

11

Newsletter of  
The Friends of  
Sarah P. Duke Gardens

Spring  
Issue No.  
55

# flora



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# flora

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Cover photo of Leubuscher Rock Garden waterfall by Rick Fisher. Additional photography by Stefan Bloodworth, Jamie Konarski Davidson, Rick Fisher, Jason Holmes, Wendell Hull, Paul Jones, Michael Patrick, Mike Owens, Tonje Hessen Schei, Orla Swift, Charles Twine.

CONNECT ONLINE:







# dear friends

The arrival of spring is always a special time at Sarah P. Duke Gardens, from the magnificent late-March display of magnolias and redbuds in the Culberson Asiatic Arboretum to the purple splendor of the wisteria-covered Pergola on the Terraces, the delicate beauty of spring ephemerals carpeting the Blomquist Garden of Native Plants and the tulips and alliums greeting visitors to the Doris Duke Center.

In addition to those familiar sites, visitors can now enjoy a splendid view of the Terraces from the new Frances P. Rollins Overlook, constructed of Duke stone, much of which was recycled from a previous restoration of the Terraces.

As I write, crews in the Rose Circle are preparing to install the 110-year-old Roney fountain, fully restored and relocated from East Campus. A second phase of work to follow will transform the Linden Allee into a fully accessible entry for our more than 300,000 annual visitors.

Our volunteer program celebrates its 20th anniversary this year, and in this issue you will hear from a wide range of participants in this diverse and talented group. Other visitors and friends of the Gardens will describe favorite views and memories. Duke Gardens touches people in special ways, and each story is a treasure and an inspiration.

You'll learn how an eroded landscape devoid of beauty has become one of the most tranquil areas in Duke Gardens. Then travel to China with Paul Jones, curator of the Culberson Asiatic Arboretum, in search of new and unusual plants in some of the most remote and beautiful corners of that far off land.

There is so much going on in and around the Gardens, it is hard to limit what can be covered in these few pages. I hope you have a chance to visit soon and often, as there is so much to enjoy. And, as always, thank you for your support.

Sincerely,

William M. LeFevre  
Executive Director

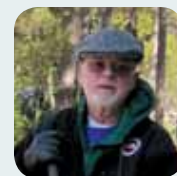
## 20 Years of Giving Celebrating Duke Gardens' Volunteer Program



It hardly seems like 20 years have gone by since Dr. Culberson and Jean Carr discussed the need for a volunteer program at Duke Gardens. Dr. Culberson, the Gardens' director at that time, had just hired Jean to oversee creation of a development program. Part of the vision for this new program would be to develop a Friends program along with a volunteer program.

I was privileged to be on staff at that time and was able to help develop the volunteer program from its inception. As you will read on these pages, the program has meant many things to different people, most notably a sense of belonging that people get from volunteering here.

- Chuck Hemric, Director of Volunteers



I have a degree from Duke, and it's kind of nice to give back. If you can't give a lot of money it's nice, if you have time, to give time. So it's kind of a way to feel a part of the total university itself almost, by being involved somehow.

way back when, when we first did the inventory. And then stupidly I said, "Sure, I'll help." It kind of blossomed from there.

The library's been the thing that I try and focus on. I'm very proud of how it is. It's a cool collection.

- Nan Len

I was in education for probably thirty-some years, and when I started doing volunteer work at the Gardens, I would say in my first year, I had more people who were strangers thank me for what I was doing than I did the whole time I worked in a career where sometimes people don't thank. They take for granted the fact that you're there, where in the Gardens people think, "This person's giving time that they don't really have to."

- Don Barry



One of the things that's interesting is that I've learned about individual plants. There are some that are so aggressive, and I've learned to recognize their roots. That's not a view I had had before.

- Cavett French



Because I had a library background I sort of fussed around with the books. It was a very small library at that point. But then Dr. Culberson, who was the director, had gotten a gift from Charlie Reid of a bunch of books that were stored out in a warehouse. And several of us - Edna and Chuck and some other people - went out to this freezing cold warehouse and recorded all the books. And there were thousands of books, like 2,000, I think.



I retired and moved down here just a year ago, and I decided I was going to keep my garden at home simple, because it's different with your own garden - you really feel that you have to do this or that and it gets to be a little bit much when you're getting older.

