



# The LAUREL

Connecticut  
Master  
Gardener  
Association  
Newsletter

Winter 2024 Volume 37, No. 1

## Connecticut Master Gardener Association 2024 Garden Symposium



**Our fourth virtual event  
Saturday, March 9th, 2024**

*"Gardening for Good"  
Resilience*

*The New Tool for Your Garden Shed*

[Register here](#)



**Nancy Lawson**

Key Note Speaker

*A World of Discovery  
How Science and Heart  
Can Make You a More  
Ecological Gardener*

*See page 4 for speaker descriptions*

# Officers 2024

<b>President:</b>	Paula Russo president@ctmga.org	<b>Board of Directors:</b>	
<b>V-President:</b>	Caroline Moran vicepres@ctmga.org	Kathy Beaty	Valerie Bryan
<b>Treasurer:</b>	Deb Prior Mary Ellen Seuch, Asst. treasurer@ctmga.org	Lisa Doggart	
<b>Secretary:</b>	Jean Fletcher Susan St. John, Asst. secretary@ctmga.org	Susan Eisenhandler	Gwyn Grant
		Cheryl Johnson	Kim Kelly
		Robert Lavorgna	Beth Marsh
		Debbye Rosen	
		Mary Jane Toomey	
		Natalie Wyse	

<b>CMGA website:</b>	<a href="http://www.ctmga.org">www.ctmga.org</a> webinfo@ctmga.org	Gloria Shusdock (Webmaster)
<b>The Laurel:</b>	cmganews@ctmga.org	Alicia Cornelio (Editor)
<b>Membership:</b>	membership@ctmga.org	Kathy Beaty, Caroline Moran (Co-chair)
<b>Grants:</b>	grants@ctmga.org	Mary Ellen Seuch

<b>UConn Extension Center Coordinators</b>			
<b>Fairfield</b>	<b>Sandi Wilson</b>	203-207-3262	sandra.wilson@uconn.edu
<b>Hartford:</b>	<b>Sarah Bailey</b>	860-409-9050	sarah.bailey@uconn.edu
<b>Litchfield:</b>	<b>Zachary Bull</b>	860-626-6240	zachary.bull @uconn.edu
<b>Middlesex:</b>	<b>Gail Kalison Reynolds</b>	860-345-5234	gail.reynolds@uconn.edu
<b>New Haven:</b>	<b>Eric Larson</b>	203-407-3161	roderick.larson@uconn.edu
<b>New London:</b>	<b>Joanna Woodward</b>	860-3887-1608	joanna.woodward @uconn.edu
<b>Stamford:</b>	<b>Pat Carroll</b>	203-322-6971 x18	patc.mgcoord@gmail.com
<b>Tolland:</b>	<b>John Lorusso (int)</b>	860-875-3331	john.lorusso@uconn.edu
<b>Windham:</b>	<b>John Lorusso</b>	860-774-9600	john.lorusso@uconn.edu
<b>UConn Home &amp; Garden Education Ctr:</b>		877-486-6271	www.ladybug.uconn.edu
<b>State Coordinator for the MG Program:</b>	<b>TBD</b>	860-409-9053	
<p><b>The Laurel</b> is published quarterly for CMGA members.  Please send information by email to <a href="mailto:cmganews@ctmga.org">cmganews@ctmga.org</a>.  <b>Deadlines for publication are January 1, April 1, July 1, and October 1.</b>  Copyright © 2024 by the  <b>Connecticut Master Gardener Association</b></p>			

## President's Message

Dear CMGA Members:



Happy 2024! I want to begin, as I do each year, 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 funds generated by your dues allows us to continue our support of the UCONN Master Gardener program as well as the many amazing outreach projects in which the master gardener community is involved.

As we all eagerly await the sunshine and warmth of spring, I am happy to say that our 31st Annual Garden Symposium is planned for March 9. After much discussion, we have decided to continue to hold a virtual event as it allows us to bring in speakers from a wide geographical area and ensures we will not have worry about the possibility of bad weather. Indeed, our post-symposium surveys suggest that, overall, our members are content with the virtual format.

