

DIG & GROW

MAY–AUGUST 2023



norfolk
botanical
garden

From the **PRESIDENT**



I can't believe it's finally here! Construction for **The Garden of Tomorrow** is well underway. When complete, there will be nothing like it in Coastal Virginia. The project includes the Brock Parking Garden, Brock Entry Pavilion and the two-story, 26,000 square foot Perry Conservatory featuring the Kay & Al Abiouness Skywalk. The Perry Conservatory will house and protect some of the most threatened plants around the world, allowing the Garden to expand conservation efforts in partnership with other botanical gardens. This is the largest project in the Garden's 85-year history.

Construction is expected to be complete in March 2025. With that being said, expect some bumps in the road during construction. We have limited parking at the moment and are requiring timed-entry tickets for NBG Members and guests. This helps us manage traffic flow and ensure you have a parking spot. Be part of the journey and donate to support us as we build and plant **The Garden of Tomorrow**.

I'm proud that our board of directors adopted the following at their January meeting:

Land and Labor Acknowledgment

We honor the past and present Tribal communities of Coastal Virginia and acknowledge the lack of Indigenous representation in the conservation of the natural world under our organization. We recognize the peoples of the Chesapeake and Lumbee Tribes, and the Federal and State-recognized Powhatan Tribes as stewards of the historic and contemporary lands of Tsenacommacah [jeh-nuh-ka-muh-kuh], an area that extends through the Tidewater Region of Virginia, and includes the land within the City of Norfolk occupied by the Garden. There is a paramount need for Indigenous ideologies and practices to be woven into our environmental stewardship initiatives, and we acknowledge we have much to learn from the deep relationship and reverence that Native American communities have for this land.

We also acknowledge the oppression and racial segregation forced on people of color in the early decades of the Garden's history. Through the Works Progress Administration of 1938, 200 African American women and 22 African American men were hired to clear and plant the first 25-acres of the Garden. Despite the grueling efforts made to create this natural wonder, the shameful public segregation policies that were in place until the 1960s prevented these workers from visiting the Garden as guests. Today, we not only celebrate the legacy of those WPA workers and their gift to the City of Norfolk, but we commit to leading the way in representing diversity, equity, and inclusion in our community.



THE MISSION OF NORFOLK BOTANICAL GARDEN:
IMMERSE VISITORS IN A WORLD OF BEAUTY
LEAD THROUGH ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION
INSPIRE THROUGH EDUCATION AND CONNECTION TO NATURE

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Did you know?

The NBG Board of Directors currently is the most diverse board in its history with 33% of our board members from underrepresented communities.



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NBG is powered 100% by renewable energy

CONSERVATION in Action

As Norfolk Botanical Garden (NBG) embarks on the largest expansion in its history, NBG horticulture experts have been researching, traveling and working with other botanical gardens to access some of the most threatened plants around the globe. Both the Director of Horticulture Les Parks and Curator of Herbaceous Plants Michelle Baudanza recently traveled to Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden in Miami, home to some very unusual and rare tropical plants. There, Les and Michelle met Director of Studio Operations and Senior Project Manager Matt Thomas with The Green Room Collaborative. Together the three of them discovered plants that were new to them, discussed design ideas, and gathered inspiration for NBG's new Perry Conservatory.

Michelle and Matt also visited The Kampong - National Tropical Botanical Garden, which is the former estate of Dr. David Fairchild for whom Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden is named. They also visited Montgomery Botanical Center, a veritable Noah's Ark for palm and cycad species. The staff at Montgomery shared rare seeds and demonstrated their propagation techniques. Their next stop was Silver Krome Gardens in Homestead, Florida, which is renowned for ultra-rare specimens. The owner William Rotolante offered Michelle three unusual philodendron species. William has hybridized some of his own anthuriums (a genus Michelle is particularly fond of), one of which he named 'Big Bill,' and it is expected to be the largest in the world when mature. Perhaps one day NBG will have its own 'Big Bill' to join those three rare philodendrons in the Perry Conservatory, where visitors will see conservation in action.



Left to Right: Matt from The Green Room Collaborative and Michelle from NBG tour Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden in Florida.



Left: Matt filled a notebook with notes on plants and design ideas for NBG's new Perry Conservatory.



Middle: Palms come in all shapes and sizes. Les was impressed with this stout petticoat palm (*Copernicia macroglossa*), an unusual species from Cuba.

Below: While plants were what everyone came to see, it is not everyday you spy an American alligator in its native habitat.