So when eventually we built the center, we got all of those books out of storage and brought them into this library, and that's where the library came from. And that was my involvement

I'd been to the Gardens before, and I thought, "I'm going to go over there and see if they want volunteers." And, of course, they always need volunteers here. And everyone's so friendly, it's like being part of a family. I just love being here. It's peaceful. It's beautiful all year round. I'm just happy when I'm here.

I get to do pruning, I've done a lot of planting, some raking leaves last fall, mulching. A little bit of everything, really. I just love it.

- Jennifer Phillips





...everyone's so friendly, it's like being part of a family. I just love being here. It's peaceful. It's beautiful all year round. I'm just happy when I'm here.



I was having some trouble with my hip, and the doctors decided that it was best to have a hip replacement, which I had at Duke and it was very successful. So I had a walker for maybe a couple of weeks, and then I was able to walk around. And I thought, "I think I should walk in the Duke Gardens. And if I find that I can walk there and walk well without a cane or anything, then that'll be good rehabilitation for the hip."

I noticed that there were a lot of cigarette butts around. And they just looked so ugly and the Gardens were so beautifully kept. And after I went home, I began to think, "How could I pick up those cigarette butts without bending over each time?" Well, they had given me a picker-upper. It's a long stick with just a little thing that you do with your fingers, and then it picks little things up like a cigarette butt. So I brought that the following day, and I went through the Gardens and I picked up the cigarette butts and put them in a plastic bag that I had hanging off of my belt. And I thought to myself, "I'll do this for a few days and see if I really like to do it. And if I do, I'll go in and volunteer and ask them if they would like me to do it as a volunteer." And so that's exactly what happened.

- Susan Gittler



When I was about 10 years old, I became aware that the Gardens were going to be built. And I was spending some time with my aunt who lived on Swift Avenue. So subsequently we walked over here and watched things beginning. And I grew up in that area, and it was our place to come to get quiet. And all through the years, I used that.

So when I was able to turn loose of publishing, I had time then to devote to myself and what I liked. I started in the gift shop, graduated on up to the information desk, then graduated to be the editor of "The Dirt." But this is a comfort zone for me. I love the Gardens. And the staff has been so nice all through the years. It's my place to come for solitude. I still continue to come. I hope I'll continue right on 'til I'm put away. It's a place to recharge, that's exactly what it's for.

- Jerry Sheehy



I've been retired 17 years, and I've always been active and not in a recliner with a zapper by a TV 24-7. We do garden at home and gardened in our past life in different states. So this is a tremendous social outlet for me, all those people.

What's really fun is the plant sale, spring and fall. We're involved in that Thursday, Friday and Saturday. All those people, you know? It's great, it's just so much fun, because I like people, being around people, and here they come. It's amazing.

- Richard Gross



We asked to be with the propagation team because when we moved here we discovered that although we had gardened for many years, when we came to North Carolina we didn't know anything about gardening here. So we thought, "Well, maybe if we volunteer and find out what they do, we can find out how to deal with it." We have learned a tremendous amount.

It's really fun to work with people who are interested in the same thing you are and they're all positive. It's just a pleasant place to work. And it's the garden I know I'll never have. I love the orderliness and the perfection of it, because our gardening at home is a mess.

- Marcella Gross



When I worked at Duke for a number of years in Perkins Library before the volunteer program came along, I spent a lot of time during lunch hour walking around in the Gardens. I'd take a sandwich over and have lunch. So I had become a bit familiar with them. And when the notice that they were starting a volunteer program came along, then I was quite interested in hooking up with that. I didn't then and don't now know all that much about gardening, about plants. I mean, I'm certainly no expert. I'm not a botanist. But it was such a lovely place to be. I just enjoyed being out there. And I take a bit of pleasure digging up weeds.