This year we continue the broad focus of gardening for good with the theme, Gardening for Good – Resilience: The New Tool in Your Shed. The day will start with our keynote speaker, Nancy Lawson, whose presentation is entitled: A World of Discovery: How Science and Heart Can Make You a More Ecological Gardener. Nancy, a certified Chesapeake Bay Landscape Professional and master naturalist, is the author of several books including, *The Humane Gardener: Nurturing a Backyard Habitat for Wildlife*. For now, please save the date and watch your email for more information on the program and how to register for this exciting event.

As an organization, CMGA's success depends on its members and its energetic and dedicated board members. This year we are happy to welcome three new board members, Gwyn Grant, from Fairfield County, Bob Lavorgna from Litchfield County and Nat Wyse from Hartford County. At the same time, we thank former board members Marge Bingham, Linette Branham and Edward Hopkins for their service. We are grateful for the time and energy these individuals have given in service to CMGA and we wish them well in all of their future endeavors.

This month marks the start of the 2024 Master Gardener program and we wish success to the new interns as we 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.

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. 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 9 for the CMGA Virtual Garden Symposium. Registration will open soon!

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

# 2024 CMGA Annual Symposium

## March 9, 2024 - 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

There are four cost levels to attend the event.

Non-members:	\$90	
Members:	\$60	CMGA Members who support fund-raising goals for the Symposium
Interns:	\$40	CMGA Master Gardener Students
Supported:	\$40	Where the standard fee may be a challenge

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

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

### Program:

9:30 – 10:30	Nancy Lawson A World of Discovery: How Science and Heart Can Make You a More Ecological Gardener
11:00 – 12:00	Tradd Cotter Mushrooms Molds and Mycorrhizae
Noon – 12:45	LUNCH break
12:45-1:45	Kim Shearer Forecasting the Future: Developing Resilience in our Developed Landscapes
2:15 – 3:15	Tom Christopher Breakthroughs in Environmentally Friendly Gardening



## Symposium Speakers



Keynote Speaker

**Nancy Lawson** is the author of *The Humane Gardener: Nurturing a Backyard Habitat for Wildlife* and *Wildscape: Trilling Chipmunks, Beckoning Blooms, Salty Butterflies, and other Sensory Wonders of Nature*. A nature writer, habitat consultant, popular speaker, and founder of The Humane Gardener, LLC, she pioneers creative, wildlife-friendly landscaping methods. Her presentations at diverse venues, from national wildlife refuges to local wildflower preserves, have inspired even seasoned horticulturists and wildlife experts to look at their landscapes in a new way. Certified as a Chesapeake Bay Landscape Professional and master naturalist, Nancy

co-chairs Howard County Bee City in Maryland and helped launch a community science project, Monarch Rx, based on scientific discoveries made in her own garden. Nancy's books, garden, advocacy, and scientific endeavors have been featured in The New York Times, The Washington Post, O magazine, Entomology Today, and Ecological Entomology.



**Tradd Cotter** is a microbiologist, professional mycologist and organic gardener who has been tissue culturing, collecting native fungi in the Southeast and cultivating fungi both commercially and experimentally for more than 22 years. In 1996 he founded Mushroom Mountain, which he owns and operates with his wife, Olga. The company, his platform for exploring applications for mushrooms in various industries, currently maintains more than 200 species of fungi for food production, mycoremediation of environmental pollutants and natural alternatives to chemical

pesticides. He's particularly fond of coming up with low-tech and no-tech cultivation strategies so that anyone can grow mushrooms on just about anything, anywhere in the world.

## Symposium Speakers

### Continued



**Kim Shearer**, of the Morton Arboretum, advances the Arboretum's mission to make the world a greener, healthier, and more beautiful place by introducing plant selections with broad adaptability, disease resistance, and pest resistance.

Kim's expertise with trees and shrubs is complemented by her knowledge of selective breeding for disease resistance and environmental stress tolerance (drought, heat, cold, and salt).

