rid your indoor plants of bugs. Diatomaceous earth can puncture the protective layer of an insect's exoskeleton. After a short amount of time, this will dehydrate the insect and cause it to die. The reason DE is so effective is that it is made up of fossilized remains called diatoms, a type of phytoplankton.



DE has microscopic edges that generally don't irritate human skin, but are sharp enough to cut through a bug's hard outer shell.

Sprinkle DE along the base of all your indoor plants to effectively get rid of insects. This strategy will keep insects from traveling to the healthy plants. Be careful when working with the powder. It may cause irritation for individuals with asthma or other respiratory issues. If you plan to apply large quantities of diatomaceous earth, wearing a mask is a good idea.

## **Plant bug-repellent herbs**



Some herbs naturally repel insects. Adding these plants to your indoor garden can help control your pest problem while providing fresh herbs for delicious home-cooked meals.

Many insects don't like the smell of some more fragrant plants, including basil, mint, sage, lemongrass, and garlic. Research which herb is most effective for a specific species. For example, peppermint and spearmint can effectively ward off spiders, fleas, and flies, while sage is most effective against moths. Aphids don't like alliums, and spider mites hate chrysanthemums.

# 2022 Master Gardener Graduates

## Hartford Litchfield

Honestee Bockting  
Bob Brown  
Mike Campion  
Stacey Capuano  
Shirley Clevenger  
Elaine Curley  
Andrea Elmer  
Anne Fenton  
Lynn Fulkerson  
Kathy Jacobsen  
Mary Lachman  
Judith Latin  
Bob Lavorgna  
Amy Parvez  
Michaela Paul  
Rosemary Pilch  
Marguerite Smith  
Cheryl Vanase-Boroski  
Agnes Walsh  
Joseph Walsh  
Carol Walters  
Leslie Ann Wharton  
Audrey N. White  
Kimberly Zeytoonjian  
Clare Zimmitti  
Elaine Zullo

## Lower Fairfield

Kory Breitel  
Ana Browne  
Linda Chapman  
Kathryn Cook  
Jennifer DeBlasio  
Laura Ferrera  
Alexandra Friedman  
Zofia Grajski  
Holly Hart  
Laura Heath  
Melanie Hollas  
Cathy Jarosz  
Kathleen Kwiatkowski  
Jennifer Mallozzi  
Geraldine Nuzzo  
Elaine Pivrotto  
Meredith Priest  
Betsy Sammarco  
Caroline Saxton  
Cathy Smith  
Liza Smith  
Maira Snover  
Linnea Stenberg  
Barbra Utting  
Judith Vasquez

## New Haven Fairfield

Rona M. Durham  
Suzanne Sliker  
Kathy Azuara  
Pamela DonAroma  
Nancy Schoenholtz  
Margaret Farley  
Kim Kirei  
Sonia Rubico-Jamir  
Tomas Jamir  
Paula Knight  
Doug Eckman  
Christopher Bird  
Kandra Houston  
Molly Crichton Jridi  
Erin Alvey  
Ann D. Jurkiewicz  
Paul DiPrato  
Maria Mauldon  
Heidi Waldkirch  
Mary Woolsey  
Pam Roman  
Gina M. Lombardi  
Judith M. Hahn  
Wes Meeker  
Maranda Kleza  
Ed Hopkins  
Krista Prince-Salvatore  
Lucinda Patrick  
Diane Dynia





# 2022 Master Gardener Graduates

## **New London Middlesex**

Shirley Malzone Barber  
Marilyn Blakeslee  
Eileen Boyce  
Veronika Burlingham  
Roz Downing  
Erika Giglio  
Kathryn Graham  
June Guertin  
Patricia Hardy  
Rebecca Hayes  
Cecilia Lins-Morstadt  
Amber Malone  
Patricia Mandell  
Amy Mastrangelo  
Jeani O'Neill  
Barbara Rafferty  
Karen P. K. Roche  
Bev Taggart  
Charlene Trudel  
Mary Washer  
Joanna Woodward

## **Tolland Windham**

Sarah Bole  
Ayme Calderon  
Elaine Corey-Zincavage  
John Daly  
Dave Dzurec  
Laura Dzurec  
Imbi Fox  
Patricia Govoni  
Ali Hibbard  
Loida John-Nicholson  
Eddie Joy  
Patsy Kirol  
Marianne Lalama  
Susan Marks  
Lisa McDaniel  
Bob McNamara  
Rich Meister  
Gary Nicholson  
Dorothy Paquette  
Melissa Parade  
Margherita Shaw  
Anne Sheffield  
Liz Tinker  
Andrea Truppa Gagas  
Sara Walling  
Anna Wasik



# 2022 Master Gardener Advancements

## Advanced Master Gardener

### Lower Fairfield:

Janr Belson  
Lori Constantine  
Joan Haddon  
Anne Huck  
Mary Kestenbaum  
Caroline Moran  
Laura Mosher  
Mary Ellen Seuch  
Orna Stern

### New Haven/Fairfield:

Andrew Danzig  
Debbie DiCicco

### Tolland/Windham:

Robert McNamara  
Kasandra Lambert  
Stuart Fisher  
Larry Bibri  
Joanne Schmalz  
Mary Terrance

## Advanced Master Gardener

### Litchfield/Hartford:

Helen Baldwin  
Susan Demuth  
Kristin First  
Susan Grew  
Kathryn Hanlon  
Ralph Kadden  
Donna Kaffenberger  
Leah Moelling  
Karen Pollock  
Laura Pratt  
Christine Rousseau  
Donna Summers  
Thea Wehmann

### New London/Middlesex:

Suzi Burchsted  
Christopher Dustin  
Sue Kelley  
Pam Rottier  
Sally Ruggeri



# Connect with Us

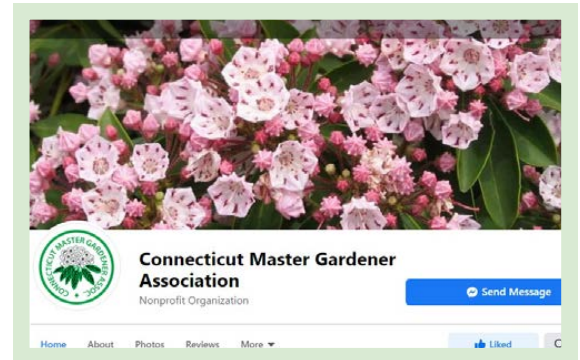
## Take CMGA with you, any time, any place!

By Vicky Ambrosey and Lisa Doggart

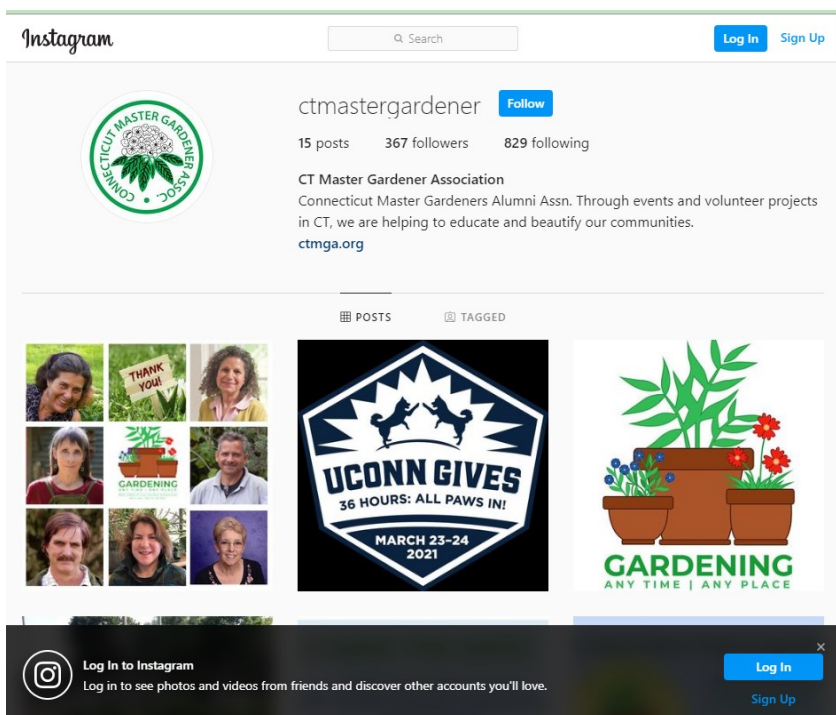
CMGA can now easily fit into your busy schedules via our social media outlets: Facebook, Instagram, YouTube and our website blog. You can view the latest news and information about CMGA happenings on all mobile and desktop devices.

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

We celebrate 13 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.



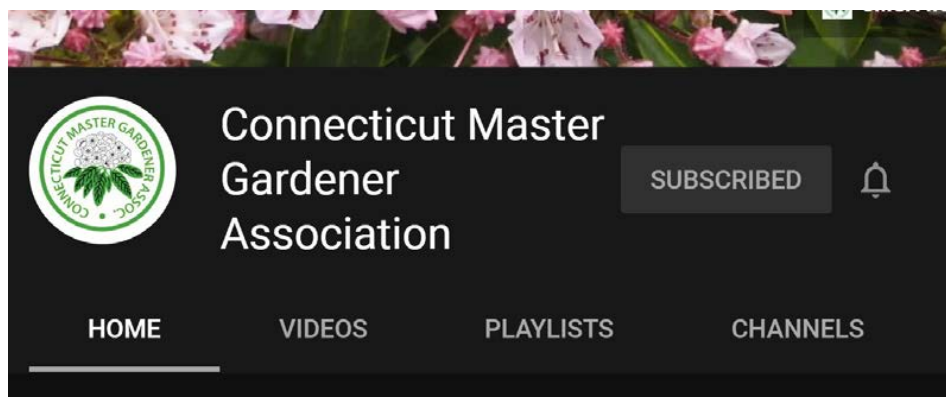
### Instagram since 2021 - [Follow us at @ctmastergardener](#)



