

**LPMGA
GENERAL MEETING**

**May 7th,
SPRING SOCIAL**

Board Meeting

May 20th, 1PM

IRA NELSON

2206 JOHNSTON ST.

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Economics tells us that for an organization to thrive it must make efficient use of its available resources. Our Lafayette Parish Master Gardeners (LPMGA) does a great job of this, thanks in large part to our tremendous volunteer workforce. Our current roster shows we have 151 active members in good standing. LSU AG statistic show that in 2024 our members performed 12,392 hours of volunteer work, which had a total economic value of over \$162,000!

But labor is not the only resource that our organization needs. Our mission of horticultural education throughout Acadiana needs quite a bit of materials and supplies to succeed. To obtain these necessary resources, we need yet another resource: money. Our major source of this funding, of course, comes from our semi-annual plant sales.

Led by Heather Warner-Finley and Becky Taylor, our propagation team makes the most of our labor and limited resources to help further LPMGA's mission. The team creates its own potting soil, recycles many of its pots, and creates plants out of seeds and cuttings for sale to the public. Creating plants that will be in demand by that public requires a great deal of planning in deciding what to propagate, and when to start each plant so it will reach maximum marketability on the date of the sale. The team leverages its knowledge to choose what propagation techniques to utilize, then how, when, and what to feed and nurture these young plants, and how to keep the pests from ruining our efforts. The results keep our organization going. Earlier this month, our Festival de Fleurs plant sales netted over \$7,000. But no rest for the weary! After a couple weeks of cleanup and preparation, the propagation teams start it all over again, working to produce a new crop of plants for the Fall PlantFest.

Our next fundraising event will be Dans le Jardin on June 13th. Tickets are on sale now, so spread the word and invite all your non-Master-Gardener friends to attend this fun and educational gardening symposium.

Also don't forget the upcoming Spring Social, May 7 at the home of Colette Anzalone. RSVP to Pam Womack by Thursday, May 1, if you plan to attend.

John Hebert
LPMGA, President

MEETINGS

**2024 LPMGA
General Meetings**
First Wednesday
Monthly
Daytime: 12:00pm
Evening: 6 pm

**2024 LPMGA
Board
Meetings**
1pm on Third
Tuesday

Dates, times, topics, and locations
are subject to change

MAY 7	MAY 20
JUNE 4	JUNE 17
JULY	JULY
AUGUST 2	AUGUST 15
SEPTEMBER 3	SEPTEMBER 16
OCTOBER 1	OCTOBER 21
NOVEMBER 5	NOVEMBER 18
DECEMBER 2	DECEMBER 16

**We have an orphan...won't you
adopt it?**

This demo bed is ready for you! It measures a small 3' x 15', in full sun with good soil and irrigation A perfect opportunity for those who work and need to earn volunteer hours on their own schedules. Recruit a partner and make it a visiting time. The season is right for sowing a mass of zinnias for cut flowers, or a wildflower mix for pollinators. Contact Gail Wakefield at gailwak@cox.net for more information.

Lafayette Parish Master Gardener
SPRING SOCIAL



**PLEASE NOTE CHANGE OF
VENUE**

LPMG Spring Social will be at Collette Anzalone's home at **600 Pappa Joe Drive in Broussard. This is on Albertson's Parkway in Broussard.** Time is still 6-8 Bring chairs and any adult beverage you wish to enjoy! May is having some remodeling done and needed to postpone it until next year. If you have any questions, please give me a call 337-344-2673. Thanks Pass this information along to everyone you know that is planning to go the social.



Summertime Super Plant – *Cuphea* hybrid ‘Vermillionaire’



The newest summertime Louisiana Super Plant is the Vermillionaire *Cuphea*, *Cuphea* hybrid. Vermillionaire is a showstopper best known for its vibrant orange-red tubular flowers, which resemble tiny firecrackers – hence the common name “firecracker plant”. This heat-loving, humidity-tolerant variety thrives in Louisiana’s climate, making it a popular choice for home landscapes, pollinator gardens, and container plantings. This tender perennial dies back with frosts but returns year after year in our climate (at least when we don’t dip into single digits). Another great aspect of this plant is the continuous blooming from spring through fall. This particular cultivar is more compact than the traditional cigar plant, *Cuphea ignea*. Vermillionaire typically tops out at 2-3 feet tall by 2 feet wide and prefers a location in full sun for heaviest blooming. One main reason this plant is utilized is that it is an absolute hummingbird, butterfly, and bee magnet. I’ve grown this plant for many years and have noticed that it attracts pollinators as well or better than *Lantana*, *Salvia*, *Buddleia*, and *Penta*. Vermillionaire is a must-have for any pollinator garden.