The Haerther New Plant Development Program focuses on the breeding, selection, and evaluation of woody landscape plants for urban and suburban environments. Through collaborations with external partners and stakeholders, new cultivars are introduced to the commercial nursery industry. Many of these selections are promoted through the brand Chicagoland Gro.



If he's not gardening, **Tom Christopher** is probably in the WESU FM radio studio, working on his weekly program and podcast, "Growing Greener." The goal is to make your landscape healthier, more beautiful, more sustainable, and more fun. Growing Greener currently broadcasts on 18 radio stations and downloads as a podcast to 10,000 listeners a month.

A graduate of the New York Botanical Garden School of Professional Horticulture, Tom is the author of 16 books about gardening, among which is the award-winning Garden Revolution, which he co-authored with pioneering ecological landscape designer Larry Weaner. Together, they share strategies for bringing the landscape into harmony with the local ecosystem, banishing weeds, and promoting natives while encouraging the garden to plant itself. Tom also publishes a syndicated weekly gardening column that appears in newspapers throughout central New England and upstate New York.

Outside the garden, Tom's interests extend to stone wall building and making vintage hard cider every fall from heirloom apples with his wife Suzanne. A long-time resident of Middletown, CT, he gardens there, and on the weekends in the Berkshire Hills of western Massachusetts.

# Upcoming Events



## UCONN Master Gardener Classes

January and September of each year, the Spring and Fall Garden Master Class catalogs are published. Check out the many classes available. Most classes are two hours in length.

[See the new catalog here](#)

## Tree and Ornaments Donations

CMGA is planning to participate in the annual Festival of Trees in December of 2024. If you would like to donate a reusable tree or ornaments this year (before you put everything away!) please contact [memberdevents@ctmga.org](mailto:memberdevents@ctmga.org). A theme will be announced soon. We'd love your help and donations!



## Please Join or Renew Your Membership Today

Membership dues for 2024 remain at \$30.

Annual dues provide CMGA with its primary source of funding for the many Master Gardener-led community projects throughout the state as well as the support for the UConn Master Gardener program. We thank you for your prior support and hope you will continue by becoming a member for 2024.

Help us Go Green by using our simple online form that allows for Credit Card or PayPal payments. Click on the link below to use our secure online application. Thank you again for your continued support.

[Renew Your Membership Here](#)



# Bethel School Garden

## A New Potting Bench for the Students

CMGA



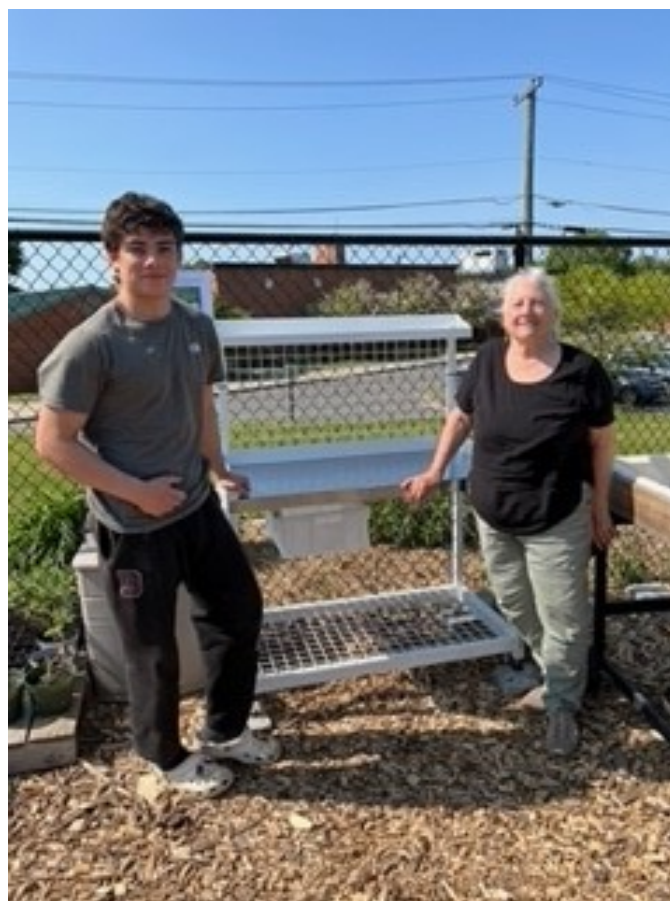
Grant Recipient

CMGA members Jamie S. McDonald and Sandra Wilson have been working for ten years with the students of Bethel F. A. Berry School to promote the love of gardening.

