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2021	EVENTS	Info
<p>Saturday 13 February 10.30am</p>	<p>Assembleia Geral / AGM Further info will be sent to all members current plans are for a virtual meeting via Zoom.</p>	<p>Contact: mgapsec@gmail.com</p>
<p>Future dates to be confirmed</p>	<p>Botanic Garden Workshops and Open Days At the Barrocal Botanic Garden at Quinta da Figueirinha near Silves. www.qdf.pt <i>Visitors in small groups are welcome by appointment</i></p>	<p>Open to All please contact Rosie on mgapsec@gmail.com</p>
<p>Western Algarve (Date to be confirmed)</p>	<p>Woodland Regeneration A day looking at four different types of woodland in the Aljezur/Monchique area where regeneration has taken place using native woody plants as alternatives to planting exotics or replacing eucalyptus.</p>	<p>Further information from mgapevents@gmail.com</p>
<p>Mid to late April One day only</p>	<p>Spring Mediterranean Garden Fair If conditions allow, we plan a later than usual event. It will be held at FISSUL, Silves in partnership with the Silves Freguesia and Silves Camara.</p>	<p>Further information from mgapfairs@gmail.com</p>
<p>To be confirmed</p>	<p>Garden Visits We will be continuing our programme of visits to private gardens in the Algarve. If you would like to host a visit from a small group of MGAP Members please contact us.</p>	<p>Further information from mgapevents@gmail.com</p>

Message from Marilyn Medina Ribeiro

President – Mediterranean Gardening Association of Portugal

Dear MGAP Members and Friends,

I would like to wish you all a healthy and prosperous 2021, although that feels a somewhat contrary hope in the face of recent political news, the ongoing pandemic, and all attendant restrictions. One can but hope that things will improve, eventually, and in the meantime, I will rephrase and say, I wish you all courage and health for the coming times, and that you may find much solace in your plants and gardens.

I don't feel there's much point wailing about what a disappointment the past year was, with no fairs or visits, as there were and are far worse things to be concerned with. I also won't make any predictions about the coming year, but I would like to share some of the behind-the-scenes activity that we are continuing with.

The botanic garden has been far from dormant, with clearing and maintenance work, together with infrastructure improvements, having been undertaken. The current round of clearance of invasive species is making way for planting around the entrance, car park and path to the main Botanic Garden area, which we plan to undertake in early Spring (I would love to say, we will be accepting volunteers to join us for planting days, but that will have to remain to be seen depending on restrictions). We are also continuing our research into funding options to get more resources in place - plant collections, provisions for permanent maintenance, an interpretation centre. Together with our Secretary and Treasurer and our landscape architect and Lisbon area rep, Jessica Gomes, I am editing and expanding our original report on the land, the project, and our plans for the site. This will be made available to members once complete.



Other than that, we are keeping all lines of communication open for our friends and associates in the horticulture community and making sure we can still access, virtually, all the fun that sharing our passion for plants brings. A quick reminder of one of the fruits of these contacts - Rosie has **Ranunculus asiaticus roots available for trial** - snap them up quick! These beauties do fantastically well here, especially in a large pot, and are a useful splash of Spring colour for terraces.

<https://mgaportugal.org/Ranunculus%20asiaticus%20hybrids%20from%20John%20Fielding.pdf>

I leave you with a photo of a recent success: a flower from *Laelia anceps* 'Guerrero', which I rushed out and bought a little over a year ago on the recommendation of José Santos in his talk on orchids suitable for growing outdoors in Portugal, at the 2019 Autumn Plant Fair.



Very best wishes, stay warm and safe, and enjoy the heck out of your gardens! If you wish to contact me - mgappres@gmail.com



We need your skills and talents to help MGAP thrive so please consider joining the active volunteers setting future and exciting priorities for the Association. It would be a real advantage to have someone who could focus on our **Education activities** – both with local contacts and in the wider field of training gardeners.

Although our **events calendar** has been disrupted over the last year, we are looking for some help with organising future events, and this could be better if two or three people wish to work on it together. If you wish to **welcome a group of MGAP members** and share your own garden,

please contact mgapevents@gmail.com

Some 'back office' activities available for your participation include **editing the newsletter** (and maybe giving it a new look !), managing the Mail Chimp **email contact lists** for our communications.

We are also looking for technical help with updating **the web site**, help with running the **Garden Fairs** and with developing our popular online **Bookshop**. If there is something specific you would like to get involved with, please let us know, we welcome your suggestions and ideas. Contact mgaptreasurer@gmail.com for further info.