A highlight of the Louisiana Super Plant (LSP) program is that these plants do well in Louisiana landscapes with minimal care and attention. The Vermillionaire *Cuphea* is no different with its heat and drought tolerance and lack of disease or insect issues. Although not a particularly heavy feeder, a slow-release fertilizer applied in early spring encourages lush growth and abundant flowers.

The Louisiana Super Plant program is based out of the LSU AgCenter Hammond Research Station in Hammond, LA. If you’ve never had a chance to visit, an upcoming opportunity will be the Louisiana Master Gardener Appreciation Day held on Thursday, May 15th. This event will be complete with garden tours and educational presentations – and is an excellent way to earn continuing education hours. LMG Appreciation Day will also serve as the Advanced LMG graduation – so come out and support your fellow Master Gardeners!

Tangentially, I am currently serving on a committee to trial and select plants for upcoming Louisiana Super Plant releases. If you know of any “showstoppers” that perform well in your garden year after year, please let me know – and it may be on its way to becoming a future Super Plant!

Maddox Miller, LSU AgCenter

WHAT PLANT IS THIS?

This plant is native to most of the Americas from Canada to Argentina. In most Zones, it is an annual but may be perennial in Zones 10 and 11. In Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, the water nymph Clytie was in love with the sun god but was scorned by him. Wasting away, she transformed into this plant, whose flowers are said to always face the sun. They occur in elongated, curled clusters of small tubular white flowers with yellow throats which bloom from spring to fall. Each inflorescence has a coiled tip that is reminiscent of a scorpion's tail. These are attractive to bees and are highly favored by small to medium butterflies. Most birds are not attracted to this plant, except for hummingbirds.

The leaves of this plant are fleshy, lance-shaped, bluish green on many-branched smooth stems. Somewhat succulent looking, they are usually low growing, sending out procumbent stems (stems which trail along the ground without rooting), but can be up to 1.5 feet in height. This plant may become invasive. Deer avoid them. Every part of this plant is poisonous, although some cultures have used them for wound healing. Ingestion causes stomach pain and cramping and contact with the skin can cause a rash in susceptible individuals. This plant is poisonous to cats and dogs.

Ideal conditions for this plant include full sun, and well-drained sandy or gravelly soils. It is able to deal with saline soils and salt spray. It is drought tolerant. Provide afternoon shade in very hot climates. It is a soil stabilizer and is ideal for coastal gardens and landscapes.

Do you know what plant this is?



**WHAT PLANT IS THIS
ANSWER**

Heliotropium curassavicum :
Salt Heliotrope, Seaside heliotrope

**IT IS ALL ABOUT MONARDA PUNCTATA
SPOTTED BEE BALM**

Spotted Bee Balm is clump-forming, short lived perennial or biennial, boasting showy clusters of creamy purple-spotted tubular flowers resting upon pink, lavender or creamy bracts. Spotted bee balm blooms for at least 4 weeks from early to mid summer and it attracts scores of butterflies and pollinators to the yard

This plant will grow in full to partial sun and very dry to average soil moisture. It occurs naturally in sandy areas such as dunes, fields and relic prairies and is often found in disturbed areas including along railroads and roadsides. Spotted bee balm is best suited to perennial borders, wild gardens, prairies and mead

Plant Profile Bloom Period: Late, Mid-summer

- **Growth Cycle:** Annual, Biannual, Perennial
- **Growth Habit:** Forbs/Herb, Shrub
- **Light Requirement:** Full, Partial sunlight
- **Native:** Eastern Canada, United States and Northeastern Mexico
- **Soil Type:** Well drained



School Gardens Update May 2025

The School Garden Initiative Committee has had another successful year! At our seven elementary schools, students have planted Cool and Warm Season plants throughout the school year. The plants were germinated and lovingly cared for by Bobby Darnall. They were quality transplants for the gardens that were prolific producers. Thank you Bobby!!

The students ate Cabbage, Kale, Brussel Sprouts, Broccoli, Cauliflower, Strawberries, Lettuce, Mustard Greens, Radishes, Spinach, Kolhrabi, Peas, Swiss Chard, Carrots, Beets, and more in various ways. And even drank Kale Smoothies! The gardens will have a final harvest the last week of school. Potato Time.