Saving the most threatened plants around the world.

“Plants are powerful and essential in our daily lives; providing food, shelter, clean air and even helping to fight some of the world’s deadliest diseases. Imagine if a plant species went extinct and its power to heal was lost forever. We are working diligently to increase our conservation efforts globally.”

— NBC President & CEO Michael Desplaines



Little Leaf Palo Verde Tree

Parkinsonia microphylla

The little leaf palo verde tree is an indicator species of the Sonoran Desert, meaning it is a fundamental component of this desert ecosystem. It naturally drops its leaves in times of drought stress, but the lime green bark allows the plant to continue photosynthesizing. Its small flowers are edible raw or cooked. This tree was rescued from imminent destruction due to urban development



Photo by Stan Shebs (CC BY-SA-3.0)

in the Apache Valley/Superstition Mountains near Phoenix, Arizona. It has a high ecological value as a nurse tree for many desert plant species and is key to the survival of the saguaro cactus.



Ironwood Tree

Olneya tesota

Ironwood trees are hallmarks of the Sonoran Desert. While a thriving tree is a valuable resource for wildlife and serves as a nurse plant for various desert plant species, the everlasting heartwood of a dead specimen is a remarkable wonder of nature.

Our trunk is easily over 1,000 years old and its size, shape, age and life history make for an unusual focal point and interesting conversation piece in our new Perry Conservatory.

**We need your help to Build & Plant
*The Garden of Tomorrow***

Corpse Flower

Amorphophallus titanum

The Corpse flower is a botanical wonder, related to the cana lily. At up to 12 feet tall, it produces the largest flower in the plant kingdom and is known for its rotting meat fragrance when in full bloom, hence its name. It does smell for a reason. Its scent and "meaty" color attracts pollinators that are attracted to rotting flesh. It has also created a lot of buzz in the media as it's unique and smelly allure has crowds gathering during its peak bloom. Unfortunately, it is listed as Endangered on the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species. There is likely less than 1,000 individual specimens left in the wild on the island of Sumatra where it is native.

For more information on sponsoring these and other plants for the Perry Conservatory, please contact COO and VP of Philanthropy Cathy Fitzgerald at 757-441-5830 ext. 319.



Photo by Rhododendrites (CC BY-SA 4.0)

Threatened species
need a refuge
before they are lost.

We are their refuge.
We need your help.

The Garden of Tomorrow is privately funded by over 1,700 generous donors who have contributed more than 32 million dollars to this project. Donations are still needed to complete the project and keep our nonprofit mission moving forward. **Thank YOU** for helping us Build & Plant the future!



The Garden of Tomorrow



With climate change and habitat loss, it is increasingly important for botanical gardens to act as safe refuges for both plants and people. The 26,000 sq. ft. Perry Conservatory will protect some of the most threatened plants from around the world and demonstrate conservation in action.

Stay in the know with
construction updates



More Green

More Accessible

More Beautiful

SCIENCE & Conservation

Mistletoe Samples

Parasitic plants sound like a sci-fi storyline but they are fairly common in nature. The most notable is a traditional holiday decoration – mistletoe, *Phoradendron leucarpum*. When broadleaf trees shed their leaves in winter, mistletoe is easy to spot. This past winter, staff from the Biology Department at Penn State University, collected multiple samples of our resident mistletoe population. Thanks to one of the stories on our blog, *Sow it Grows*, the scientists knew exactly where to look on our campus.

Interestingly, Pennsylvania's population of mistletoe has been extirpated from the state, meaning it no longer exists in the wild. The Penn State team is most interested in collecting samples for DNA analysis from mistletoe populations in New Jersey, Delaware, and Virginia. Whole plants and seeds will be added to their herbarium collection. They will also attempt to germinate the seeds and grow them in potted plants in their greenhouse. During their visit, Dr. Nicholas Flanders from Old Dominion University joined the collecting party. We love to share our collection with our colleagues in the research community.



Left to right: Theresa Augustin NBG Vice President of Education, Dr. Uma Venkatesh Research Assistant Professor, Dr. Marcos Caraballo-Ortez Post Doctoral fellow Temple University, Philadelphia, Paula Ralph Senior Research Technologist, and Dr. Nicholas P. Flanders Old Dominion University and Manager of Blackwater Ecological Preserve.



L-R: NBG Curator of Woody Plants Carl Simmons, NBG Horticulturists Tyler Greenwell and Daniel Fulford.



L-R: NBG Horticulturists Tensaie Fesshaye and Nicole Ordway.