This year CMGA provided a grant to help create a potting bench for first and second grade students. 40 students participated in the spring of 2023 and 100 students participated in the fall of 2023.

250 seed garlic were planted in the fall of 2023. The children will be back in the spring of 2024 to direct seed in the potting bench, plant sets and start seed boxes.

The goal this year is to start a seed bank of vegetable crops.





# Hollis Garden

## A Gem in Lakeland

By Alicia Cornelio  
Editor, Laurel

For all the snowbirds and vacationers going to Florida this winter, there is more to do than visit the amusement parks and beaches. Florida has a nice system of state parks. Even some cities have beautiful gardens worth touring. One of these cities is Lakeland.



Hollis Garden is a public, formal botanical garden in Lakeland, Florida, between Tampa and Orlando. Hollis Garden is a botanical display garden set in a neo-classical architectural environment complete with patterned flower beds, public art, and ornamental fountains. Hollis Garden is on a 1.2-acre site located within historic Lake Mirror Park.

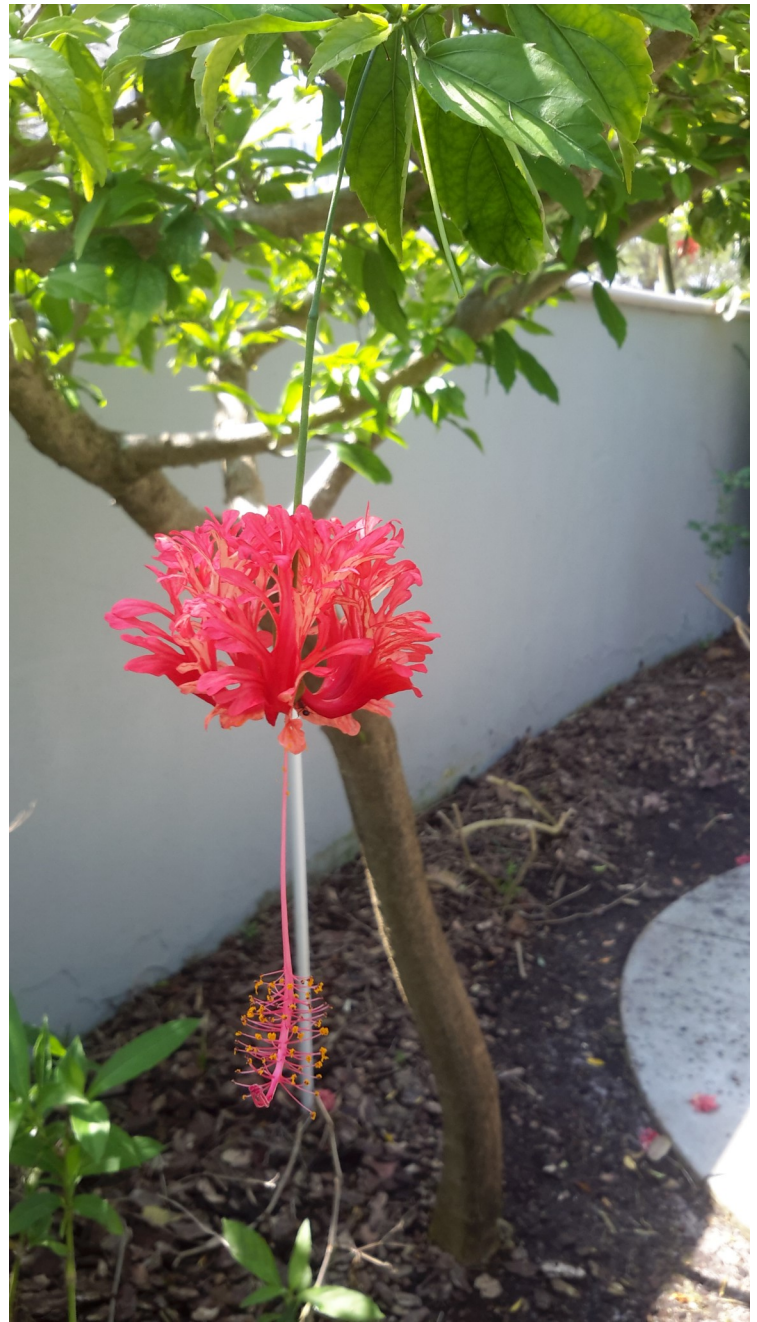




It is divided into sixteen sections or "rooms" with plantings being rotated throughout the year. Here you will find over ten thousand flowers, ornamental shrubs, and native trees. And the best part: the admission is free.







The park opened December 8, 2000, fulfilling a vision of the center's original architect that dated all the way back to 1928. Hollis Garden is a popular place to take pictures for any occasion. You can spend an hour or the full day just relaxing there.





The original design by Charles Wellford Leavitt, a student of Frederik Law Olmsted, around Mirror Lake was supposed to include a garden. But when the stock market crashed in 1929, only the concrete promenade around Mirror Lake was completed.

Finally, in 1998, Mark Hollis, president of the Publix Grocery Store chain, and his wife Lynn donated one million dollars for the construction of the gardens. The botanical garden was designed based on gardens they saw during a trip to New Zealand.

