

IMPACT

Annual IMPACT Report 2024 — 2025

norfolk botanical garden



CONNECTING WITH NATURE

“Nature is a source of endless curiosity. The more you notice, the more you want to discover, and that’s how the connection begins.”

— Theresa Augustin, Vice President of Education & Conservation



A note from the President, Peter Schmidt

The Impact of Conservation and Education

Our connection to nature runs through every part of life. Plants sustain us in ways both simple and profound. They give us food, shelter, clean air and water and the roots of so many of the medicines that keep us healthy. They're essential to the balance of our ecosystems and to our own well-being.

Conservation and education have always been at the heart of our mission. When we teach people, especially young people, about the natural world, something powerful happens. Curiosity turns into care and care becomes action. Over time, those experiences grow into a personal commitment to protect the environment we all share and depend on. Helping them learn how to care for it is one of the most meaningful legacies we can leave. Each lesson, each discovery, each spark of curiosity helps ensure a healthier, more resilient world for tomorrow.

Here at Norfolk Botanical Garden, 175 acres of manicured gardens, waterways and wild spaces give people the chance to experience nature up close. Folks are free to explore, reflect and imagine. The Brock Environmental Education Center builds on that promise. It's an inviting space where learning about the environment becomes hands-on and inspiring, nurturing stewardship, critical thinking and a lifelong love of discovery.

That same vision continues to grow through **The Garden of Tomorrow**, a bold new chapter that expands our mission of conservation and education and invites people of all ages to connect with nature in new and unforgettable ways. Together we're making an impact.

IMPACT

Visitors

Total Visitors:		426,321
Non-local Visitors:		34,796
International Visitors:		1823
Free/Discounted Admissions:		14,465
Dominion Energy Garden of Lights:		103,545

Membership

Average Member Households per Month:		15,244
Total Renewals:		12,220
Total New Members:		4,171

Staff

Full-Time, Part-Time & Seasonal:		126
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Volunteers

Total Volunteers:		740
Total Volunteer Hours:		12,705
Value of Volunteer Time:		\$437,306

Weddings & Event Rentals

Weddings:		90
Weddings Revenue:		\$423,640
Corporate/Social Events:		73
Corporate/Social Events Revenue:		\$67,995

All in support of NBG's mission



NBG Fiscal Year 2025 by the Numbers

Education Programs



Total WOW Children's Garden Activity Participants:	10,874
Youth Education Class Participants:	1,731
Total K-12 Students Engaged via Outreach and On-site Programs:	6,668
Title I Schools:	19
Grant-funded Scholarship Recipients:	372
Total Adult Classes:	528
Total Adult Class Participants:	8,795

Community Outreach



Adult Outreaches:	113
Community Members Engaged:	7,308
Total Plants Donated:	1,340
Value of Plants Donated:	\$11,823
Youth Education Outreaches:	14
Schools Visited:	16
Plant Plugs Donated:	700

Renewable Energy



Total Solar Panels:	592
Total Emissions Reduced:	1,138,214 lbs.
Equivalent of Planting:	8,597 Trees

Tidewater Composting Partner

Weight Collected & Diverted from Landfill: **459 lbs.**

Living Plant Collection



Plant Families:	203
Taxa:	8,868
(2,466 species, 6,402 cultivars)	
Accessions:	14,562

New On-Site Plantings

Annuals Planted:	29,496
Spring Flowering Bulbs:	24,071
Herbaceous Plants:	1,517
Shrubs & Trees:	593



Plant Sales

New Plants & Plugs for Local Landscapes	
Total sold at NBG Plant & Plug Sales	12,877

Communications

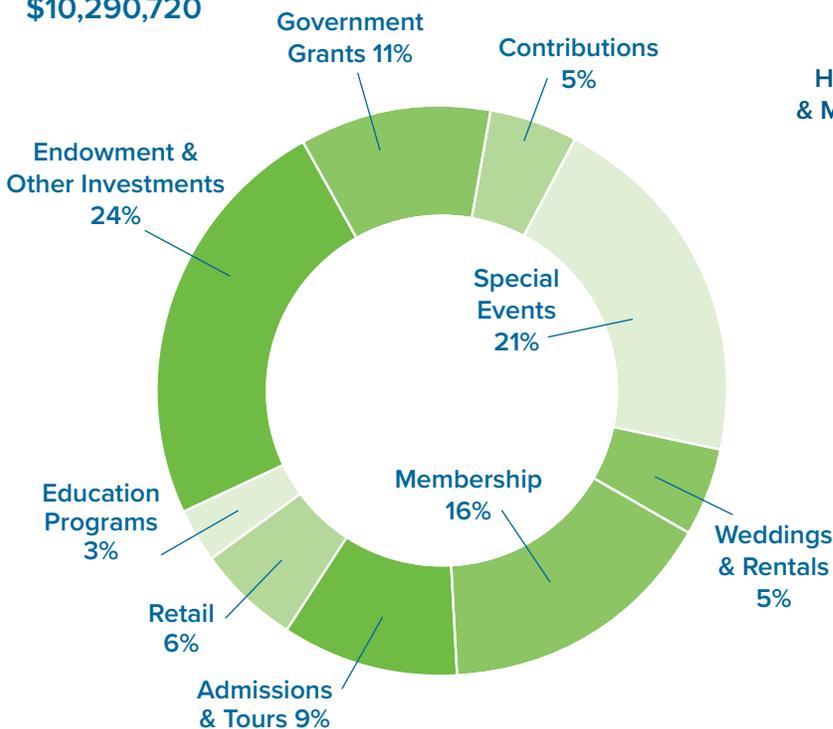
Total Email Newsletter Subscribers:	125K+
Facebook Followers:	77K+
Instagram Followers:	37K+