- Mary Dawson

## Milestones:

- 1992 The Dirt volunteer newsletter is launched
- 1996 First gift shop opens in Terraces, run by volunteers
- 1998 Annual Gehman Award created, recognizing outstanding achievement
- 1998 A beverage cart staffed by volunteers opens for business, a precursor to the Terrace Café
- 1999 Volunteer artists create the Garden Guild
- 2008 First volunteer to reach 10,000 hours: Edna Gaston

## VIEWPOINTS

### Musings on favorite gardens spots

Jamie Konarski Davidson  
visitor and photographer  
on the Gardens in macro

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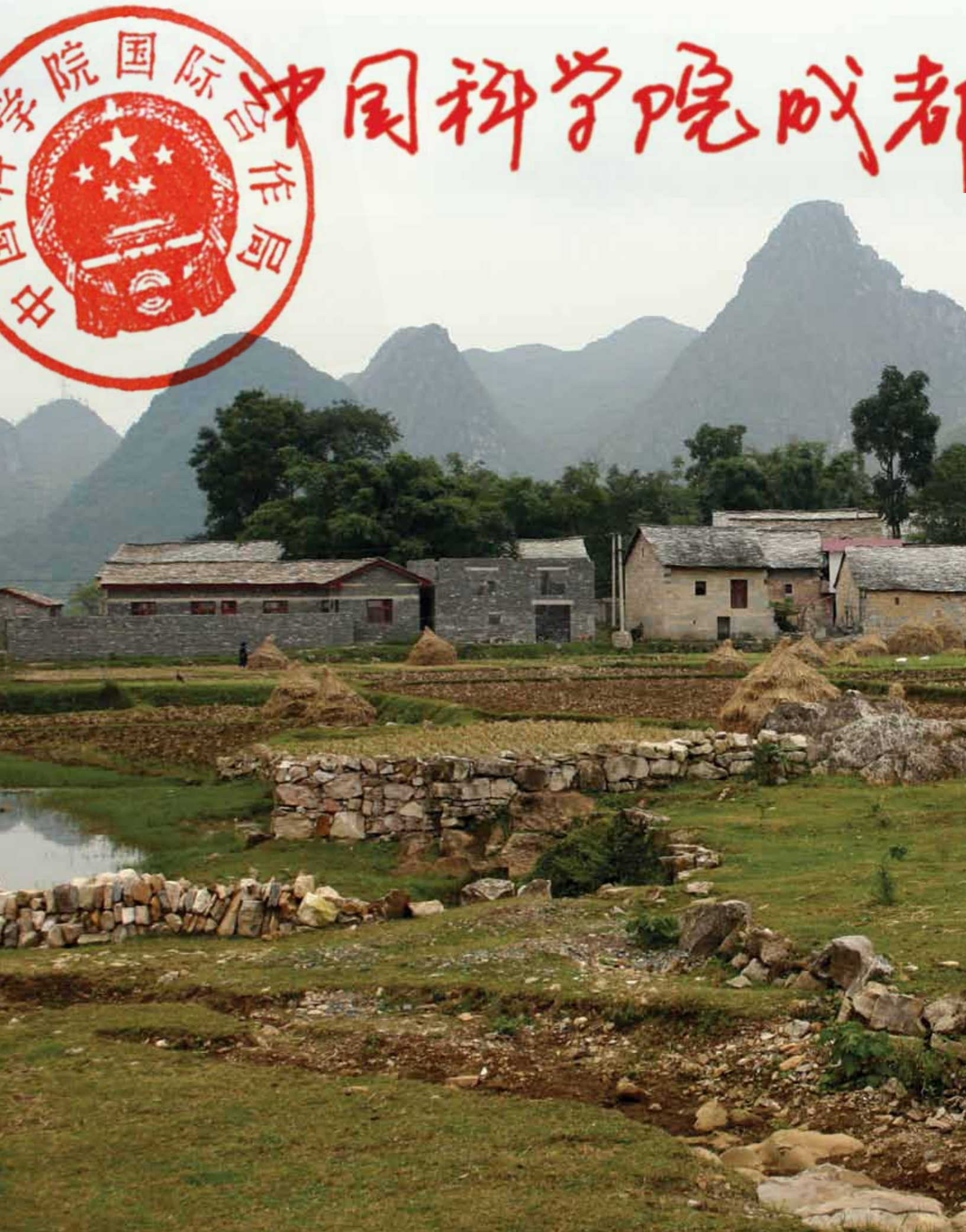
Over 15 years ago, as a Duke bone marrow transplant/stem cell transplant patient, I discovered the Gardens. It was the only place I could go while my body was recovering. It was and continues to be a place of healing, freedom and sanctuary – full of life, color and nature at its finest. Full of peace...and hope.