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**

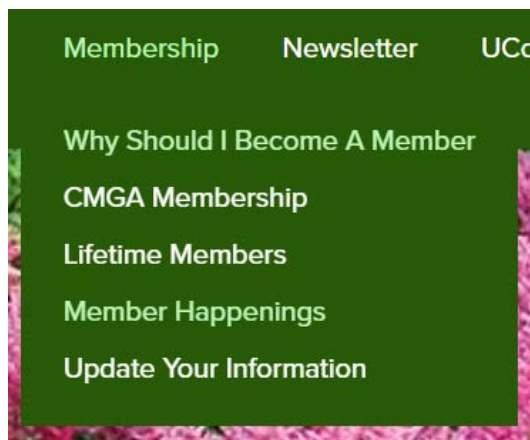
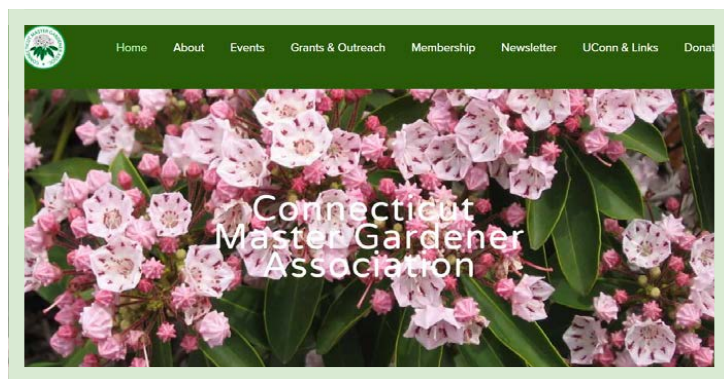
## YouTube since 2020 - [See Our CMGA Channel](#)

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 2022 - [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*

Spring 2023 Volume 36, No. 2

## Great Neck Elementary Garden CMGA Grant Recipient



The Day, February 22, 2023

***Story on page 7!***

# Officers 2023

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

**V-President:** Mary Ellen Seuch  
vicepres@ctmga.org

**Treasurer:** Deb Prior  
treasurer@ctmga.org

**Secretary:** Jean Fletcher  
secretary@ctmga.org

## Board of Directors:

|                    |                |
|--------------------|----------------|
| Kathy Beaty        | Lin Branham    |
| Valerie Bryan      | Lisa Doggart   |
| Susan Eisenhandler | Ed Hopkins     |
| Cheryl Johnson     | Kim Kelly      |
| Beth Marsh         | Caroline Moran |
| Debbye Rosen       | Susan St. John |
| Mary Jane Toomey   | Jim Ward       |

**CMGA website:** [www.ctmga.org](http://www.ctmga.org)  
jward@ctmga.org

Jim Ward (Webmaster)

**The Laurel:** cmganews@ctmga.org

Alicia Cornelio (Editor)

**Membership:** membership@ctmga.org

Deb Prior (Chair)

**Grants:** grants@ctmga.org

Linette Branham (Chair)

## UConn Extension Center Coordinators

**Fairfield**     **Sandi Wilson**     203-207-3262     sandra.wilson@uconn.edu

**Hartford:**     **Sarah Bailey**     860-409-9050     sarah.bailey@uconn.edu

**Litchfield:**     **Michelle Winkler**     860-626-6240     michelle.winkler@uconn.edu

**Middlesex:**     **Gail Kalison Reynolds**     860-345-5234     gail.reynolds@uconn.edu

**New Haven:**     **Eric Larson**     203-407-3161     roderick.larson@uconn.edu

**New London:**     **Christopher Dustin**     860-887-1608     Christopher.dustin@uconn.edu

**Stamford:**     **Pat Carroll**     203-322-6971 x18     Patricia.carroll@uconn.edu

**Tolland:**     **John Lorusso (int)**     860-875-3331     john.lorusso@uconn.edu

**Windham:**     **John Lorusso**     860-774-9600     john.lorusso@uconn.edu

**UConn Home & Garden Education Ctr:**     877-486-6271     www.ladybug.uconn.edu

**State Coordinator MG Program:**     860-409-9053     amber.guillemette@uconn.edu

*The Laurel* is published quarterly for CMGA members.  
Please send information by email to [cmganews@ctmga.org](mailto:cmganews@ctmga.org).  
**Deadlines for publication are January 1, April 1, July 1, and October 1.**  
Copyright © 2023 by the  
**Connecticut Master Gardener Association**

## President's Message

Dear CMGA Members:



As I sit writing this, the temperature outside has topped 80 degrees and the garden is simply exploding with life! Trees are flowering, and crocus, daffodils, as well as many other major and minor bulbs are now visible wherever you look. It is truly a wonderful time of year!

I hope that many of you were able to attend our Third Virtual Gardening Symposium – *Gardening for Good – Full Circle Gardening*. The virtual platform allowed us to include speakers from different parts of the continent 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!

Looking ahead, we have several exciting events, both new and returning, coming up for our members. On May 13, from 10 A.M. to 3 P.M., CMGA is again partnering with the Connecticut Science Center for the third annual *MakeFest/Make it Grow*. With the backdrop of a 50,000 square foot roof top garden that overlooks the Connecticut River, it's the perfect setting to highlight the importance of growing healthy, green and local through engaging on-site and virtual demonstrations, displays and family activities. The Plant Sale offers you the opportunity to buy plants, herbs and veggies donated by Master Gardeners and "extras" from the Science Center. For information on how to donate plants or to volunteer at the event, please contact [events@ctmga.org](mailto:events@ctmga.org). We hope to see you there.

On May 23<sup>rd</sup>, the first of several garden tours will be held at the Nancy Moss Gardens on the campus of Connecticut College. The tour will showcase the nearly 200 azalea and rhododendron shrubs present onsite and will be led by Maggie Redfern. Visit the events page of our website for more information about this and all of our upcoming events. <https://ctmga.org/cmga-events>

On June 14 we will return to McCue Gardens in Wethersfield for our annual Plant sale. Once again, owners Cindy and Bruce McCue will donate a percentage of all sales that day to CMGA. The sale will take place rain or shine from 10 A.M. to 3 P.M. We hope you will come and bring a friend!

In closing, I want to thank all of our members for the continued support of our organization. The money we raise through fund-raising efforts such as plant sales and from membership dues allows us to continue to support the UConn Master Gardener program as well as outreach projects around the state. In fact, the first grant proposal cycle ended last month with a total of 18 proposals requesting funding. We were able to fund a good portion of these proposals and look forward to seeing the second-round grant proposals due on June 15. Check our website to learn more about these exciting projects.

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



# CMGA Members are Top Donor For UCONN Gives

Thanks so much for your support for the 2023 UConn Gives Campaign. Although results remain preliminary, it appears that the Master Gardener Program has achieved an additional \$5500 for the greatest number of donors! This is in addition to the \$21000 raised. We also need to give a big thanks to the Higganum Grange for providing \$4200 of matching funds on Day 2.



## Using Your New Membership Card

If you are a CMGA member, you received an email detailing how you can capture your membership card so you can take advantage of the many member benefits you will receive. Don't delete this email!

### How to Capture your Membership Card:

- ◆ Take a picture of your membership card from your email. You will always have it ready on your cellphone for any of the retailers who will accept your membership discount.
- ◆ Print your email and keep it in your purse or car.





# 2023 CMGA Annual Symposium Well Attended

Our fourth virtual Symposium was well attended by over 150 viewers.

Our symposium began with Bill Logan and his presentation on ancient practices of caring for forests and trees.



Next, Dr. Ian Stewart presented his work on native plants and trees, highlighting his work on Cloverdale Farm Preserve in Delaware.



The Symposium continued with Jeff Lorenz talking about how we can decrease our carbon footprint by changing our gardening habits such as reducing lawn, creating meadows, and eliminating ecological dead zones.



Niki Jabbour shared her experiences with methods to extend the growing season in a cooler environment to grow warm season vegetables and plants.





# Great Neck Elementary School Garden

CMGA



Grant Recipient

Great Neck Elementary School Garden, in Waterford, Connecticut is a member of the Eastern Connecticut Community Gardens Assoc. It received a \$350 grant from CMGA in 2022 to upgrade their educational garden.

Eileen M. Boyce, a CMGA member, spearheaded the reclamation project, The grant from CMGA helped to improve the garden walks, strengthen the garden raised beds, and upgrade the garden entrance. The grant also paid for vegetable and herb seeds. These seeds are part of a student activity to start the seeds indoors to transplant later in the garden.

The garden was started in 2013 by a former teacher and grandmother of a student. The goal was to teach students about everything from biology and math, to history and nutrition. The garden was

established thanks to a lot of help from staff, parents, and local businesses. Ten years later, this educational garden is still going strong!

The original plan was to plant crops that would be self-maintaining until they could be harvested in the fall. However, a number of classes wanted more variety. Those more tender plants needed to be nurtured through the summer. Volunteers make sure the garden is watered and weeded when school classes are not in session. Counselors and kids at the summer camp, which is based at the school, help out. Then, in the fall, the students are able to reap the nutritious rewards, even in the school cafeteria!



# Where Have the Insects Gone?

By Barbara Wood  
CMGA Intern

Insects have been around for over 400 million years and have survived through multiple mass extinction events in the past. Scientists believe we're entering the sixth mass extinction and this time, insects are dying. Studies by Dirzo and Wagner have revealed that we're losing terrestrial insects at a rate of around one to two percent per year, in every continent around the globe. That's 10 to 20 percent per decade. Global invertebrate abundance has already declined 45 percent since 1974.



Florida Museum

## The importance of insects

Katherine Dugas, at the The Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station, noted that insects "are the largely-unnoticed keystones at the base of every ecosystem; they are the soil engineers, the clean-up crews, the pollinators, and the direct food source of larger life-forms."

Ollerton reports that pollinators are responsible for pollinating 90 percent of flowering plants. This includes insects, including bees, wasps, beetles, flies and moths, and also birds, lizards, bats and some other mammals. Many of these creatures rely on insects.

Caterpillars are the most efficient energy transporters from plants to other animals, according to Janzen. Entomologist Dr. Douglas Tallamy warned that "If we design landscapes that don't have a lot of caterpillars in them, we're going to have failed food webs and eventually failed ecosystems."

The 2022 State of the Birds Report shows that more than half of U.S. birds are in decline.<sup>5</sup> UConn Home & Garden Education Center's Pamm Cooper said, "Many birds are highly dependent upon insects for food, especially nestlings and fledglings of many bird species whose diet is largely made up of caterpillars."

Then, there are the adult birds who rely on insects, too. For example, pileated woodpeckers eat mostly carpenter ants. As insects decline, so do the birds that need them.

Termites, cockroaches and beetles play important roles as scavengers, decomposing leaves and wood, creating nutrient-rich soils. Some insects are on nature's biocontrol team, serving as predators to control other insect pests, like aphids, sawflies and mosquitoes.



Tallamy said, "They eat our crops, they sting us, they transmit disease. So, we've lumped them all together. What we've missed is, the fact that if we lost our insects, life as we know it would cease to exist."

### What causes insect decline?



A 2021 study revealed twelve of the major stressors or threats to insects: global warming, intense storms, droughts, fire, nitrification, interaction disruption, pollution, introduced species, urbanization, agricultural intensification, insecticides, and deforestation. An author on the study, entomologist Dr. David L. Wagner noted that "In any one site, you often have more than one of those stressors." The study outlined climate change, habitat loss and degradation, and agriculture as the three most important stressors.