Solar Panel Update

NBG is committed to being GREEN! In December of 2022, the Baker Hall Visitor Center officially became powered by the sun. Director of Facilities Ryan Call worked with Convert Solar to install the 212.400 kW system. Comprised of 472 panels, this system is expected to offset 83% of that building's energy needs. The savings and environmental benefits are already working. In just two months, the Garden has saved nearly \$4,000 and offset more than 80,000 pounds of carbon emissions, which equates to the carbon sequestration of over 600 trees. This is the second solar panel installation in the Garden. In 2018, 120 solar panels were installed on our Dominion Energy Garden of Lights storage building.

Repurposing a Redwood

You might recall we had to take down one of the Garden's coast redwoods (*Sequoia sempervirens*) near NATO Tower after an unfortunate lightning strike in spring of 2022. Thankfully, we were able to mill the wood to repurpose in the future – maybe something special for **The Garden of Tomorrow**. We will have to be patient as it has to cure, which could take up to two years.

Learn how NBG is taking environmental action.



COMMUNITY Connections



Reusable Shopping Bag Collection

NBG is a collection point for Lynnhaven River Now's (LRN) reusable grocery bag collection and distribution drive. This will help residents prepare for a future when stores will no longer use single use plastic bags. LRN will collect gently used reusable bags and redistribute them to members of the community who may not have access to free reusable bags. Our collection box is located in the library. If you have gently used reusable bags that you'd like to rehome, please bring them by. More than 1,000 bags have been distributed to local communities.

Longleaf Pine Restoration Project

Thanks to a generous gift from IKEA in 2019, we were able to expand the longleaf pine community in the Virginia Native Plant Garden. Longleaf pine, *Pinus palustris*, was once the most common pine in southeast Virginia, occupying nearly one million acres at the time of the founding of the Jamestown settlement. Longleaf pine was highly valued for the production of naval stores such as tar, pitch, turpentine and lumber, so much so that the tree was nearly extirpated due to over harvesting and fire suppression. It's historic influence on our area's local economy and emerging port system earned it the nickname "The Tree that Built Tidewater." Today, fewer than 200 mature trees remain in small natural areas about 50 miles west of Norfolk in the City of Suffolk and the counties of Isle of Wight and Southampton. Longleaf pine ecosystems are high on the conservation list because of their exceptional diversity of plants and animal species.



IKEA volunteers and NBG horticulturists joined forces to plant young longleaf pines in the fall of 2019.



Some of those young plants are over 5 feet tall now and the expanded longleaf pine community is thriving.



Students from the Environmental Studies Program through the Virginia Beach City Public Schools participated in the Worldwide Daffodil Project by planting 500 bulbs near Friendship Pond. This is a part of the worldwide Living Holocaust Memorial that aspires to plant 1.5 million daffodils in memory of the 1.5 million children who perished in the Holocaust and for children who suffer in humanitarian crises around the world today.

L to R: NBG Director of Adult Education Alexandra Cantwell, Ryleigh Greeves, Cayden Braswell, Kaitlyn Lora, Flora Umy, Sebastian Rosario, William Videll.

HORTICULTURE Highlights



Mayapple (*Podophyllum peltatum*) is one of our most unusual native perennials. It loves shady open woodlands where it will slowly spread to form wide, but low growing, lush colonies. Each individual plant consists of 1-2 umbrella-like leaves, and in May a single white flower blooms below the foliage. This flower soon forms a solitary yellow fruit, which is the only edible part of the plant. These fruits are relished by eastern box turtles, and the mayapple relies on the reptile to disperse its seeds. Traveling through the digestive system of the turtle increases the seeds' germination rate substantially, enough so that we would likely not have the plant without the eastern box turtle. While patches of this plant can be found all over the Garden, the Enchanted Forest is the best place to see them.

The pomegranate (*Punica granatum*) is a storied fruit that has a long history with humankind. Valued for both its beauty and for its delicious fruit, it is mentioned in sacred texts, depicted in the visual arts, and is cherished in many world cuisines, mainly Mediterranean and South Asian. Despite its more exotic origins, pomegranates grow well in Coastal Virginia. In early summer, the shrubs are covered in bright orange flowers, and later these will give way to showy orange fruits. However, there are a number of pomegranate varieties that are strictly grown as ornamentals. The most spectacular specimens at NBG can be found in our Japanese Garden.