MGAP online bookshop is available on the web site with a full list of all the publications available in English, Portuguese and French. All books can be posted and costs are quoted both with and without postage. To reserve books or for more info email mgaptreasurer@gmail.com you can check out the online bookshop here <http://www.mediterraneangardeningportugal.org/BooksGB.html>



GARDEN FAIRS UPDATE We are discussing a possible **Spring Garden Fair** with Silves Freguesia and Silves Camara. The dates we have suggested are mid to late April, but we will have to confirm our plans depending on circumstances in the Algarve over the coming weeks. Please keep checking on the MGAP web site for up-to-date news.

Plans for an **Autumn Garden Fair** will also be discussed, and we hope to have the last weekend in October in 2021 reserved for a two day event in Silves.

The Garden Fairs are the **major fund raising events** for MGAP but also give an opportunity for us to share our aims and objectives with visitors. Talks and workshops will be aimed at promoting sustainable and appropriate gardening and landscape management and enjoying our gardens and plants. The period of lockdown has highlighted for many how much we depend on the links with nature provided by a garden and by contact with our plants.

This year we again plan to have an **MGAP Plant Sales** table. Please save your spare plants, cuttings and seeds and bring along for sale to other keen gardeners. There will be collection points for donated plants nearer the date and PLEASE do label your plants – help available if needed. We hope this will encourage our keen propagators. There is a new supply of paper seed packets available for sale and the useful plant pot labels – details available on request.

The **MGAP 2021 AGM** is scheduled for Saturday February 13th and we plan to hold this virtually via Zoom. Together with the business meeting there will be an opportunity to ask questions – both on the formal business of the meeting and we hope some time for gardening queries and general discussion. We are looking forward to hearing how you and your gardens have fared over the last few months. All reports and financial information will be distributed to members before the meeting. **The Minutes of the last AGM** held on March 7th 2020 are available online <https://mgaportugal.org/minutesmgapagmmarch2020engfinal.pdf>

Rosie Peddle – MGAP Secretary mgapsec@gmail.com

BARROCAL BOTANIC GARDEN UPDATE

As soon as conditions permit we plan to advertise an **Open Day** at the Botanic Garden and hope that this might take place during late February. Contact mgapsec@gmail.com if you would like details sent direct to you.

We are also looking for someone who may be able to help us by using a drone to **film an overview of the garden** so that it can be included on our website pages for the garden. If you can help with this or know someone who could advise us, that would be great.



Winter season work continues, including our second skip on site to remove old irrigation tubing and other waste. We now have further pathways created in new areas so that the garden is more accessible all year round. The paths are wider and have a stone surface as the original.

Following approval at the AGM in 2020, the work on the car park is now complete. The car park is at the centre of the concession area for our demonstration gardens with direct access from the public road and trackway into the Quinta. Fortunately, we continue to have the opportunity to work with the Quinta and use their facilities

for visitors, the bar remains open and we plan to use the classroom and open air spaces for future workshops.

Despite the restrictions, during 2020 we were able to welcome small groups of visitors to the gardens and to continue with planning for the future. It was particularly exciting to have the opportunity to work with Jessica Gomes on an overall plan for the various elements agreed for MGAP Demonstration Gardens at the Quinta.



During December there was a guided visit for the guests staying in the Quinta accommodation and their families. We shared the background to the project and discussed plans for the future. The day ended with a workshop for the children looking at leaves and sticking them onto sheets for identification.

There is an article on the Botanic Garden in the 2021 Annual edition of **Tudo Sobre Jardins** – available at book shops and via this link

<https://www.tudosobrejardins.com/anuario/>

There are more photos and information via the Botanic Garden pages on the web site

<https://www.mgaportugal.org/BGHome.html>

NEWS from the world of plants

The Tavira Museu Municipal Palácio de Galeria bookshop has copies of the newly published *‘Flores da Praia Á Serra’ - ‘Flowers from the Beach to the Uplands’ of Tavira*. A full colour 296 page guide to wildflowers of Tavira. Author José Filipe has provided text in English and Portuguese together with a stunning selection of photos for easy identification.

The book is free to collect for those who can visit the bookshop at the Palace.

<http://museumunicipaldetavira.cm-tavira.pt/>

Virtual garden tours seem to be all over social media. A selection here

<https://www.housebeautiful.com/uk/garden/g31913008/best-virtual-tours-garden/>

and for Highgrove House <https://artsandculture.google.com/exhibit/igLSEOWqhVHoJw>

Illustrated talks on Mediterranean gardening are available from our UK sister organisation. These include talks on Form and Foliage, Using Mediterranean Plants in the UK and Roses.