Without the plants in their habitats, insects don't have food. While some insects are polyphagous and feed on many plants, 90 percent are specialists and can only eat specific plants.<sup>6</sup> Just as the monarch feeds exclusively on milkweed, the hackberry emperor needs hackberry, and other particular insects need other particular plants.

## What Can We Do?

### Plant native keystone plants and reduce your lawn.

Tallamy recalled, "Roadsides used to be all milkweed and asters and sunflowers, and you know, things the farmer called weeds. That's what was supporting our native bees and the honeybee and monarchs and everything else. So that's all gone now and it's grass. But it's all reversible. We took it out, we can put it back."

Wagner said, "Insects respond very, very quickly to small amounts of space and even cutting back your lawn by 10 percent or 20 percent will be a huge gain for nature. And if everybody did it, it would probably be more land than all of the national parks in the United States."

A study by Narango reveals that a small amount of native plant genera supports many lepidoptera species. Tallamy said that, "Just five percent of our native plants support 75 percent of the caterpillar food that drives food webs, 14 percent support 90 percent of our caterpillars. A third of our native bees require particular plants to reproduce."

There are just a few plants that are doing most of the work in our ecosystems. These hyperproductive plants are called keystone plants. They are key to sustaining the caterpillars at the base of the food web and the pollinators that are producing our plants.

Most of Connecticut is eastern temperate forest. The top 20 keystone plants are native trees, shrubs and flowering perennials in the following genera: Quercus, Prunus, Betula, Acer, Populus, Malus, Carya, Pinus, Vaccinium, Salix, Solidago, Symphyotrichum, Helianthus, Rudbeckia, Heterotheca, Grindelia, Chrysopsis, Coreopsis, Bidens and Verbesina.<sup>8</sup> In northwest Connecticut however, Carya is replaced with Alnus and Heterotheca is replaced with Cirsium. The full list by ecoregion, with top 30 plants for butterfly, moth caterpillars, and pollen specialist bees, is at the [National Wildlife Federation](#).



Tallamy said gardeners have "a greater responsibility, but they have to change their gardening goals. Instead of just trying out the newest cultivar of some foreign plant, focus on the keystone plants that are gonna support most of the life. How do we use them attractively? How do we create a landscape that's full of life, that is so pretty everybody else wants it? That's the gardener's challenge."

Edenbrothers.com

Wagner said planting pollinator gardens, “including not only the diurnal bees and butterflies, but the nocturnal moths would be a great step forward.”

### **Reduce light pollution.**

According to Owens, artificial light at night harms nocturnal and diurnal insects. It exhausts them, burns them, blinds them, puts them at a greater risk of being eaten by predators, disrupts their circadian rhythms, and affects their ability to forage and reproduce. We don’t want to attract a bunch of insects to lights that kill them. We can turn our lights off at night, put a motion sensor on security lights and use yellow light bulbs instead of blue ones.

### **Minimize broad-spectrum pesticide use.**

Instead of hiring mosquito control, we can control mosquitos at the larval stage. Tallamy said, “We use neonicotinoids all over the place, mostly for no reason. They’re 7,000 times more toxic to insects than DDT was. You know when you get a seed and it’s pink, that pink is neonicotinoids. It’s on the seed coating of everything, only five percent is taken out by seed, the other 95 percent washes off into our waterways or it blows away.”

### **Raise awareness and encourage the next generation to protect insects.**

Cooper said, “Increasing the awareness of the public to the plight of pollinators has resulted in the creation of many pollinator butterfly gardens.”

We can raise awareness by participating and sharing educational initiatives, citizen science programs and campaigns, like No Mow May and Leave the Leaves.

Wagner suggested, “Just taking 10 percent of your yard or 15 percent of your yard, and turning it into a little wild land becomes a great sort of observatory for the kids, where they can find caterpillars and watch these animals.”

### **Develop and support policy change.**

Dugas said, “The gardener can also advocate on a broader level by joining local conservation efforts, adding their support to preserving public spaces in an ecologically-friendly manner, and supporting/voting for governments, policymakers, corporations, and other officials that embrace policies which minimize damage to insect populations.”



We can help create lawn reduction policies and programs. We can look to actions in other states. In Minnesota, a cost sharing program designed to replenish food sources for pollinators, encourages homeowners to replace their lawn with prairie. Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources has provided technical assistance to residents looking to convert their lawns into trees or meadow. California and Nevada have provided rebates for grass turned into drought-tolerant landscaping.

Dugas added, "The good news is that favor does appear to be tipping towards insect conservation research. Research funding is increasing, and policymakers are starting to pay more attention to the environmental issues that affect insect decline. Supporting policies and corporations that have an interest in insect conservation will help positively influence these trends."

Wagner said, "Nature can use all the help we can give her right now and by making our gardening efforts and our landscaping more nature friendly, there's much to gain."

### **Sources:**

- Bernays, Elizabeth, and Michelle Graham. "On the Evolution of Host Specificity in Phytophagous Arthropods." *Ecology*, vol. 69, no. 4, 1988, pp. 886–892., <https://doi.org/10.2307/1941237>.
- Bird Conservation Initiative (NABCI). "State of the Birds 2022." *State of the Birds 2022*, <https://www.stateofthebirds.org/2022>.
- Cooper, Pamm. Interview. March, 2023.
- Dirzo, R., Young, H. S., Galetti, M., Ceballos, G., Isaac, N. J., & Collen, B. (2014). Defaunation in the anthropocene. *Science*, 345(6195), 401–406. <https://doi.org/10.1126/science.1251817>.
- Dugas, Katherine. Interview. March, 2023.
- Janzen, Daniel H. "Ecological Characterization of a Costa Rican Dry Forest Caterpillar Fauna." *Biotropica*, vol. 20, no. 2, 1988, p. 120., <https://doi.org/10.2307/2388184>.
- Ollerton, Jeff, et al. "How Many Flowering Plants Are Pollinated by Animals?" *Oikos*, vol. 120, no. 3, 2011, pp. 321–326., <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1600-0706.2010.18644.x>.
- Owens, Avalon, et al. "Light Pollution Is a Driver of Insect Declines." *SSRN Electronic Journal*, 2019, <https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.3378835>.
- National Wildlife Federation. "Keystone Plants by Ecoregion." <https://www.nwf.org/Garden-for-Wildlife/About/Native-Plants/keystone-plants-by-ecoregion>
- Narango, Desiree L., et al. "Few Keystone Plant Genera Support the Majority of Lepidoptera Species." *Nature Communications*, vol. 11, no. 1, 2020, <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41467-020-19565-4>.
- Tallamy, Dr. Douglas. Interview. March, 2023.
- Wagner, David L., et al. "Insect Decline in the Anthropocene: Death by a Thousand Cuts." *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, vol. 118, no. 2, 2021, <https://doi.org/10.1073/pnas.2023989118>.



# Upcoming Events

Check <https://ctmga.org/events-page> for registration

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

**WHERE:** Connecticut Science Center, 250 Columbus Blvd., Hartford, CT

**WHEN:** Saturday, May 13, 2023, 11:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. Rain or shine!

The Connecticut Science Center is excited to announce its third annual MakeFest event, in conjunction with their Family Gardening Day in Hartford overlooking the Connecticut River. The event highlights the importance of growing healthy, smart, green and local through engaging on-site and virtual demonstrations, displays, activities and a large plant sale. The event is a planned partnership with the Connecticut Master Gardener Association. A portion of sales goes to the Connecticut Master Gardener Association.



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

## Rhododendron & Azalea Tour

**WHERE:** Connecticut College Arboretum 830 Williams St., New London, CT

**WHEN:** Tuesday, May 23, 2023, 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Rain date: Thursday, May 25, 2023

Free to CMGA members and interns

Registration is limited and opens April 14, 2023



Come join us for an extraordinary tour of the Nancy Moss Fine Native Azalea Garden at the Connecticut College Arboretum in New London. You will enjoy an exquisite display of 192 shrubs representing fifteen different species and three selections of natural hybrids. At least one species can be found in bloom from late April through mid-August. This tour is not to be missed!

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



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

**WHEN:** Wednesday, June 14, 2023, 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. Normally closed to the public, the gardens will be open to CMGA visitors on June 14.

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/>

## Meigs Point Pollinator Garden and Nature Center Tour

**WHERE:** Hammonasset Beach State Park, 1288 Boston Post Rd., Madison, CT

**WHEN:** Wednesday, June 28, 2023, 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.  
Rain date June 29, 2023



Started in the mid-1990s by the Madison Garden Club, the Meigs Point Gardens began with the Butterfly and Pond gardens. In 2015, volunteers working with the UConn Master Gardener Program initiated restoration and expansion. Now the garden center includes ten themed gardens: a native garden, pollinator garden, Native American, Colonial farming and more! The center also provides a history, and a guide for home gardening.

For more information:

<https://www.meigspointnaturecenter.org/the-gardens/>

# Gardening with Arthritis

By Alicia Cornelio  
Editor, Laurel

Gardening is proven to be a healthy hobby, providing both physical and mental health benefits. But, if a gardener has arthritis, gardening can be a challenge. No problem! With a little planning and creativity, the risk of joint pain and injury can be reduced.



Creakyjoints.org

## Take Your Garden to a Higher Level

*Bring the garden closer to you!* Try a flower box or raised garden bed to eliminate stooping. Raised beds, containers or planting tables can reduce the stress on your joints when you're digging and weeding. Container gardening offers looser soil that is easier to reach with hand tools.

## Use Joint-Friendly Tools



If you must garden in the ground, long-handled tools that allow you to stand, not stoop, are very helpful. Use an ergonomic cultivator, which has a curved handle.

It may sound counterintuitive to *use heavier tools* such as a hoe. However, it instantly drops into the ground and lightens the load on your joints because it's doing the work for you.

Gain leverage with easy-to-grip hand tools where you can add attachments that lengthen tool handles. Garden seats are helpful but make sure to stretch frequently.

## Create low-maintenance gardens

Choose plants that can thrive on their own, in case you experience an arthritis flare or simply don't feel comfortable enough to garden for a while. The best way to do this is to *select plants native to your region* that don't require a lot of pruning.

## Practice Correct Posture

Whenever possible, *avoid lifting heavy items*. Recruit your partner, kids, or a friend to help. Try to stock up on smaller bags of soil or compost, rather than one large bag that is difficult to lift. Pushing tools or bags of compost in a wheelbarrow may be easier than carrying them by hand.

If you do need to lift a heavy gardening item, keep it close to your body to reduce stress, as suggested by the University of Washington Orthopaedics and Sports Medicine. If you're picking something off the ground, bend your knees and lift by straightening your legs, while trying to keep your back straight.

