

## **France: 2013 : A year full of activities**

The allotment gardeners all over France develop both interesting and innovative projects. Below you will find some examples:

### **Boulogne-sur-mer (Pas-de-Calais)**

Mrs Stéphanie Pihen, specialized educator working in the judicial protection of youth department of Boulogne-sur-mer contacted the president of the allotment association in order to initiate an activity to sensitise young offenders (between fourteen and sixteen years old) to gardening. The president answered in a positive way assuring her that a plot would be put at the disposal of these young people.

A short time later, he informed Mrs Pihen that a plot would be put at their disposal. The same day Mr Lagadeuc, chief of the judicial service for youth protection and the president of the allotment association visited the site of Waroquerie in order to see the plot. After the signature of a convention this plot was put at their disposal

*Jacques Guerlain, President of the Local committee of the Opal Côte*

### **Villeurbanne (Rhône)**

In spring, at nightfall, some gardeners took position in front of the camera of Mr. Marc Lathuillière, an artist, in the allotment gardens Saint Pierre Chanel.

The weather didn't seem to want to facilitate this project and the photo shooting had to be interrupted several times at the great despair of all.

Finally, between two showers, the photograph could capture some moments between mystery and dream.

This project could not have been realised without the kindness of a neighbour, who authorised the taking of electricity from his counter and of course without the enthusiasm of some members, who were not discouraged by the rain. Thank you very much to all of you.

*Evelyne Bonnet, President of the allotment gardens St Pierre Chanel*

## **Marseille (Bouches-du-Rhône)**

The eighth edition of our annual lunch took place in June under a bright sun and with an incredibly good mood!

75 people assisted and among them were 15 children; we had also invited Mrs Yvette Raspal, President of the local committee of Alès as well as Frédérique Wauquier and Florent Roubinet, leaders of the organisation “a natural vegetable garden”. 21 gardeners of our association took part in this event. Many thanks are addressed to the local committee of Marseille for having received us in such a nice way.

The day started with collective work: destruction of the old associative home followed by a meal: paella cooked by Sylvie, Eliane, Marie-Christine, Jo and Rémy. During the afternoon awards were distributed to the 14 winners of the competition: “the most beautiful gardens”.

This ceremony was followed by a pedagogical workshop dealing with the subject on the importance of the existence of bees and their mission. This workshop was led by Edith and Miguel. Edith was responsible for the first workshop in which small tasks around bees were made and Miguel was responsible for the second one. Here an observation beehive was presented and harvested honey could be tried.

This was a well filled day full of surprises, activities, movements and animation under a bright sun as we had not known it up to this day. A tangible dynamism, a balm for the heart under the kind regard of Lady Nature.

That is the magic of the gardens! Thank you very much to all of you for your confidence.

*Patricia Pustorino, President of the gardens Ecureuil*

## **Saint Denis (Seine-Saint-Denis)**

At the beginning of June an urban walking tour for the discovery of flora in the streets of Saint-Denis, was organised under the leadership of two specialist animators from the national museum of natural history. This walking tour passed through the allotment sites of Fort de l’Est within the framework of the 24 hours for biodiversity. The visitors were very happy and fascinated by the freshness of this nature lost among modern cities.

*Michèle Roncin, Responsible for the allotment gardens around Paris*