The Leadership Team – Melissa Dardar, Tom Spencer, Karyn Sims, Pam Womack – thank all of our SGI members for their commitment to the students and schools. We appreciate y'all!

Linda Beyt, Lindsay Watson, Kirsten Fox, Kessler Landry, Sue Stoltz, Audrey Cosgrove, Rachel Thibodeaux, Carolyn Freeland, Chris Butts, Cindy Walton, John Fontaine, Theresa Guidry, Carla Schrimpf, Candy Bienvenu, Carol Broussard, Patsy Hebert, Susan Wilhelm, Ed Wilhelm, Eddy Wharton, Peggy Dronet, Patricia Leyendecker, Erin Bass, Julie Gray, Danielle Guidry, Lucia Rasolomaharavo.

We would also like to thank other MGs that helped the program during the school year:

Bootsie Durand, Louise Prejean, Germaine Lattier, Juan Nieto, Mona Ekas, Colette Anzalone, Cindy Wiley, Cheryl Perret, Susan Chustz, Yvonne Mitchell, Jahmilah Sekhmet, Rico Rice, Anna Gauthier. If I missed a volunteer, please let me know.

Thank you Maddox Miller and Charlene Martin. Lastly, we would like to thank the program's wonderful organizer and facilitator – Charles Hebert! There is a lot of work that goes into getting students to eat vegetables!!

If any MGs are reading this article and would like to volunteer with the School Garden program in August, we would LOVE and WELCOME your assistance. Let me know!

Melissa Dardar melissadardar@cox.net

Medicinal Plants of Louisiana: Traditional Remedies for the Spring Season

Mandy Hatman

Louisiana's healing plant traditions blend Native American, African, Cajun, and Creole knowledge. These plants thrive in our climate and connect us to generations of healers. Understanding these traditions helps preserve our cultural heritage while maintaining sustainable healing practices.

Essential Louisiana Medicinal Plants

- Sassafras (*Sassafras albidum*)– Traditional spring tonic, though modern research shows risks; historically used by all cultural groups in the region
- Spanish Moss (*Tillandsia usneoides*) – Used in poultices, thrives in our humidity; traditional uses for wound dressing and fever reduction
- Louisiana Iris (*Iris giganticaerulea* and related species) – Root traditionally used for digestive issues; requires careful harvest to preserve plant populations
- Elder (*Sambucus canadensis*) – Berries & flowers used for immune support; grows wild in moist areas
- Beauty-berry (*Callicarpa americana*) – Leaves traditionally used as insect repellent; berries used in traditional preparations
- Yaupon Holly (*Ilex vomitoria*) – Native caffeine source used traditionally
- Groundsel Bush (*Baccharis halimifolia*) – Traditional fever reducer
- Palmetto (*Sabal minor*) – Multiple traditional uses; careful sustainable harvesting required

Growing & Gathering

Most medicinal plants native to Louisiana thrive with minimal care in partial shade and rich, well-drained soil. Respect traditional gathering practices - never harvest without permission or understanding of the plant's role in the ecosystem. Learn from local knowledge keepers when possible and always verify plant identification before harvesting or use.

Preserving Knowledge & Plants

Document traditional uses while respecting cultural ownership of knowledge. Create medicinal gardens to preserve both plants and practices. Share seedlings and cuttings with other interested gardeners to maintain local varieties.

Happy planting!

SUNSET HERB & GARDEN FESTIVAL

Saturday, May 3, 2025

Gates Open: 8am - 3pm

Admission: \$5

Children's Garden & Activities: \$5

Please join us on Saturday, May 3, 2025, for a Family Friendly festival for the yard and garden enthusiast.

Over 100 garden-related vendors and Artisans:

- Native Plants and Flowers, Hanging Baskets, Herbs and Vegetables, Succulents
- Fertilizer, Worm Castings, Mushrooms
- Garden Art, Planters & Pottery
- Hand Crafted Jewelry, Wood Artisans, All natural Soaps and Body Lotions
- Fresh Breads, Pastries, Jams, Jellies, Pickles, and so much more!