"When you get a bag of soil, put it right up against your stomach — don't hold it out, don't toss it over your shoulder, and don't lean with it and try to drag it," says Shawna Coronado, author of *The Wellness Garden*.

Let your larger/stronger joints do the work when possible. Instead of using your fingers to lift an object, try using the flat palm of your hand, your forearms or even your elbows.



## Take Frequent Breaks

When you're gardening, arthritis pain can build if you don't rest your joints properly. *Stop and smell the roses* and have a glass of lemonade. Well-earned, frequent breaks will allow you to appreciate your garden's beauty, plan your next tasks and get more done before fatigue begins. Taking breaks will help reap the mental health benefits of gardening.

It is helpful to gently stretch before you start gardening. This loosens joints and can help prevent injury. One simple stretch: Reach forward as far as possible with your arms straight in front of you.

### Sources:

"Gardening With Arthritis: Tips for Preventing Joint Pain". Arthritis Foundation. March, 2023.  
<https://www.arthritis.org/health-wellness/>

Kloss, Kelsey. "Gardening with Arthritis: 5 Habits to Avoid Pain and Joint Strain". June 26, 2020.  
<https://creakyjoints.org/living-with-arthritis/gardening-with-arthritis/>.



# Connect with Us

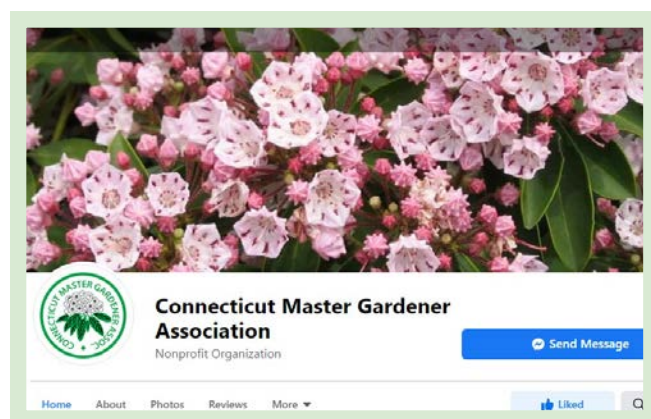
Take CMGA with you, any time, any place!

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.

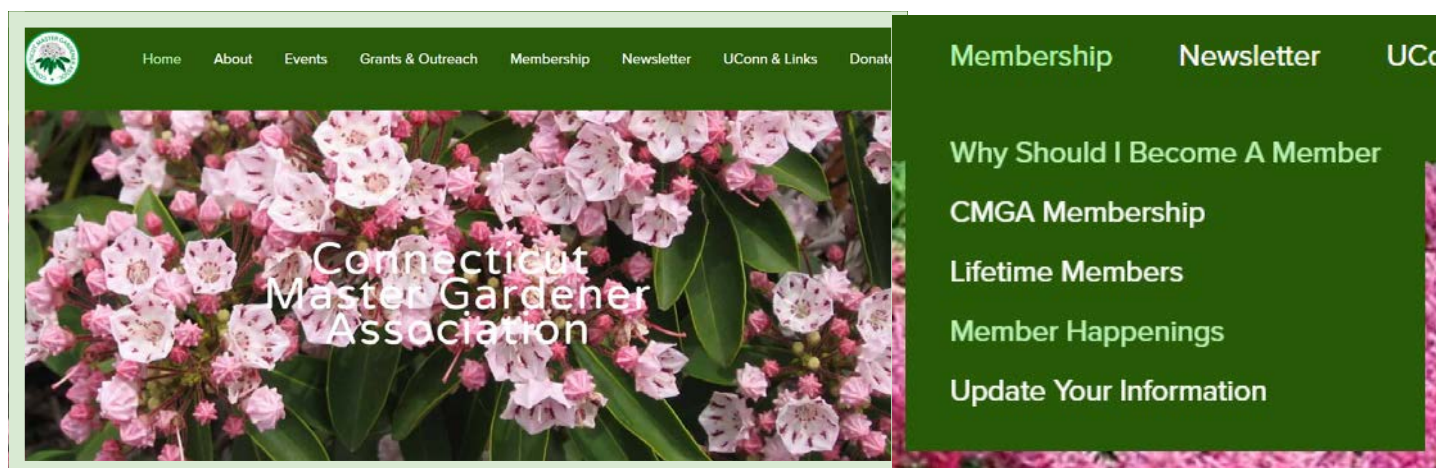
## Facebook since 2010 - [Follow CMGA & Like Our Page](#)

We celebrate 13 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.



## Website since 2005, updated 2022 - [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!



# 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**



ctmastergardener

Following ▾

Message

+👤 ⋮

146 posts    1,076 followers    886 following

**CT Master Gardener Association**  
 CT Master Gardener alumni educate & beautify communities thru events & volunteer projects. <https://ctmga.org>  
[ctmga.org](https://ctmga.org)

Followed by [eightmile\\_wildandscenic](#), [ct.grown](#), [connecticuthistoricgardens](#) + 33 more

🗪 POSTS

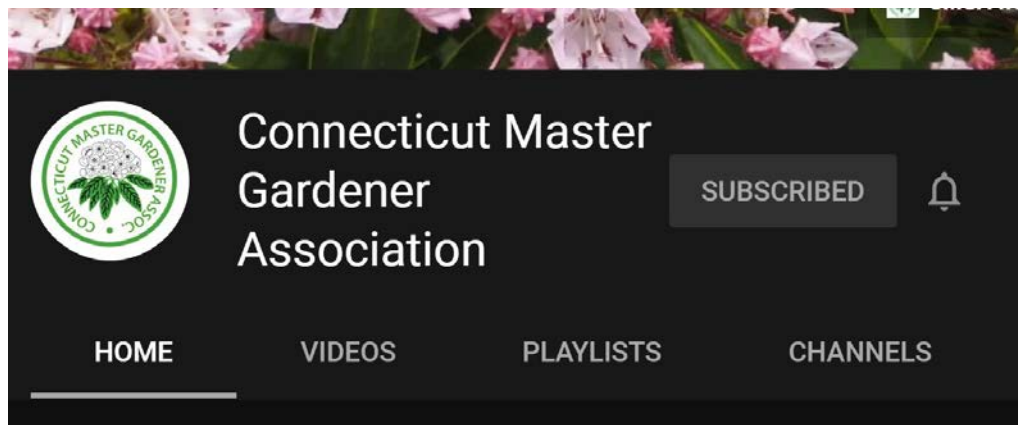
🏷 TAGGED





## 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.



## 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!**

***Stay Connected!!***







# The LAUREL

Connecticut  
Master  
Gardener  
Association  
Newsletter

Summer 2023 Volume 36, No. 3

## *CMGA Semi-Annual Meeting*

**Connecticut Master Gardener Association**

*Invites you to join our*

***Virtual Semi-Annual Meeting***

Tuesday, August 1, 2023 at 9:00 am

**Christine Darnell Speaks on**

**Radically Re-thinking Garden Design**

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

**Online Registration and Information:**

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



***Details on page 4!***



# Officers 2023

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

**V-President:** Mary Ellen Seuch  
vicepres@ctmga.org

**Treasurer:** Deb Prior  
treasurer@ctmga.org

**Secretary:** Jean Fletcher  
secretary@ctmga.org

## Board of Directors:

|                    |                |
|--------------------|----------------|
| Kathy Beaty        | Lin Branham    |
| Valerie Bryan      | Lisa Doggart   |
| Susan Eisenhandler | Ed Hopkins     |
| Cheryl Johnson     | Kim Kelly      |
| Beth Marsh         | Caroline Moran |
| Debbye Rosen       | Susan St. John |
| Mary Jane Toomey   | Jim Ward       |

**CMGA website:** [www.ctmga.org](http://www.ctmga.org)  
jward@ctmga.org

Jim Ward (Webmaster)

**The Laurel:** cmganews@ctmga.org

Alicia Cornelio (Editor)

**Membership:** membership@ctmga.org

Deb Prior (Chair)

**Grants:** grants@ctmga.org

Linette Branham (Chair)

## UConn Extension Center Coordinators

**Fairfield**     **Sandi Wilson**     203-207-3262     sandra.wilson@uconn.edu

**Hartford:**     **Sarah Bailey**     860-409-9050     sarah.bailey@uconn.edu

**Litchfield:**     **TBD**     860-626-6240

**Middlesex:**     **Gail Kalison Reynolds**     860-345-5234     gail.reynolds@uconn.edu

**New Haven:**     **Eric Larson**     203-407-3161     roderick.larson@uconn.edu

**New London:**     **Christopher Dustin**     860-887-1608     Christopher.dustin@uconn.edu

**Stamford:**     **Pat Carroll**     203-322-6971 x18     Patricia.carroll@uconn.edu

**Tolland:**     **TBD**     860-875-3331

**Windham:**     **John Lorusso**     860-774-9600     john.lorusso@uconn.edu

**UConn Home & Garden Education Ctr:**     877-486-6271     www.ladybug.uconn.edu

**State Coordinator MG Program:**     860-409-9053     bonnie.burr@uconn.edu

*The Laurel* is published quarterly for CMGA members.  
Please send information by email to [cmganews@ctmga.org](mailto:cmganews@ctmga.org).  
**Deadlines for publication are January 1, April 1, July 1, and October 1.**  
Copyright © 2023 by the  
**Connecticut Master Gardener Association**

## President's Message

Dear CMGA Members:



What a month! Unlike last July when we had drought conditions to contend with, the rain we have received this year has resulted in an abundance of growth in our gardens which is delightful to observe. I hope you have taken advantage of the weather!

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 visit the beautiful azaleas and rhododendrons at The Nancy Moss Fine Native Azalea Garden at the Connecticut College Arboretum in May, followed in June by a tour of the Meig's Point Nature Center and Pollinator Garden. The arboretum visit gave members a chance to see more than 79 deciduous Rhododendron shrubs while At Meig's Point, members saw first-hand the work local Master Gardeners have done to make this a beautiful, welcoming spot for birds, insects, and all creatures, big and small. In addition to these visits, we had an excellent 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 more than \$800 which will allow us to continue to fund several outreach grants later this summer.

In addition to these member events, this year CMGA again 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 close to 100 interns attending in 5 different locations across the state. CMGA plans to continue these workshops in the future and is grateful for the cooperation of all of the MG coordinators.

Looking ahead to the coming months, we have several exciting events coming up for our members. On August 1<sup>st</sup>, we hope you will join us for our virtual Semi-Annual Meeting. Following a brief business meeting, garden designer Christine Darnell, owner of Christine Darnell Gardens in Lyme, CT, will be speaking on "Radically Re-Thinking Garden Design." On August 8<sup>th</sup> we will be hosting a tour of Lockwood Farms followed by a tour of Hidden Gems Orchard on August 12<sup>th</sup>. Please visit the events page on our website to register for all of these events which are open to the public. <https://ctmga.org/cmga-events>

Finally, we will be hosting our virtual Annual Meeting in November. 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 proposals for the second round of outreach grants. Check our website to learn more about these exciting projects.