<https://www.medpag.org/lectures.html>

There is a **monthly gardening article** prepared by MGAP for The Resident newspaper.

<https://www.portugalresident.com/gardening/>

The popular Algarve plant nursery, **Jardim Seco**, has just launched their online shop for pre-ordering plants. You can see details here <https://www.jardimseco.com/our-online-shop>

Support your local plant nurseries ! Due to the cancellation of our Garden Fairs during 2020 it has been even more important to support the local growers that we rely on for our plants, shrubs and trees. You can find an up to date list of nurseries and other exhibitors who have supported our events via this link – please always contact the nursery before visiting -

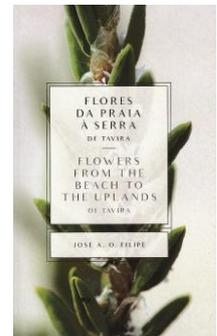
<https://www.mgaportugal.org/nurseryleaflet202011.pdf>

O grupo floresta autóctone de Aljezur

é um núcleo da associação sócio-cultural Tertúlia, reúne cidadãos do SW de Portugal, especialmente dos concelhos de Aljezur, Monchique e Odemira, com interesse na protecção e desenvolvimento da floresta autóctone da região. O programa do primeiro semestre 2021 consiste

em *webinares* durante os meses de janeiro e fevereiro. Mais uma oficina de micologia no mês de Março com data ainda por anunciar e passeios guiados nos meses de abril, maio e junho.

<https://www.florestaaljezur.org/events-1/webinares-em-janeiro-e-fevereiro-de-2021>



The native forest group of Aljezur, part of the socio-cultural association *Tertúlia*, brings together citizens from the SW of Portugal, especially from the municipalities of Aljezur, Monchique and Odemira, with an interest in the protection and development of the region's native forest. There is a programme of walks and online talks which is included on their web site. Meetings are in Portuguese and there are English speaking members. <https://www.florestaaljezur.org/>

The annual **Christmas Card from Dr Jorge Paiva** is a highlight of the festive season and this year was as relevant and revealing as always

ECOSYSTEMS AND PANDEMICS

Myxomycetes are eukaryotic organisms (cells with nuclei), so they are neither bacteria nor viruses (prokaryotes). They are not plants, because they do not have chlorophyll; they are not animals, because they reproduce through spores; and they are not fungi either, since they ingest and digest microorganisms. They are protists and constitute a subphylum with more than 1,000 known species. The Myxomycetes are microscopic, plasmodial organisms, which move like amoebae, feed on other microorganisms, such as yeasts, fungi, bacteria and, probably, also viruses, and are therefore controlling these organisms.

Forests are one of the ecosystems where they are most abundant, living both, on decaying plant debris and on the surface of plants.

In tropical forests, trees can reach 80-100 m in height and have huge biomass. A big forest tree can host thousands of spores or propagules of Myxomycetes on its surface. When we cut a tree down, we are also killing thousands of potential myxomycetes, predators of microorganisms. Additionally, when we destroy the forest ecosystem, we are releasing from control millions of bacteria and viruses, that can cause new diseases, such as, for example, happened with the HIV virus, which is at the origin of AIDS, which arose in the forest region of Tropical Africa, caused by two species of the genus *Lentivirus*. At that time, apes were blamed, because the viruses that caused HIV had passed to our species through contact with apes from those regions. It may have been so, but the virus is in the ape's body, after having spread due to the lack of predators, which disappeared with the clearing of the region's tropical forest. The same can be said of Ebola haemorrhagic fever caused by four of the five virus species belonging to the genus *Ebolavirus*, all from Tropical Africa. There are also those who consider that the species of the genus Betacoronavirus (SARS-CoV-2), which causes COVID-19, moved from wild animals (bats) to man.

The explanation is therefore the same, but the only culprit is *Homo sapiens* L. At the moment, only 20% of the forests that existed when our species appeared on this Globe remain, a "cage" that we have been destroying and in which we have been decimating predators of microorganisms, which may become agents of new lethal diseases and that we may not be able to control.

Without forests, this "island" of the Universe (Earth), in which we live, will have so high temperatures and such a number of lethal microorganisms, that it'll be uninhabitable to our species.