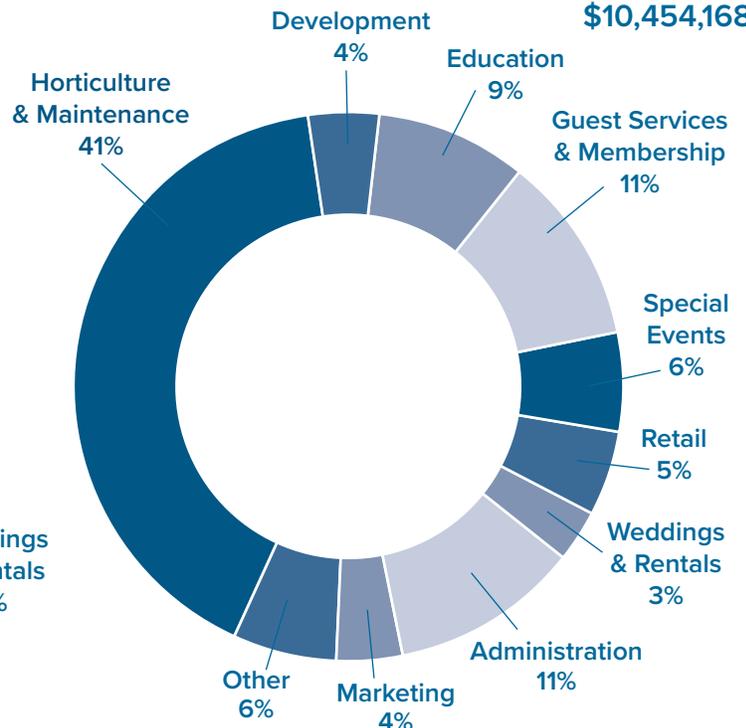
Fiscal 2025 Report: Operating Revenue and Expenses

Audit Pending

Revenue
\$10,290,720



Expenses
\$10,454,168



IMPACT in the Horticulture Department

This past year we focused on preparation for the opening of **The Garden of Tomorrow**. Soil recipes for the tropical and desert biomes were finalized and arrived late in the summer (2025). Several staff members attended the Tropical Plant International Expo in Florida where more plants and vendors were found. While in Florida, nurseries were toured and a very rare *Osa pulchra* plant donation was picked up from Fairchild Tropical Garden. Plans for the Batten Sky Meadow were finalized and after most of the planting took place, pollinators and birds began making it their home.

In the new Brock Parking Garden, permeable pavers have been added as well as new-to-the-area ArborSystem from GreenBlue Urban which enabled us to plant a variety of trees directly in the parking lot. Not only will these trees look good and offer shade, but their planting system will also help filter water runoff. The greenhouse is undergoing an upgrade in preparation of the opening of the new Perry Conservatory. In addition, NBG Conservatory Director, Michelle Baudanza interned at the U.S. Botanical Garden in Washington, D.C., where she gained invaluable training and perspective and was able to network with staff from the nation's oldest conservatory. Later, they donated something we are very excited about, our very own corpse flower (*Amorphophallus titanum*).

Closer to home, Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden in Richmond is also building a new conservatory. Because of limited storage, they made a generous donation of plants. We have also worked closely with the Virginia Zoo again this year to provide some of its animals with fresh foliage from NBG as part of their browse program. Here at the Garden, members of the Horticulture staff continued to support our mission by leading 20 walk and talks, 45 classes and participating in 37 community outreach programs. All indications point to an even busier year next year.

L to R: Nate Braddock, Gardener (Advanced) - Collections, of the United States Botanic Garden assists NBG Greenhouse Senior Manager Meredith Courtney with loading the corpse flower root ball for its transit from Washington, D.C., to Norfolk, Virginia.



GROWING the Next Generation

Revamped in 2023, Norfolk Botanical Garden's Summer Teen Volunteer Program offers high school students hands-on experience in early childhood education, horticulture and green careers. Teens ages 14–18 apply and interview to become official NBG volunteers, spending their summer assisting in the WOW Children's Garden with discovery tables, crafts, story times and educational classes.

In 2025, new training workshops introduced 21 teens to career development, team building and partnerships with local organizations like Virginia Tech Cooperative Extension, Chrysler Museum of Art and First Landing State Park. Exit interviews revealed powerful takeaways: increased confidence, greater appreciation for education and nature and awareness of local green career opportunities.

This program continues to cultivate leadership, curiosity and environmental stewardship in the next generation of changemakers.