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



# CMGA Semi-Annual Meeting

Please join us for our upcoming 2023 virtual Semi-Annual Meeting *on August 1, 2023 at 9:00 am*. The event will begin at 9:00 am with a short business meeting to recap recent CMGA events and efforts. We have also invited to speak, Christine Darnell, from Christine Darnell Gardens, will speak on the topic :

## ***Radically Re-Thinking Garden Design***

*The meeting is free for CMGA Members. Guests and the public are welcome and are asked to make a \$10 contribution to attend. [Register here for the 2023 Semi-Annual Meeting](#). You will receive a Zoom link for the August 1 event.*

Christine Darnell is a horticulturalist and landscape designer based in Lyme, CT with over twenty years of experience. She is known for her beautiful, habitat-based, naturalistic perennial plantings and has run her firm Christine Darnell Gardens since 2011.



Christine teaches Landscape Design for the CT Landscape and Nursery Association, and serves on the Nurserymen's Advisory Foundation. She represents the town of Lyme on their Conservation Committee, and the Eight Mile River Wild and Scenic Watershed Committee. She also serves on the Florence Griswold Museum Buildings and Grounds Committee.



Christine is a frequent contributor to the Connecticut Gardener magazine and the New Haven Register.

# The Spotted Lanternfly Invasion

By Alicia Cornelio  
Editor, Laurel

All images from the [US Department of Agriculture](#)

The Spotted Lanternfly (*Lycorma delicatula*) is native to China and was first detected in Pennsylvania in September 2014 and in Wilton, Connecticut in 2020. Spotted lanternfly populations are currently found in 14 states including: Connecticut, Delaware, Indiana, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Virginia, and West Virginia.

Spotted lanternfly feeds on a wide range of plants including grapes, apples, hops, walnuts and hardwood trees. Connecticut vineyards and fruit orchards are especially vulnerable. Tree-of-Heaven (*Ailanthus altissima*), a non-native tree, is the preferred host.

Spotted lanternflies can be spread long distances by people who move infested material or items containing egg masses. Infestations have been detected along the I-95 corridor in Connecticut.



First Instar Nymph, Final Instar Nymph, Adult of Spotted Lanternfly

## Connecticut Specific Reporting Information

If you think you have found SLF in Connecticut, do not attempt to move any wood or other potentially infested material from the site. Citizens have been encouraged to kill them immediately on sight!! By killing an adult female, you're preventing potentially up to 90 eggs from hatching next spring.

However, Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station (CAES) has a procedure for reporting infestations. Follow the instructions on the Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station Spotted Lanternfly sample submission form to send a dead specimen sample; or take lots of photos and carefully note the location to report your finding to the Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station (CAES) at [ReportSLF@ct.gov](mailto:ReportSLF@ct.gov).

### What is at Risk?

- Almonds
- Apples
- Apricots
- Cherries
- Grapes
- Hops
- Maple Trees
- Nectarines
- Oak Trees
- Peaches
- Pine Trees
- Plums
- Poplar Trees
- Sycamore Trees
- Walnut Trees
- Willow Trees

Spotted lanternfly (SLF) does not fly long distances. It is a hitchhiker. Starting in the fall, SLF seek out outdoor surfaces and lay mud-like egg masses on tree bark, outdoor gear (such as lawnmowers, bikes, and grills), and transportation vehicles.

Spotted lanternfly egg masses are about an inch long and resemble a smear of mud. If found in an area known to have an SLF population, residents should crush them and scrape them off. Connecticut has a [quarantine order](#). If you travel in these areas, thoroughly check your vehicles, trailers, and clothes to avoid accidentally moving the spotted lanternfly.

Report and kill any SLF you see! July and August is when a lot of adults are out there, and will be around until a hard freeze. On the shoreline, a hard freeze is almost in December. Areas where SLF has

established populations as of 2021 can be seen on this [map](#).



### Signs and Symptoms

- Plants that ooze or weep and have a fermented odor
- Buildup of sticky fluid (honeydew) on plants and on the ground underneath infested plants
- Sooty mold on infested plants

### What You Can Do

When preparing for the winter holidays, check outdoor items for spotted lanternfly egg masses, including those items you may bring indoors. Scrape any egg masses and crush. Dispose of the mass in a plastic bag before throwing away.



Inspect your trees (in particular, tree of heaven) and other plants for signs of this pest, especially at dusk and at night when the insects tend to gather in large groups on the trunks or stems of plants.

Inspect bricks, stone, and other smooth surfaces for egg masses.

We can all help to decrease the population of this pest!!



# Great Plain School Pollinator Garden



Grant Recipient

By Alicia Cornelio  
Editor, Laurel

Master Gardener, Anne Mead, class of 2021, has spearheaded a project to improve the pollinator garden and add a vegetable garden at Great Plain Elementary School in Danbury, Connecticut.

Three years ago, students in the SunSational Summer program began to build a garden at Great Plain Elementary School. Last summer, the K- grade 6 students who tended the flower garden realized it needed more perennials that will self seed and come back each year for the garden to be successful. The students also showed a big interest in growing vegetables that they could plant, tend and eat. The renovation project in the courtyard used some of the existing plants and added vegetables this year.

Danbury Schools have a focus on gardening as many of the students' families are from agricultural communities and the administration wants to replicate what they had in their home country. The students like to garden and are really good at it. However, in the city, there is a lack of pollinators to develop flowers and produce. The pollinator garden will increase the amount of pollinators in the area and increase vegetable production this year and in the future.

UConn 4-H provides cooking classes using the vegetables produced for the students and their families. The cooking classes are part of a larger initiative to educate families about healthy eating by incorporating more fruits and vegetables into children's diet. The program's Counselors in Training (CIT) will also help tend the garden. Sodexo, Danbury School System's food service provider, will incorporate more vegetables from the garden into their menus.

Another added feature of the program, a local artist will work with K-grade 6 students on still life painting of the flowers and vegetables grown in the new and improved gardens.







### **The Main Goals of the Project:**

1. Improve three planting beds for easy care, weeding and maintenance.
2. Increase native pollinator plants by ten for a total of fifteen plants.
3. Plant quick to grow vegetables such as snow peas, green beans, radishes, lettuce and tomatoes that can be eaten during the summer months while the program is in session.
4. Pick and eat vegetables as part of the lunch and snack program and increase healthy eating concepts.



### **Community Benefits:**

1. The area around Great Plain School will benefit from having more native pollinators in the area by drawing them to the plants and vegetables of the Great Plain School garden.
2. Students will learn about the life cycle of vegetables and plants, pick the vegetables, attend cooking classes in the program with their families.
3. Students will eat a healthy diet as the vegetables can be part of the program's snack /lunch menu.



# Summer Events

## Lockwood Farms CMGA Tour

808 Evergreen Ave. Hamden, CT 06518

Date: August 8, 2023

Raindate: August 10, 2023

Time: 2:00 PM

Free Event for ALL

Registration required, No limit

Lockwood Farms is the site of the Connecticut Experimental Agricultural Station. Come and learn what the UCONN scientists are studying this year!!



## Hidden Gem Orchard CMGA Tour

2500 Purchase Brook Road. Southbury, CT 06488 <https://www.hiddengemorchar.com/>

Date: August 12, 2023

Raindate: August 19, 2023

Time: 10:00 AM - Noon

Free Event for ALL

Registration required, No limit



Tour a unique apple orchard with varieties dating back to the 16th and 18th century. Hidden Gem is a start up farm, established in 2017, that focuses on apple production. Along with common varieties, they grow uncommon or antique apples that are rarely available. Examples include: Esopus Spitzenburg, which was Thomas Jefferson's favorite apple grown at Monticello; Pink Pearl, a red fleshed apple; Hudson Golden Gem, an apple that looks and tastes like a pear. Porters Perfection and Golden Russet, both antique varieties, are coveted for making premium apple cider. And, two new releases from the Cornell Apple Breeding Program that were just named in 2020 (Cordera and Firecracker). Additional varieties were planted in 2021 including a 16th century French variety (Calville Blanc), prized for pastries and baking, and Wickson, a variety that produces intensely flavored miniature apples.





## Insect Wonders at the Farm

Tuesday, July 25th, 2-6pm All-Ages Event | Spring Valley Student Farm, 104 Spring Manor Rd, Storrs, CT

## Bug Walks

**Wednesday July 26, 2023 10 AM - 2 PM**

All-Ages Event | Middlesex County Extension Center, 1066 Saybrook Road, Haddam, CT, 06438

**Thursday July 27, 2023 10 AM - 2 PM**

All-Ages Event | New London County Extension Center, 562 New London Turnpike, Norwich, CT

## Parasite Day

**Thursday July 27, 2023 12PM - 4PM**

Biology/Physics Building (BPB) lobby, 91 N. Eagleville Rd., UConn Storrs Campus

"Big Beautiful Eyes" David Silsbee

**We Are Now Accepting Entries!**

**Bug Photo Contest**

Categories

- Junior (under 18 years old)
- Senior (18 years old or older)

Submission Deadline:  
July 28th, 2023

"Australian Banded Digger Bees"  
Emily Bryan

The graphic features three photographs of insects. The top left shows a dragonfly with the caption "Big Beautiful Eyes" David Silsbee. The top right shows two Australian Banded Digger Bees on a green stem with the caption "Australian Banded Digger Bees" Emily Bryan. The bottom half shows a close-up of a butterfly with orange and grey wings and black spots.

*For more details and activities, visit:*

[S.UConn.EDU/BUGWEEK](https://S.UConn.EDU/BUGWEEK)

# CMGA Helps our Master Gardener Program in Many Ways

## ***Your Membership Dollars At Work***

The Master Gardener program started at UCONN in 1978. The certification program classes are run by the UCONN Extension Coordinators. In 1987, the Connecticut Master Gardener Association (CMGA), a chapter of the national Master Gardeners, began.

Since 1987, CMGA has supported the UCONN Extension coordinators in many ways. First, each Extension Office is given direct financial support. This money is used to provide scholarships to MG students and support some of the needs of the offices not provided by UCONN.

In addition, CMGA provides these following supports:

- Free admission to the CMGA Symposium for Extension Coordinators
- CMGA members help with the MG Graduation ceremonies at each Extension Office
- Coordinates Tree Shrub Vine ID walks to help educate MG Interns
- CMGA members help MG Interns with their Diagnostic Practice
- MG Interns have complimentary membership to CMGA during their classes to allow them to participate in tours and use nursery discounts

The Master Gardener Program now reaches more diverse students of all ages with its online classes. There are more participants in the online classes than in class lectures. Also classes are now offered on Saturdays and evenings to reach more students.