In Hollis Garden, you can find over 10,000 flowers, ornamental shrubs, native trees and several water displays – all of which tell the a story of Florida’s history. Florida limestone is represented in the grotto, native plants in the gardens, and vegetables and herbs. There are many rare species, including a frankincense tree. The strange fruit collection includes the peanut butter fruit and the blackberry jam fruit. One garden room is the Trees of America that features cuttings from famous trees. There is a Susan B. Anthony sycamore tree from a cutting near her grave and a cutting from a weeping willow from Elvis Presley’s Graceland estate.

“Our goal is to make sure that when people visit Hollis Garden, they see something new and their experience is different every time they visit,” explained Kevin Polk, the supervisor of the gardens.



# 2023 Master Gardener Graduates

## Hartford Litchfield

Elizabeth Adler  
Jane Andresen  
Susan Bailey  
Carol Bingham  
Zachary Bull  
Carmela Calafiore  
Cynthia Carter  
Sally Chesney  
Laura Conner  
Autumn Cyr  
Marjorie Farley  
Elizabeth Fenton  
Letitia Ferguson  
Briana Garneau  
Scott Giguere  
Richard Hanson  
Paula Kille  
Wynne Lou  
Leslie Mathews  
Suzanne Miller  
Erica Pierce  
Zachary Potter-Vose  
Karin Przygocki  
Cindy Salmoiraghi  
Casey Shaiken  
Michelle Wallace  
Leonard Wik  
Roxanne Witmer-DeWitt  
Christina Wooden

## Lower Fairfield Stamford

Jodi Blumenfield  
Olga Carmody  
Michael Cusack  
Richard Erickson  
Emily Fountain  
Sherry Greer  
Jill Hooper  
Michele Kohari  
Anthony Martin Jr  
Kate Nareski  
Yvelise Perez  
Kathleen Raby  
Melodie Rak  
Yvonne Rivera  
Marilyn Shapiro  
Michele Sienkiewicz  
Jessamine Smith  
Trisha Tozzi  
Karen Trickett  
Susan Vogel  
Gail Walter  
Joan Wheeler  
Sandra Yates

## New Haven Bethel

Moira Birmingham  
Catherine Blansfield  
Sydney Brooks-Raha  
Joanne Cafiero  
Alison Card  
Barbara Carmignani  
Liz Doyle-Santini  
Taylor Dunham  
Giulia Gambale  
Gwyn Grant  
Theresa Harper  
Yazad Jal  
Jennifer Jones  
Elizabeth Lee  
Ellie Lieberman  
Stacy Maddern  
Kenneth Marangell  
Susan Mosler  
Joi Prudhomme  
Christiana Ricchezza  
Robb Sauerhoff  
Sunanda Saxena  
Dorothy Schmidt  
Susan Stein  
Brian Truskowski  
Enrene van Tonder  
Laura Weinman  
Kathryn Wheeler  
Jordan Williams  
Barbara Wood