Each visit reminds me of how far I've come and how blessed I am to be able to photograph and share such an amazing treasure with others. Slowing down to notice and capture the intimate details – to celebrate the moments we might miss when moving at a faster pace – is what draws me to macro photography. The Gardens offer those moments every day and provide visual miracles and surprises at every turn.



Photo credit: Jamie Konarski Davidson





# Treasure Hunting in Southern China

中国科学院

By Paul Jones, *Curator of the W.L. Culberson Asiatic Arboretum*

If you follow events at Duke you're probably aware of initiatives in recent years aimed at developing closer ties between the university and China – increasing student enrollment, collaborative ties between medical schools, and most recently a new business campus to be constructed just outside Shanghai. Since 1994, Duke Gardens' Asiatic Arboretum has also been engaged in China – for horticultural reasons. Why China? Well, there are 32,000 reasons... which is a conservative estimate of the diversity of plant species native to the Middle Kingdom. Indeed, approximately one-eighth of the plant species on planet Earth call China home.

Of course, not all of this floristic variety, hailing from tropical to desert to alpine habitat, is applicable to Duke Gardens. Our focus has been on the montane flora of temperate southern China, for two important reasons: adaptability to our climate – both cold and heat tolerance – and because these southern mountain forests harbor an impressive array of species that have yet to be adequately trialed for horticultural use in the southeastern U.S. (my modest want list is about 400 strong). This latter point is despite the fact that since Jesuit missionaries first began sending plants home to Europe in the 16th century, legions of plant collectors have mined the forests of China searching for the next new Bradford pear.

There are rigors involved with collecting plants in China today, but overall the experience bears little resemblance to the difficulties faced by our predecessors a century or more ago. Depending on the province, getting into the wilderness typically involves a few poor roads, facing off with cowboys coaxing overburdened trucks, excessive negotiations, construction delays, a questionable restaurant or two, and enduring a few very unwesternlike "facilities." However, even in the few years of my travels there, China has developed at an unimaginable pace and now provides modern facilities and a transportation network that renders even the most remote destinations little more than a hop, skip and a jump away. Of course arriving at the forest destination is only part of the challenge. Finding viable seed is another, and the species being sought usually aren't waiting by the roadside with ripened fruit beckoning, "Pick me, pick me." The legal collection and export of seed from China requires a permit issued by the Department of Forestry, and that permit must include a list

of targeted species that has been approved in advance. It's my belief that once the name of a species I'm interested in is placed on a permit, and I arrive at the destination with permit in hand, all the wild specimens bearing good fruit transplant themselves into hiding! Joking aside, it is a cruel reality that when one is armed with a list, those are the plants that seem most elusive. Still, as a botanist, it's wonderful fascination to find a species growing in its native environment that I previously had only read about or known from gardens. And planting such a species in Duke Gardens, grown from seed personally collected in the wild, is eminently satisfying.

Planning botanical field trips in China requires dotting many i's and crossing many t's, and such trips are possible only with the cooperation of Chinese hosts. Acquiring permits, arranging transportation and lodging, gaining access to or through protected areas – these are but a few of the requisites for which an app has yet to be created. One must submit a letter of invitation from the host when applying for the appropriate visa. About these hosts, and the many persons involved as guides, drivers, assistants – whatever role they may serve that brings them into my path – I can honestly say that I remember not one who was in any way less than gracious, friendly, professional and eagerly accommodating.

The first few field trips I participated in were led by Guan Kaiyun, director of the Kunming Botanic Gardens in Yunnan province, who remains a friend today. Guan subsequently arranged introductions to colleagues in neighboring Sichuan province and at the Guizhou (Provincial) Botanic Garden in Guiyang, who served as hosts for later trips. One student who assisted our work in Guizhou graduated and accepted a teaching position in the Department of Life Sciences at Jinggangshan University in Jiangxi province. Hu Xuehua, an invaluable friend, continues to provide assistance and has served as a link to other botanists and students at JU, resulting in opportunities to explore some of Jiangxi's richest terrain. Indeed, building a network of collegial friendships has opened doors to exciting fieldwork throughout southern China.