Some future plans with the Extension Offices is to organize more social events to give MG members and Interns the opportunity to connect and have fun in ways that are not related to working with plants!

Keep reading your email blasts, and check the websites of the [CMGA](#) and [UCONN Extension](#) for more events to keep our MG program growing!



# Connect with Us

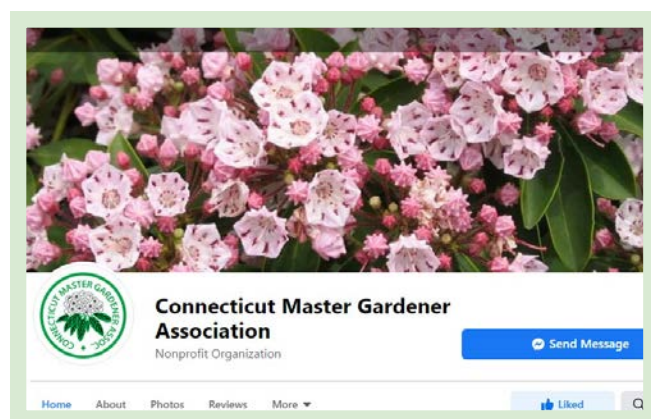
Take CMGA with you, any time, any place!

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.

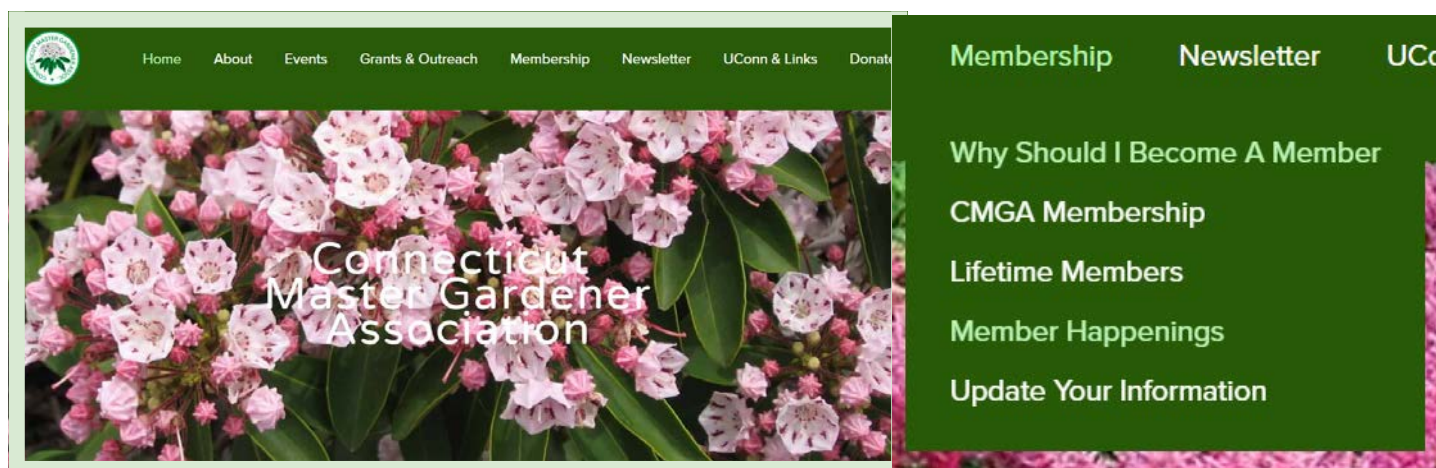
## Facebook since 2010 - [Follow CMGA & Like Our Page](#)

We celebrate 13 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.



## Website since 2005, updated 2022 - [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!





# 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**



ctmastergardener

Following ▾

Message

+👤

⋮

146 posts

1,076 followers

886 following

**CT Master Gardener Association**

CT Master Gardener alumni educate & beautify communities thru events & volunteer projects. <https://ctmga.org>  
[ctmga.org](https://ctmga.org)

Followed by [eightmile\\_wildandscenic](#), [ct.grown](#), [connecticuthistoricgardens](#) + 33 more

📱 POSTS

🏷️ TAGGED



Spring 2023

Master Gardener Course Catalog

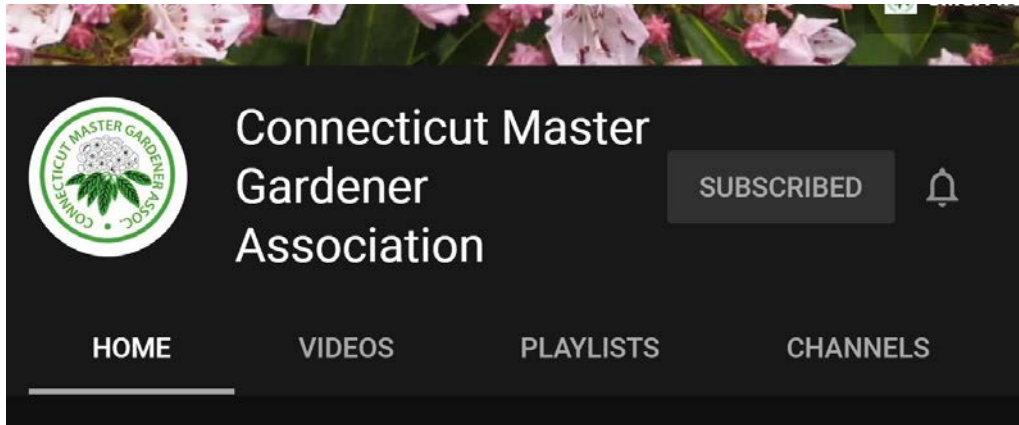


Garden Master Classes are offered through the UConn Extension Master Gardener Program. These classes provide continuing education for Certified Master Gardeners as part of the Advanced Master Gardener certification process. Classes are being offered in various formats - check course description and location. Classes will be added as they are developed - Be sure to check back for additions. **Please plan to register at least 24-hours in advance.** Anyone with an interest in gardening and horticulture is welcome! **Classes are open to the general public - MGs receive a discounted price**



## 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.



## 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!**

***Stay Connected!!***







# The LAUREL

Connecticut  
Master  
Gardener  
Association  
Newsletter

Autumn 2023 Volume 36, No. 4

## *CMGA Annual Meeting*

**Connecticut Master Gardener Association**

*Invites you to join our*

***Virtual Annual Meeting***

**Saturday, November 18, 2023 at 9:00 am**

Registration:  
free for CMGA Members,  
\$10 for non-members  
Online Registration and  
Information:  
[www.ctmga.org/cmga-events](http://www.ctmga.org/cmga-events)



**Kathy Connolly Speaks on**

***Leave the leaves, Save the stems:***

*Wildlife-friendly Winter Landscapes That Work for People, too*



# Officers 2023

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

**V-President:** Mary Ellen Seuch  
vicepres@ctmga.org

**Treasurer:** Deb Prior  
treasurer@ctmga.org

**Secretary:** Jean Fletcher  
secretary@ctmga.org

## Board of Directors:

|                    |                |
|--------------------|----------------|
| Kathy Beaty        | Lin Branham    |
| Valerie Bryan      | Lisa Doggart   |
| Susan Eisenhandler |                |
| Cheryl Johnson     | Kim Kelly      |
| Beth Marsh         | Caroline Moran |
| Debbye Rosen       | Susan St. John |
| Mary Jane Toomey   |                |

**CMGA website:** [www.ctmga.org](http://www.ctmga.org)  
kcassidy@ctmga.org

Kathleen Cassidy (Webmaster)

**The Laurel:** cmganews@ctmga.org

Alicia Cornelio (Editor)

**Membership:** membership@ctmga.org

Kathy Beaty (Chair)

**Grants:** grants@ctmga.org

Linette Branham (Chair)

## UConn Extension Center Coordinators

**Fairfield**     **Sandi Wilson**     203-207-3262     sandra.wilson@uconn.edu

**Hartford:**     **Sarah Bailey**     860-409-9050     sarah.bailey@uconn.edu

**Litchfield:**     **TBD**     860-626-6240

**Middlesex:**     **Gail Kalison Reynolds**     860-345-5234     gail.reynolds@uconn.edu

**New Haven:**     **Eric Larson**     203-407-3161     roderick.larson@uconn.edu

**New London:**     **Christopher Dustin**     860-887-1608     Christopher.dustin@uconn.edu

**Stamford:**     **Pat Carroll**     203-322-6971 x18     Patricia.carroll@uconn.edu

**Tolland:**     **Joanna Woodward**     860-875-3331     Joanna.woodward@uconn.edu

**Windham:**     **John Lorusso**     860-774-9600     john.lorusso@uconn.edu

**UConn Home & Garden Education Ctr:**     877-486-6271     www.ladybug.uconn.edu

**State Coordinator MG Program:**     860-409-9053     bonnie.burr@uconn.edu

*The Laurel* is published quarterly for CMGA members.  
Please send information by email to [cmganews@ctmga.org](mailto:cmganews@ctmga.org).  
**Deadlines for publication are January 1, April 1, July 1, and October 1.**  
Copyright © 2023 by the  
**Connecticut Master Gardener Association**

## President's Message



Dear CMGA Members:

What a wet and warm autumn we have had this year! Most of our gardens are done producing vegetables, though many fall-blooming flowers are still producing color. As gardeners, we try to take advantage of every moment before the first frost, knowing that winter is just around the corner.

I hope you will be able to join us for this year's Annual Meeting, to will be held virtually on Saturday, November 18<sup>th</sup> from 9:00 am to 12:00 pm. The business portion of the meeting will, as usual, feature a review of the year's events and accomplishments, and we will also be voting on the 2024 budget and new officers and board members. We will again be using the ZOOM platform for the Annual Meeting as it has been a relatively easy way for everyone, regardless of location, to attend. Since all current members will be voting, your attendance at this meeting is especially important. Our special guest speaker will be local landscape designer, Kathy Connolly, speaking on the topic, ***"Leave the Leaves, Save the Stems: Wildlife-Friendly Winter Landscapes That Work for People, Too."***

This year, we are moving the kick-off of our annual membership drive until January, and you will begin receiving communications about renewing your annual membership in the coming months. CMGA is open to all Master Gardeners, regardless of when or where they graduated. We hope that you will consider joining us this coming year, whether you are a current member or a Master Gardeners who has not yet become a member.

Lastly, I want to be sure you know that the CMGA Grants Program will see some changes in 2024, which we hope will encourage Master Gardeners to 'think gardening' much earlier! Please read the article about these grant cycle changes in this issue of the Laurel.