There are few flowers more attractive and eye-catching than that of sacred lotus (*Nelumbo nucifera*). The fragrant, anise-scented blossoms are mostly shades of a delicate pink, with white and yellow surrounding its central pod. This edible and medicinal wetland plant is revered in Asian cultures for its ability to cleanly rise above the muck and mud with such beauty. It is the national flower of India. After the blooms have gone, the attractive seed pods will remain and are prized by flower arrangers. Sacred lotus is listed as invasive in many parts of the United States, but ours are contained within the pond of the Japanese Garden. You can enjoy these flowers up close and personal from the stone footbridge there.

Separated by the Pacific Ocean, two species of *Agastache*, one native to North America, and the other to Korea, were united by a Dutch plant breeder who created 'Blue Fortune.' While both of the species are good plants, the hybrid cross is a spectacular and superior plant, especially if you are interested in gardening for beneficial pollinators. Commonly called hummingbird mint, or anise hyssop, the foliage does have a minty aromatic aroma. The flowers bloom from mid-summer into early fall, and are a rich purple blue. In full bloom, the plant positively vibrates with insect activity. The Canal Walk behind Baker Hall is the best place to view this amazing perennial.



GARDENING FOR POLLINATORS

By Director of Adult Education Alexandra Cantwell

It seems the new buzzword (yes, pun intended) in gardening is pollinators. ‘Protect the Pollinators,’ ‘Pollinator Gardens,’ etc., are common phrases—and with good reason. Without pollinators, our lives – all life – on earth would be drastically different. Everything from what’s on our dinner plates, to what’s in our medicine cabinets would change, and that’s just smaller scale effects. Entire ecosystems would cease to function worldwide without pollinators.

But what exactly IS a pollinator? It’s an animal that is essential to plant reproduction as it moves pollen from one flower to another, resulting in fertilization and leading to fruit and seed production in plants. Butterflies and honey bees might be the most famous, but there are so many more in this essential group of animals. Butterflies are indeed pollinators (though not the most efficient), as are honey bees, but did you know honey bees are non-native species? They were introduced to North America by European colonists right here in Virginia. We have quite a few native bees that need our attention—about 4,000 different species in North America. From the familiar bumblebee, to the tiniest of sweat bees, these hardworking insects go from flower to flower, transferring pollen along the way, oftentimes competing with honey bees for resources. Other industrious insects include moths, flies, beetles and even wasps.

Pollinators aren’t just limited to our six-legged friends. Birds, mammals and even reptiles are pollinators as well. Some pollinators that live here at Norfolk Botanical Garden include bats and the ever-popular ruby-throated hummingbird that you’ll see flitting from flower to flower this time of year.

Loss of foraging grounds and nesting habitats, along with excessive pesticide use are two huge threats to pollinators. It’s vital to support conservation efforts—starting right at home! Reduce your turf and expand your flower beds, filling them with a variety of native plants, many of which have evolved directly with specific pollinators (think monarchs and milkweed or hummingbirds and cardinal flower). Choose plants from local nurseries that haven’t been sprayed and rethink traditional yard maintenance. Leaf litter, logs, and various textures and heights of foliage all provide excellent habitat. Gardens with a diversity of plant species and successional bloom periods are destined to attract our pollinating pals, while providing year-round interest and beauty for us as well.

For more information on pollinators and their supporting plants, visit Norfolk Botanical Garden to see flourishing pollinator gardens in action. Together, we can reshape traditional landscaping and restore vital habitat for these indispensable allies.



Top Photo: Alexandra Cantwell, Director of Adult Education.



Middle Photo: Miner Bee (*Andrena* sp.) on Horse Sugar (*Symplocos tinctoria*).

Bottom Photo: a type of Flower Longhorn Beetle in the Lepturinae subfamily on New Jersey Tea (*Ceanothus americanus*). Photos and identification by retired NBG Senior Horticulturist Tom Houser.



Read all about it! Catch articles like this in the *Virginian-Pilot* once a month. Look for the Wild Green Yonder green logo.