# 2023 Master Gardener Graduates

## New London Middlesex

Lynne Bradbury  
Nancy Brault  
Amanda Buberger  
Patricia Decker  
Debra Dee  
Joan Domin  
Joelene Foley  
Paul Geise  
Kim Henderson  
Katherine Leslie  
Melissa Liles  
Laura Ludington  
Patricia Ludwig  
Lisa Mangano  
Mariann Mankowski  
Kit McKinnon  
Bethany Naccarato  
Nancy O’Brien  
Sandy Pardes  
Penny Parmelee  
Kelly Rapuano  
Pamela Reiss  
Deborah Rutter  
Allison Schmitz  
Susan Shanley  
Kathleen Slimon  
Beth Stewart-Kelly  
Cynthia Stritzel  
Margie Sydney  
Joanne Tedford  
Jean Wilson

## Tolland Windham

Sally Anderson  
Bonnie Appleton  
Vicki DeLeo  
Erika DuPlessis  
Dawn Erikson  
Wendy Fusco  
Suzanne Hudd  
Jennifer Hulstein  
Paula Kille  
Riley Lange  
Shannon Lange  
Robert MacGregor  
Anita McMahon  
Dennis Pierce  
Rachel Rosen  
Teri Stratton  
Janice Tomanelli  
Joan Valcourt  
Jean Vose  
Katie Wilcock





# 2023 Master Gardener Advancements

## Hartford and Litchfield Counties

### **Advanced**

Val Bryan  
Shirley Clevenger  
Jill Peters-Gee

### **Bronze**

Val Bryan  
Annemarie Riemer  
Gina Trusiewicz

### **Gold**

Beth Ann Loveland Sennett  
Carolyn Wilcox

### **Ruby**

Kathy Beaty

### **Sapphire**

Marilyn Palmer

## Middlesex and New London Counties

### **Advanced**

Veronika Burlingham  
Carol Chappell  
Kathly Meyering  
Jean Rocheleau

### **Silver**

Sherri-ann Martin  
David Smith

### **Gold**

Joan Lazer

### **Ruby**

Jack Leary

### **Sapphire Bronze**

Gail Reynolds

### **Cobalt**

Ken Sherrick

## Fairfield & New Haven Counties

### **Advanced**

Cheryl Henri  
Nancy Knorr  
Jamie McDonald  
Pam Roman  
Julie Kirikowic  
Kandra Houston  
Mary Jane Toomey  
Liz Santamaria

### **Bronze**

Andrea Sarnik

### **Silver**

Diana Cook  
Lindy Hennessy  
Jane Jawlik  
Lia Scammon  
Jane Yankocy

### **Gold**

Jim Doyle  
Jim Sicilia

### **Ruby Bronze**

Barbara Stauder

### **Ruby Gold**

Fran Litwin

### **Sapphire**

Marilyn Palmer

### **Emerald**

Allan Brown

**Tolland & Windham Counties**

**Advanced**  
Susan Ristau

**Ruby**  
Jean Laughman

**Lower Fairfield County (Bartlett)**

**Advanced Bronze**  
Kelle Ruden NA  
Beth Marsh

**Ruby**  
Cheryl Cappiali

**Emerald Bronze**  
Lesley Gehr



# Connect with Us

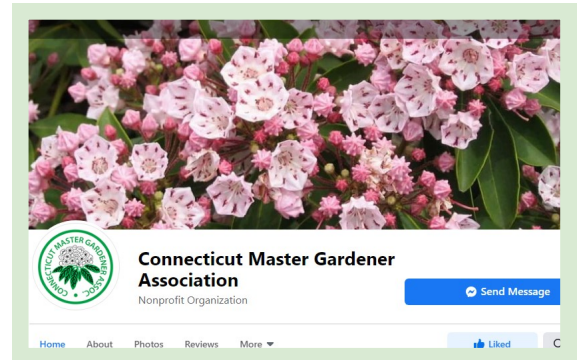
Take CMGA with you, any time, any place!