In closing, I would like to wish everyone a safe and healthy holiday season. We look forward to seeing you again in the garden in 2024.

Paula Russo, Interim President, CMGA

# CMGA Semi-Annual Meeting

Please join us for our upcoming 2023 virtual Annual Meeting *on November 18, 2023 at 9:00 am*. The event will begin at 9:00 am with a short business meeting to recap recent CMGA events and efforts. We have invited Kathy Connolly, from Speaking of Landscapes, to present the topic :

## ***Leave the Leaves, Save the Stems:***

### ***Wildlife-Friendly Winter Landscapes That Work for People, Too***

*The meeting is free for CMGA Members. Guests and the public are welcome and are asked to make a \$10 contribution to attend. [Register here for the 2023 Annual Meeting](#). You will receive a Zoom link for the November 18 event.*



Kathy Connolly is a landscape designer who specializes in naturalized designs, low-impact landscape techniques, and native plants. She has helped design and install multiple meadows and meadow-gardens and has managed her home meadow for over 25 years.

She gives more than 30 talks and workshops annually for conservation organizations, master gardeners, museums, libraries, land trusts, and garden clubs. Topics include meadows, site preparation, native plants, invasive plants, and pollinator encouragement, among others.

Since 2013, Kathy has published upwards of 150 articles on landscapes, plants, and land care in Connecticut publications. She is active in the Connecticut Invasive Plants Working Group, which awarded her its Leslie J. Mehrhoff Award at the 2022 symposium for her efforts on the topic of invasive plants. Kathy has a masters degree in ecological landscape planning and design from the Conway School in Northampton, MA. She completed the advanced master gardener program and is an Accredited Organic Land Care Professional through the Northeast Organic Farming Association of Connecticut.

Her website is [www.SpeakingofLandscapes.com](http://www.SpeakingofLandscapes.com).



# CMGA Diversity Outreach

By Lisa Daggart  
CMGA Communications Committee

Connecticut Master Gardener Association is initiating a program to share the love of gardening around the state by collaborating with individual towns and cities to encourage gardening knowledge, discussions, and programming with communities not generally reached.

The mission statement of Connecticut Master Gardener Association reads: "Through sponsorship of events and leadership of volunteer projects throughout the state, CMGA members are helping to educate and beautify our communities." We are hoping to expand our projects to include reaching out to the larger community. Our focus will be on growing vegetables which are typically prepared by ethnically diverse groups of our state's citizens.

At present we have started a focus group to speak about planning for next year and would love to have other Master Gardeners join us for the purpose of idea generation, planning, and outreach. We are a group desiring that our CMGA membership and programming will reflect the diversity and interests in our state.

Won't you consider joining us in this new endeavor? Please email the CMGA Diversity Equity Inclusion Committee at

[CMGADiversityEquityInclusionCommittee@ctmga.org](mailto:CMGADiversityEquityInclusionCommittee@ctmga.org)

**Fresh New London Garden**



# CMGA Lifetime Member Nominations

The purpose of the Lifetime Membership Award is to recognize CMGA members who have made extraordinary contributions to their communities through volunteer service on behalf of CMGA and the Master Gardener program. **Any CMGA member may nominate any CMGA member.** (Current members of CMGA are eligible for nomination, however, members currently serving on the CMGA Board of Directors are not.)

Our "Lifetime Membership" award grants all the benefits of full membership while waiving all future dues. Lifetime members are given complimentary admission to all CMGA events, including the Spring Garden Symposium. A Board Committee was established to consider members for this honor. Our Lifetime Membership Award recipients are announced at the Garden Symposium in March.

The main criteria for a CMGA member and Certified Master Gardener are:

- ◆ Significant and sustained impact made in the community through volunteer service on behalf of CMGA and the Master Gardener program
- ◆ Depth, length, and variety of volunteer service to the community
- ◆ Professional leadership including demonstration of depth and responsibility, creativity, ability to build relationships, and technical skills
- ◆ Ability to motivate and recruit others as volunteers
- ◆ Use of innovative approaches to achieve measurable gains in organizational performance and Efficiency

The CMGA Board of Directors asks members for nominations in October of each year. Nominations are reviewed by the Board, and decisions are made by December 15. Please contact us at [jfletcher@ctmga.org](mailto:jfletcher@ctmga.org) if you have a member you wish to be considered for a Lifetime Member Award.







# Join CMGA and Master Gardeners from Bartlett, Bethel and New Haven!

Let's Gather for a Potluck Lunch to Mark the End of the Gardening Season

**WHEN:** Friday, November 3, 2023 at 11:00am

**WHERE:** Pavilion at Sherwood Island State Park, Westport CT

**WHO:** Master Gardeners from:  
Lower Fairfield (Bartlett), Fairfield (Bethel)  
and New Haven Offices

**INFO:** No entry fee, ample parking  
Dress warmly - pavilion is covered by a roof  
but has open sides

*\*Please no glass containers, alcoholic  
beverages or pets\**

**RSVP:** By October 27th by clicking the link below

Register at <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0D4DA4AE2DA4FEC07-44579989-cmga>

Questions? Email CMGA Membership Development & Events at [events@ctmga.org](mailto:events@ctmga.org)



# Hidden Gem Orchard

## A true gem!!

By Alicia Cornelio  
Editor, Laurel

For those of you who missed the tour of Hidden Gem Orchards on August 12, make sure you visit now! The harvest is ready and the orchard's store is open. Check out the 31



different varieties of apples, heirlooms as well as moderns. Cider mills from far away travel to buy the apples uniquely bred for cider. There are apples that are especially good in baking as well as fresh eating.



Hudson Golden Gem apple



Owner James Wargo, grew up in Woodbury and was always interested in agriculture. He obtained a Bachelor of Science degree in Horticulture from The University of Connecticut and a Master of Science in Pomology (fruit science) from Cornell University. Living out of state for 20 years, James realized his dream of owning and operating a fruit farm when the State of Connecticut offered land to lease in Southbury on former farmland of the Southbury Training School.



James always refers to his orchard as “his gem” tucked away in the Southbury hills, so he named the orchard “Hidden Gem”.

The aim is to grow a high-quality, high-end product and he has succeeded. There are some very unique varieties in the orchard. There is an apple sport called Hudson Golden Gem that looks and tastes like a pear, but it is an apple! Other varieties include: Esopus Spitzenburg, which was Thomas Jefferson’s favorite apple grown at Monticello; Pink Pearl, a red fleshed apple; Calville Blanc, a 16th century French variety prized for pastries and baking; Wickson, a variety that produces intensely flavored miniature apples; and Porters Perfection and Golden Russet, both antique varieties coveted for making premium apple cider. Two new releases from the Cornell Apple Breeding Program

that were just named in 2020, Cordera and Firecracker, were added recently.

To see the orchard, it is amazing to learn that the trees were only planted in 2017 and were actually producing two years later! There are 4,000 trees growing on only six acres! Unlike a traditional orchard with full size fruit trees in wide rows, James uses a method called the Vertical Axe planting system, a training method developed in France in the 1970s by J.M. Lespinasse. It reminds me of a modified espalier system. All the trees are grafted on dwarfing rootstock which limits tree size and maximizes planting density. Each tree is made up of a 10-12 foot tall vertical trunk, along which shorter fruiting branches are regularly distributed. The tree shape tends to be conical (like a Christmas tree). In this system, trees are tall and relatively narrow. They are spaced closely together to form a continuous canopy down the tree row. The main advantage is it allows for maximum sunlight interception which is needed for photosynthesis – the process by which plants obtain their energy and food supply. One can see how successful this growing system is when visiting the orchard. Unfortunately for established orchardists, transitioning all at once to this new efficient system would be expensive and time consuming. But, any old orchards that need rejuvenating surely should convert to the Vertical Axe system.





Master Gardeners on the tour were quick to observe the ten foot fence surrounding the entire six acres of the orchard. James was lucky to win a grant to pay for the fencing. Without it, the deer would make quick work of the delicious apples. He also uses "scare eyes" and a sound cannon to keep away birds.

Pollination of the apples is key. James depends on many native pollinators to pollinate the apple flowers. He considers them to be the "work horses" of the pollinators. European honey bees are also used but James feels that they don't perform as well as the native bees in challenging weather and environments.

James was asked if having so many varieties of apples in close proximity affected the fruit. His scientific answer was no.



Apples require cross pollination and the seeds of an apple contain the genetic traits of both apple parent varieties. Whereas, the fruit of the apples grows true to the tree it is on. Orchardists don't ever use the seeds of an apple to create new trees. To stay true to the apple variety, an orchardist must take a cutting from that particular apple tree and graft the stem's bud on a root stock.

Don't miss visiting this unique orchard. For more information see:

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



# Tree, Shrub, Vine Walks for Interns Is Well Received

By Kathy Beaty  
CMGA Communications Committee

CMGA is the alumni association for graduates of the Connecticut Master Gardener program. Graduating members provide opportunities to share their knowledge and love of gardening with others. Through sponsorship of events and leadership of volunteer projects throughout the state, CMGA members are helping to educate and beautify our communities. The Master Gardener program is a national program with chapters in every state.

One of the core commitments of the CMGA is to support interns enrolled in the UConn Extension Master Gardener Program.

With the aftermath of the Covid pandemic, we were finally able to resume a sense of normalcy. The CMGA Membership & Events Committee was brainstorming on ways we could help the Master Gardener interns as well as support the Extension Coordinators. One of the big ideas was to offer interns assistance on their required Tree, Shrub, & Vine (TSV) project.

In the Spring of 2022, CMGA launched our first TSV I.D. Walk program exclusively for the Master Garden interns. Working in collaboration with Sarah Bailey, then State Coordinator of the Master Gardener Program. CMGA tailored a program to plants listed on their project sheet, emphasizing native trees, shrubs, and vines of the area.





We were mindful to offer these walks in different locations of the state to accommodate interns from all five Branch Extension offices.

The program began in May, 2022 after the interns had finished their class work.

It featured visits to Connecticut College Arboretum in New London; Cedar Hill Cemetery in Hartford; Sherwood Island in Westport; James L. Goodwin Forest in Hampton; and Edgerton Park in New Haven. Each tour was facilitated by an experienced arborist, or distinguished plant expert. At several locations, the interns were

allowed to collect samples for their TSV project.

CMGA received such positive feedback, the program was offered again in May, 2023. Next, CMGA offered an additional Winter Walk at the Marsh Botanical Garden in New Haven, as well the five Spring walks.

The 2023 venues included Elizabeth Park, Connecticut College Arboretum, Sherwood Island, James L. Goodwin Forest, and a second visit to the Marsh Botanical Garden. Interns were allowed to collect their samples.

We've been encouraged by the positive feedback from both the interns and the Extension Coordinators. And so, it is our intention to offer this opportunity again for the Class of 2024.