THEN & NOW



Maps Data Google: 2023 © SIO, NOAA, U.S. Navy, NGB, GEBCO TerraMetrics

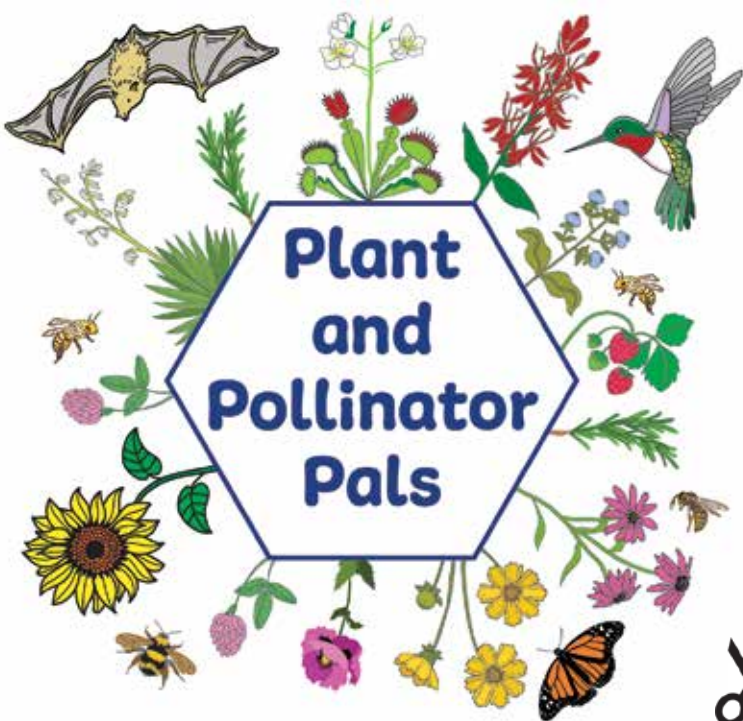


Norfolk Botanical Garden and the Norfolk International Airport celebrate 85 years!

In 1938, Norfolk Botanical Garden (NBG) was created through the Works Progress Administration (WPA) grant. 220 African American men and women were hired to clear land and plant the Garden's first flowers. At the same time, The Norfolk International Airport (ORF) was built on land formerly belonging to the Truxton Manor Golf Course. The first permanent terminal was completed by 1940. Both the Garden and the Airport saw many changes throughout the decades, including the Airport's expansion where NBG ceded land for the development. Many azaleas were relocated to the Enchanted Forest while others bloom at the airport each spring. To learn more about NBG and the Airport's history scan the code below.












This Summer in the World of Wonders Children's Garden



Join us in the WOW Children's Garden this summer to complete interactive scavenger hunts, guided and self-guided tours, and investigative field activities to learn about the different pollinators that call Norfolk Botanical Garden home!

Dig It Kids' Corner Take-along Guide

Planting native plants in your garden is a great way to support native pollinators. Look for the following plants in the Garden that are popular among our native pollinator pals.

Bee Balm 	Cardinal Flower 	Columbine 
Garden Phlox 	Goldenrod 	Pickereel Weed 
Rose Mallow 	Swamp Milkweed 	Tickseed 

Bonus activity: Spend two minutes watching one of the flowers. How many different pollinators did you see visit that single flower? Answer: _____

EXCLUSIVE Catering

Entertaining is an art, and no one does it better than East Beach Catering. For nearly twenty years, East Beach Catering has been helping clients bring the WOW factor to their events through impeccable cuisine and curated design, earning them acclaim as one of the most esteemed catering companies in Coastal Virginia. Norfolk Botanical Garden is proud to announce that East Beach Catering is now the exclusive catering partner for all private weddings and events at Norfolk Botanical Garden.

Whether it's a black-tie gala, wedding, social party or corporate function, owner Chelsea Browne's eye for design, passion for food, and commitment to a collaborative client experience are evident in every event East Beach Catering serves. As a full-service catering company, East Beach helps clients craft custom menus to suit a range of cuisines, styles, and budgets.

The Norfolk-based catering company is committed to NBG's progressive sustainability policy, implementing alternatives to single-use plastics and environmentally friendly catering practices into every event, including the sourcing of local ingredients.

Exclusive East Beach catering applies to events and weddings contracted as of January 1, 2023.





Use this guide to help you find the listed plants in the Garden. The numbers reflect the locations listed on the NBG map.

- Bee Balm:** Border Garden (near 17), Wildflower Meadow (11)
- Cardinal Flower:** WOW Children's Garden (3), Native Plant Garden (7)
- Columbine:** Statuary Vista (21), Border Garden (near 17)
- Garden Phlox:** Native Plant Garden (7), Statuary Vista (21)
- Goldenrod:** Butterfly Garden (4), Perennial Garden (17)
- Pickereel Weed:** WOW Children's Garden (3), Native Plant Garden (7)
- Rose Mallow:** WOW Children's Garden (3), Border Garden (near 17)
- Swamp Milkweed:** Border Garden (near 17), Butterfly Garden (4)
- Tickseed:** WOW Children's Garden (3), Perennial Garden (17)



VOLUNTEER Spotlight

Susan Moore



The Garden's volunteers bring a variety of experience and skills to their work helping us with our goals. Susan Moore is one of these essential team members who has donated a total of 277 hours of her time and talents to the Garden since

the spring of 2021. She has taken on a variety of jobs—Butterfly House interpreter, floral guild, special events assistant, etc.—and is always eager to do more.