Dans le Jardin**NEEDS DOOR PRIZES AND SILENT AUCTION ITEMS
DONATED!**

The Dans Le Jardin Conference is set for June 13, 2025, at the Lafayette LITE Center. Cindy Jensen and Cindy Wiley are organizing a silent auction and are seeking new or nearly new items valued at \$25 or more, as well as door prizes worth between \$10 and \$15.

Auction items can be a group of smaller items that when combined produce a nice silent auction item. Flower pots of like kind or color for example.

Donations can be dropped off at Propagation on Wednesday mornings.

Cindy Wiley

Hours Opportunity!

Looking for an easy volunteer hour opportunity?

Considering writing an article for our blog!

Write about your favorite plant, tools, gardening along with the moon phases observations on your own garden as the seasons progress.

Contact Meagan Stogsdill if interested!

imgmeagan@gmail.com

Check Out Our Blog!

Wanting to find articles to read for CE hours?

Look no further than our own website!

www.lpmga.org/mgcorner

As a reminder our YouTube channel also counts for CE!

10 May 2025 8AM to 5PM



The St. Francisville Home and Garden Stroll is presented by the Feliciana Master Gardeners and benefits the West Feliciana 4-H school gardens and 4-H scholarships.

Garden strolls and home tours will take place in the morning. Floral and horticultural workshops will take place in the afternoon.

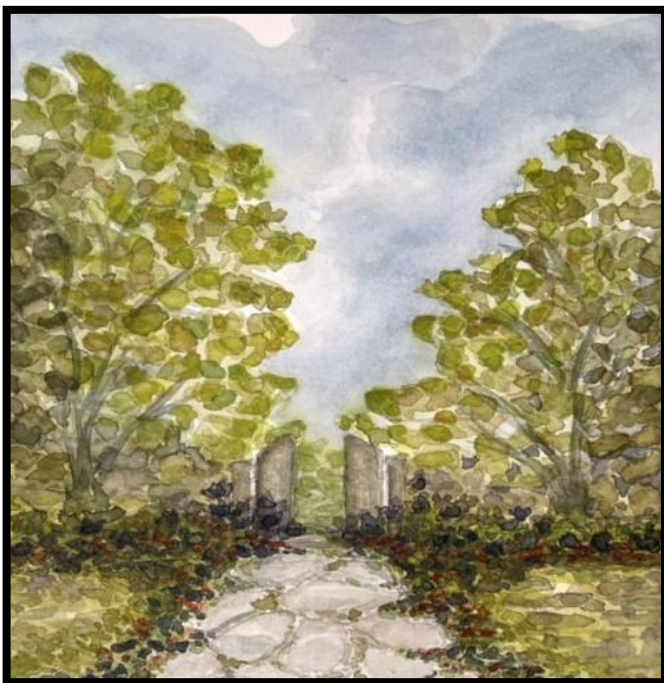
11757 Ferdinand Street, St. Francisville, la 70775

Register now for the third annual

Dans le Jardin

(In the Garden)

A Symposium on the Challenges of Gardening



Friday, June 13, 2025

Lite Center

537 Cajundome Blvd

Lafayette, LA

8:00 am—3:00 pm

Admission is \$50. Includes lunch.

Preregistration is required.

Deadline to register is June 6. To register or get more information, scan this QR code or visit

WWW.LPMGA.org

Note: Linda Alesi will be collecting registrations at the Spring social, but she can accept checks or cash only.

Featuring renowned

horticulturalists & botanists

Kathryn “Kiki” Fontenot, PhD

Director of the LSU Ag Center

Southwest Region

Linda Auld

The NOLA Bug Lady

Gary Salathe

Founder & President Louisiana Iris Conservation

Initiative

Taylor Vaughan Lyon

The Worm Lady



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MAY 2025

**SPRIN SOCIAL MAY 7, 2025
 600 PAPPAS JOE DR., BROUSSARD**

**ST. FRANCISVILLE GARDEN STROLL
 MAY 10TH**

**BOARD MEETING, IRA NELSON, MAY 20,
 2025**

**DAN LE JARDIN, LITE CENTER, JUNE
 13TH 2025**

Gardener's Gazette is issued to all members of the Lafayette Parish Master Gardeners' Program. All members are encouraged to submit news, educational features, and photographs. **The deadline for all submissions is the 17th of each month for publication in the next month's issue unless otherwise noted.**

Please send newsletter items to:

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If you have a disability which requires special assistance for your participation in our meetings, please call the LSU AgCenter 291-7090

Please note: All meeting and event dates, times, and locations are subject to change.