# Cohen Woodlands Butterfly-Pollinator Garden

By Alicia Cornelio  
Editor, Laurel

CMGA



Grant Recipient

Created in 2014 out of the 206 acre Cohen Woodlands, donated to the town by Ruby Cohen, this garden has been regularly supported by CMGA grants.

Pollinator populations, including bees and butterflies, are declining due to environmental threats, habitat loss, chemical use in gardens and property, invasive plant species, and parasites. The goal of this garden project is to educate the public on this issue and demonstrate how to garden for butterflies and pollinators.

This year, new CMGA member Barbara Rafferty was awarded a grant to revitalize the butterfly-pollinator garden. Barbara is the new garden coordinator for all the gardens in the Colchester Garden Club. The Butterfly-Pollinator Garden has four main sections. They contain perennials and shrubs that serve to provide food, nectar and/or shelter for birds, beneficial insects, pollinators, various lepidoptera and specifically for the decreasing population of monarch butterflies.

Cohen Woodlands, the property which contains the gardens, is certified as a wildlife habitat through the National Wildlife Federation. The four Butterfly-Pollinator gardens are certified as a Monarch Waystation through MonarchWatch.

The garden began as a community outreach project in 2014, lead by CMGA member Katherine Kosiba, to create an educational butterfly-pollinator garden near the park's sign. Nine years later, the gardens require major revitalization. Large parts of the gardens have matured to the point that many of the plants have either become too large for their spaces or have widely reseeded, making the garden crowded with a significant number of the same plant. The plan is to dig out multiples of the same plant to create more space and to incorporate new and different native or nativar plants and shrubs in those areas, adding more diversity to the gardens.





Many perennials were lost to the heat and drought from last summer and need to be replaced with natives. The grant will also help to replace some of the non-native shrubs in the gardens with native ones.

This project benefits the community in many ways. First, visitors are met with a beautiful, colorful landscape that enhances the overall entrance to the gardens. More importantly, as they stroll through the gardens, they can observe, hear, and appreciate the



vibrant nature of the insects/pollinators/butterflies busy at work there. Often visitors will ask about particular plants or insects that inhabit the garden. There are educational pamphlets about the gardens that are available to the general public in gardens as well as in the town's library. Information about the gardens can also be posted on an educational board that is near the gazebo and adjacent to the gardens. Also, the Butterfly Garden and the surrounding property provides school children with a place to pursue science activities.

## Grants program sees changes in 2024!

The CMGA Grants Program will see some BIG changes in 2024, which will encourage master gardeners to "think gardening" much sooner.

A new Winter cycle with applications accepted from November 15, 2023 - January 5, 2024; grants in this cycle will be awarded in early February 2024.

A new Spring cycle with applications accepted from April 15, 2024 - May 10 2024; grants in this cycle will be awarded in early June 2024.

The maximum amount of a grant will increase to \$500.

The elimination of a summer grants cycle.

The gardening season may be almost over, but it's never too early to begin to "think gardening" for 2024.

# Swords to Plowshares

## Guns into Garden Tools

By Alicia Cornelio  
Editor, Laurel

The Swords to Plowshares program began in January, 2017 and has chapters in every region of the country. The program is focused on reducing gun violence in our communities. The strategy to this problem is to convert guns into tools of life, and then use those tools to the betterment of the community, with the goal of reducing senseless gun deaths. They work with community groups, religious organizations, businesses, police departments, and hospitals to reach their goals. They believe in the value of gun buybacks to remove unwanted firearms from homes and neighborhoods. Then the destroyed guns are transformed into gardening tools, jewelry, and works of art. Another organization with similar goals is Guns to Gardens, a national organization of which Swords to Plowshares is a member.

*"These gardening tools provide incentives for turning vacant land into gardens, or for expanding and enriching existing gardens in designated neighborhoods. They provide the residents of those neighborhoods with positive reinforcement and a heightened sense of community pride."*

Most of the events surround a demonstration of blacksmithing techniques to transform the guns into tools. Also, they speak about their mission to reduce gun violence. Then, they donate their newly created tools to agricultural high schools and community gardens.

Many municipalities, religious and educational organizations are holding events where Swords to Plowshares is invited to demonstrate their unique blacksmithing. Swords to Plowshares provides these organizations with a very positive way to dispose of guns in seizure or buy back situations.



[www.s2pnortheast.org](http://www.s2pnortheast.org)



# Connect with Us

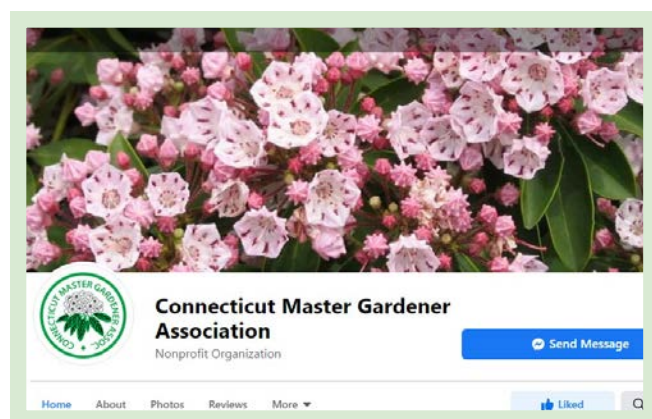
Take CMGA with you, any time, any place!

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.

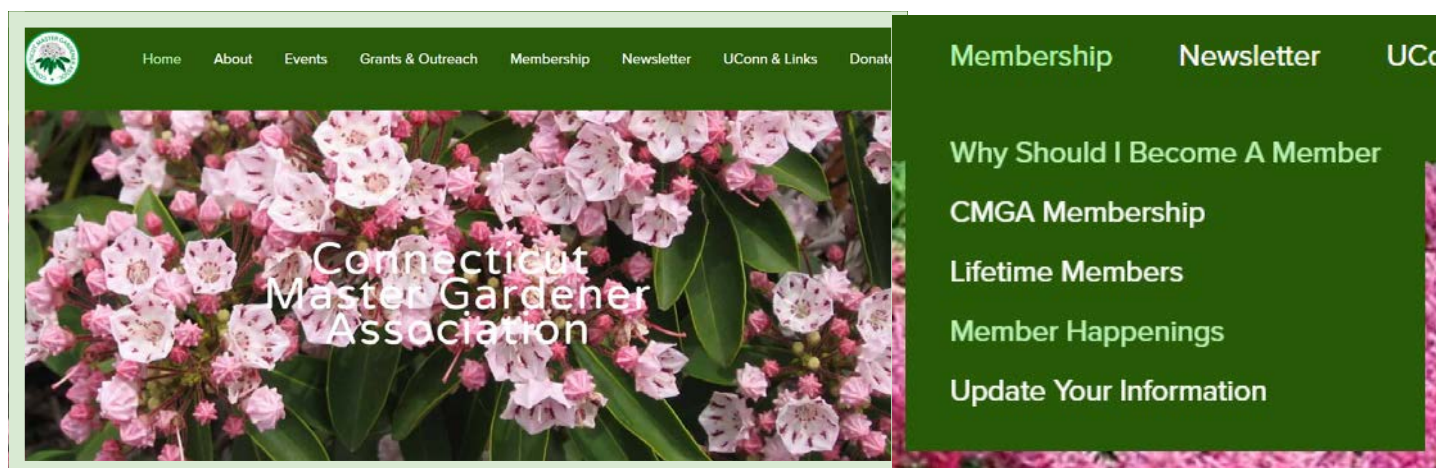
## Facebook since 2010 - [Follow CMGA & Like Our Page](#)

We celebrate 13 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.



## Website since 2005, updated 2022 - [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!





# 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**



ctmastergardener

Following ▾

Message

+👤

⋮

146 posts

1,076 followers

886 following

**CT Master Gardener Association**

CT Master Gardener alumni educate & beautify communities thru events & volunteer projects. <https://ctmga.org>  
[ctmga.org](https://ctmga.org)

Followed by [eightmile\\_wildandscenic](#), [ct.grown](#), [connecticuthistoricgardens](#) + 33 more

You can follow us on Instagram [@ctmastergardener](#), or open these images to view our recent posts.



**2023 Master Gardener Certification Program Syllabus**

**Location:** The 2023 program will be a hybrid program with two in-person Saturday sessions, September 16 & 30 along with two evening online sessions, September 21 & 28 via World 4. The two Saturday classes will be held at the Washburn County Extension Center, 1000 Lakeshore Rd., Washburn, CT 06488.

**Textbooks:** There will not be specific required readings for this class but we suggest that you acquire at least one good reference book and one that we found useful on the Inside Book of Composting, Deborah L. Martin & Nancy Glendon, editors, Rodale Press, 1992 (ISBN 0-8759-0000-0 paperback) or The Complete Composting Guide by Barbara Pleasant & Deborah L. Martin (Henry Publishing 2005) (ISBN 0-815-08857-5).

More excellent information can be found in the Cornell Master Composter Resource Manual, which is an abbreviated list of a PDF file called the Cornell Waste Management Institute Master Composter Program Guide & Resource Manual. The PDF file can be downloaded at <https://www.cornell.edu/extension/education/extensionmanual.pdf>. If you are having difficulty accessing this address, email "Cornell Master Composter Resource Manual" into Google+. The New York City Master Composter manual (<https://www.cornell.edu/extension/education/extensionmanual.pdf>) also has lots of good information especially when thinking about setting up an outreach education program.

**CLASS ONE:** Saturday, September 16, 2023, 10 am - 2:30 pm  
**Instructor & Field Observer of Program:**  
**Coordinator:** Diana Petrowski, UCare Soil System Analyst & Master Composter Educator

**Book: Principles of Composting**  
**Lecturer:** Chad Reynolds, MS E.S., UCare Master Gardener & Master Composter Coordinator, Middlebury College Extension of Care

**Compost in Compost Chemistry - Compostants & Testing**  
**Lecturer:** Robert F. Runko, Ph.D., UVM Master Composter & Recycler, UVM

**Tour of Washburn Extension Office Compost display area**  
**LED by:** Susan Whelan, Master Composter & Master Gardener

**CLASS THREE:** Thursday, September 21, 2023 from 6:30 - 9:00 pm  
**Soilloging & Compost Recipe & Using Compost Calculators**  
**Lecturer:** Rosemary Madala, Ph.D., Faculty, Owner and Operator of Probi & Whisk Composting in Washburn, VT



**Lockwood Farms Tour - NEW DATE & TIME**

Tuesday, August 29, 2023  
10:00 AM  
Lockwood Farm - Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station (map)

**Cancelled due to forecast...looking forward to next year!**

Did you ever wonder exactly what happens at the beginning of an experiment? Join us for