Susan's background includes teaching, floral design, and commercial art. Once she became a volunteer, she quickly zeroed in on the Butterfly House. "After a few weeks there, I knew I'd found my niche," Susan said. She especially loves interacting with the children who tour the exhibit.

With over thirty-five years of experience working in floral shops and owning her own shop, Susan is an expert in floral design and enjoys having the Garden as an outlet for her creativity. As a member of the Floral Guild, she creates beautiful arrangements visitors can see throughout Baker Hall and the Administration Building.

SAVE the Date 15TH Annual Garden Heritage Celebration

Sunday, September 17
2:00—3:00 PM

Join us in honoring the original Works Progress Administration (WPA) workers who cleared the land and planted the first azaleas in 1938. Due to limited parking, please reserve your timed-entry ticket.



Above: NBG Board of Directors President Clenise Platt addressed ceremony attendees in the Margaret Moore Hall Rose Garden in 2021.

Right: The bronze statue *Breaking Ground* by artist Kathleen Farrell is located in the WPA Memorial Garden near Mirror Lake.



ART in BAKER HALL

Included with Garden Admission

APRIL — MAY 31

Scenes of Coastal Virginia

Nature
photography
by Lori Cash



Gifts From My Garden



Colorful
contemporary oil
paintings by
Karen Kinser

JUNE 1 — JULY 31

*Adventures
of Misfits and
Wayward Girls*

Whimsical Acrylic
Paintings by
Chris Jeangeuenat



AUGUST 1 — SEPTEMBER 30

A Colorful Collaboration



Vibrant Acrylic Painting by
Bethany Simpson and Jennifer W. Klein

Tribute Opportunities

The beauty, wonder and serenity of the Garden combine to create a perfect setting to honor a loved one, pay tribute to a friend, or mark a special anniversary or milestone. Select from a number of sites in the Garden to place our teakwood bench, complete with commemorative plaque. Please call Cathy Fitzgerald at 757-441-5830 ext. 319 or email her at cathy.fitzgerald@nbgs.org to make an appointment to discuss this \$25,000 tribute opportunity.

Leaving a Legacy

The Evergreen Society recognizes and celebrates an outstanding group of friends who generously support the Garden beyond their lifetimes.

Evergreen Society Members

If you are interested in learning more about the Evergreen Society, or letting us know about a gift in your estate plan including IRA's, please contact cathy.fitzgerald@nbgs.org.

Dan Allison, Annette Averitt, I.M. & Sarah Lee Baker, Ty & Martha Brown, Elizabeth Bruce, Blanche C. Chappell, Robert & Janie Creecy, Cindy Cutler & Craig Haines, Sandra L. Dashney, Michael Desplaines, William W. Eley, Richard & Eleanor Evans, Cathy Fitzgerald, Joe Foreman, R. Michael & Patricia Fuller, Jane Frazier, Robert M. Gostel, Craig & Sue Grube, Randy Harrison, June Hoye, Kit E. Johnson, Karen S. Gershman, Karen L. Hines, Edward C. & Betty Lou Johnston, Sr., Patricia A. Kiefer, Patty L. Landrum, Virginia T. Lawrence, Eleanor Marshall, Bee McLeod & Goody Tyler, Rick Morsink, Susan Elise Morton, Nancy Nelson, Edward & Gayle Nichols, Susan L. Oldridge, Brian O'Neil, Dana Parker, Stephanie Pope, Mildred Amsinger Powers, Judy Pravecsek, Kathleen Keogh Rahman, Ann Rathbone, Pamela Read, Alan Rohanna, Kurt & Debbie Schroeder, Sam Strickland, George & Nancy Sutcliffe, Sylvia E. Simons Trembelas, Jim & Christiane Valone, Richard & Ann Weber, Pearl Windle, 3 anonymous.

THANK YOU NBG MEMBERS

Thank you for being a part of our Garden family. You are helping us as a non-profit organization fulfill our mission and together we are building and planting the Garden's future. Your support is very much appreciated.

norfolk botanical garden

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