Let us hope that the festive season at the end of the year will illuminate everyone's awareness so that natural ecosystems will not continue to be destroyed and polluted.

Jorge Paiva, 2020

Merry Christmas
Happy New Year



Felices Pascuas
Próspero Año Nuevo

Auguri di Buon Natale
Prosperoso Nuovo Anno



Mediterranean Gardening International is an international group of eight societies for people with an interest in Mediterranean plants and gardens. Each society is independent but come together to share our knowledge and experience of gardening and plants in the Mediterranean climate zones of the world. (MGAP Members will be welcomed at events, subject to availability of places.) Please

contact the local organiser. Many international societies are using the internet to share talks and garden visits. <http://www.mediterraneangardeninginternational.org>

MGi Seed List – News from Mediterranean Gardening France. "As usual at this time of year, Chantal Guiraud has updated the MGi / MGS seed list with some interesting new varieties. In addition, this year we have been offered access to the Index Seminum of the botanical garden at Château Pérouse, near Nîmes. This is a wonderful opportunity for plant collectors to source rare and special plants.

We would normally make the updated seed list available via our website, but as we are currently part way through the delicate process of transferring to a new site, the list of new seeds and the Château Pérouse seed list is available on request from mgapsec@gmail.com

MGAP Members can order seeds in the usual way, by [sending Chantal an email](#), up to 10 varieties, or, if you are a seed donor, up to 15 different varieties. Please add one or two alternatives in case the ones you want are out of stock.

Chantal has written an article highlighting some of her favourite plants from the new list - this will be published in the January edition of the MGFrance newsletter. You can also look at the [Château Pérouse database](#) which contains a mine of information about each taxon on their list.”
For updates on seed list and ordering <https://www.mediterraneangardeningfrance.org/>

Closing the Mediterranean Gardening Forum

for Mediterranean Gardening International
The forum was set up at the same time as the international network of gardening associations. It was for your plant and gardening queries and monitored by a panel of experienced and knowledgeable Mediterranean gardeners. Members of MGAP were able to access this forum via the link at top right of the front page of our web site. Unfortunately, there has been a very low amount of use for this forum. This has meant that the amount of work involved in updating and regulating is not proving viable. It has been decided to close the forum and concentrate on more direct personal contact with members. Please send any questions to mgapsec@gmail.com

PODCASTS from the Linnean Society of London are available to everyone and cover all manner of Natural History related topics <https://soundcloud.com/user-679811756>

There is also a great selection of nature based activities to do at home via a special page for activities, videos, podcasts and other resources to keep you occupied, engaged and enthusiastic about the wonderful natural world outside, <https://www.linnean.org/learning/at-home> and presentations via this link <https://www.linnean.org/meetings-and-events/podcasts-of-events>

AAJBA (Associação dos Amigos do Jardim Botânico da Ajuda) of Lisbon A full programme of gardening courses will be held online. <http://www.aaiba.com/Cursos/Cursos20202021.aspx> For updates check the web site web: www.aaiba.com | [Facebook](#)

Beira Grass Roots Gardeners – Friendly, free to join, group of enthusiastic gardeners in the Beira area of Central Portugal. We normally have regular meet-ups, visits to gardens and nurseries, and run many plant and garden events. For more info and latest news, contact beiragrassroots@gmail.com

Garden Masterclass Created by Annie Guilfoyle and Noel Kingsbury, Garden Masterclass is a place to learn and to share, knowledge, skills, and ideas in gardening and garden and landscape design - globally. available via <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCXrC79EfhUQJjBPXd4wzGHq>

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You can contact mgapmembers@gmail.com at any time to request a listing of the information that we hold about you on file, and/or to be removed selectively from our different mailing lists.

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Email: maggiefrollason@hotmail.co.uk

Algarve - Rosie Peddle, Tel. 289 791 869

Email: mgapsec@gmail.com

MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

We have a friendly and informal group for everyone who has a special interest in the plants and gardens of Mediterranean climates. The aims of MGAP (Mediterranean Gardening Association Portugal) include education and encouraging the exchange of information and of experiences.

Web site www.mgapportugal.org contains articles as well as news, notices, practical information and comment. Please pass on this newsletter to anyone interested. MGAP is affiliated to The Mediterranean Garden Society and a member of Mediterranean Gardening International.

Membership Secretary email mgapmembers@gmail.com

If you no longer wish to receive these newsletters then please do let us know by sending a return email with **REMOVE** in the subject line to mgaptreasurer@gmail.com