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](#)

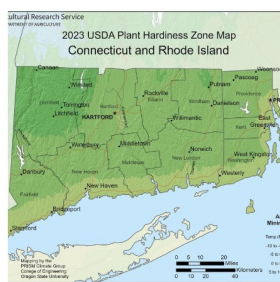
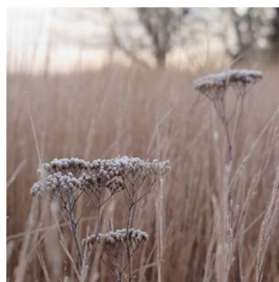
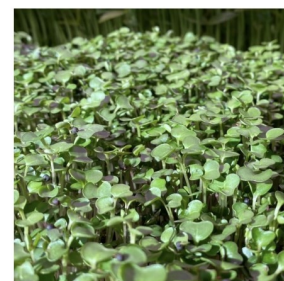
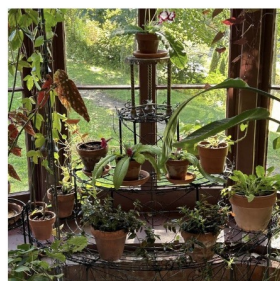
We celebrate 13 years with Facebook, since Earth Day, April 22, 2010. Our intent with Facebook is to share our CMGA activities and events, along with other state and local activities that might be of interest to our members and our UConn Master Gardeners. Like our page and look forward to timely updates and information about our state.



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

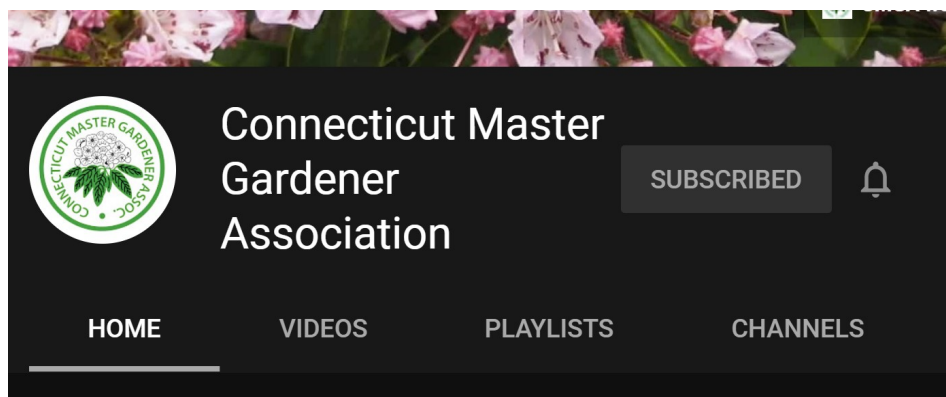
With Instagram, we enjoy sharing our stories and pictures of our outreach projects, activities and events. If a picture is worth a thousand words; gardening pictures are worth a million words! **#ctmastergardener**

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



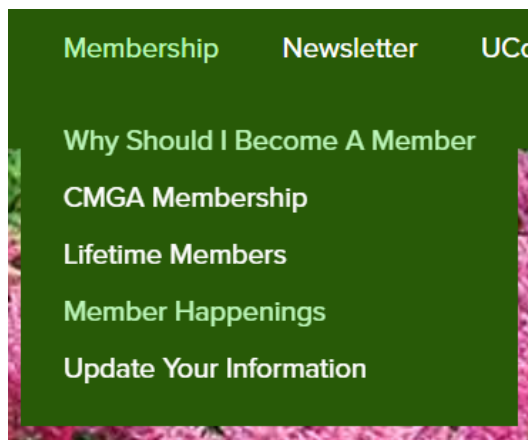
## YouTube since 2020 - [See Our CMGA Channel](#)

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!**