Regarding relationships with Chinese hosts, if one has intentions to return time and again to work in China, he or she can do no better than to expend the effort necessary to









## 🌻 digging deeper:

### Gardens supporters on the roots of their passions

#### DOT BORDEN AND MAVIS MAYER

*Durham-Toyama Sister Cities board members  
On the Durham-Toyama Sister Cities Japanese Pavilion*

**Dot:** My late-husband Bud and I went to The Japanese Garden in California. I had heard of other sister cities doing a teahouse honoring their Japanese sister city, and I had thought it wasn't really that important. But after that experience, I realized that this would bring a lot of consciousness about our sister city and pleasure to people in Durham. We're so blessed that the Gardens were open to collaborating and carrying forth with this.

It's sacred space. There has been so much energy put into creating it that that in and of itself makes it an important, valuable place. In a tea ceremony we're honoring spiritual areas of life, learning and growing and intuition, and sensitivity to nature and to the creation and the creator. There are lots of religions we're talking about here, and the ceremony honors and confirms all of them: Shinto, Buddhist, Christian, Jewish and Islam. So it's all-encompassing. It is a sacred space, and a cultural teaching place, and a place of beauty. So it's lots of things. But it's the beauty that catches people's imagination first.

Durham has the only American-Japanese sister city relationship in North Carolina. And there are more than 200 sister cities in the nation between the U.S. and Japan. But they're mostly on the West Coast, you see. It's wonderful that North Carolina does seem to

resonate with Japan, because of all the Japanese companies here. And the annual Japanese New Year celebration was here. That kind of inspires everybody to reach out to each other, immigrants as well as native people. And that's a real celebration.

**Mavis:** We sort of had this idea of having something tangible to illustrate the ongoing relationship with our sister city, in that we have lots of people who go back and forth and different programs, but there was nothing tangibly there to represent that relationship. In a way, the tea house provided a catalyst to develop a garden around it, so it's been a double bonus. We not only have the structure to have the tea ceremonies, but we have the beautiful surroundings, too, which have added to the beauty of the Gardens.

As sister cities, we have these ongoing relationships that are often in fields of education and medicine. We've had a whole variety of cultural exchanges. But just to have something there where we can have not just tea ceremonies but other cultural events – it's just a symbol of this wonderful relationship we've had for 22 years.



*Duke Gardens thanks Dot Borden for her generous gift of lightweight tatami mats for the tea house in the Durham-Toyama Sister Cities Japanese Pavilion, in memory of her late husband, William "Bud" Cowdery. Preceding the gift, the Tea House had heavy mats that were cumbersome to move in and out for each tea gathering.*

#### LOIS OLIVER

*Board member and volunteer  
On relaxing and learning in the Terrace Gardens*

From 1970 to '74 my office in the pediatric clinic was directly opposite the entrance from Flowers Drive to the Terraces. I could walk over to the Gardens, to enjoy the beauty and peace on a break from the clinic. The Terraces were different then. The seasonal change from tulips and pansies to summer annuals to fall mums filled each terrace with a band of color.

When I returned to Duke in 1987, my office was a bit farther away, but still near Flowers Drive. I often walked over to have a brown bag lunch in the Gardens, sitting on a bench under a tree in the Terraces or in the Pergola. Other faculty and administrators did the same, and I once shared my bench with Nan Keohane during her presidency at Duke. The terraces were now planted with more perennials, and the variety of plant material was interesting. I now had a house with a big yard and garden, and I used the perennial choices in the Gardens as a guide for plant choice. When I had planted my favorites from my Pittsburgh garden, many succumbed during the heat and humidity of a North Carolina July.

I began exploring further in the Gardens as the Blomquist and Culberson gardens were growing and developing. By 1996, I was working part time and began volunteering, first as a docent, where I learned about all the gardens, and then as a horticultural volunteer in the Terraces. During one early period, we could choose an area and be responsible for weeding and deadheading during our two- or three-hour weekly volunteer stint. I remember being responsible for Terrace 2 for a while.

As I got older, I picked up other volunteer options. I worked on the information desk weekly for the early years that the Doris Duke Center was in operation. Lately, I have been on the propagation team, and I still weed and dead head occasionally in the Terraces. My enjoyment of the Gardens, has grown over the years. Having initially had a peaceful and beautiful place to go to from a busy and sometimes sad place was a real benefit to me. Now I enjoy giving something back to the Gardens. 🌻

*Do you have a special connection with Duke Gardens?  
If so, we'd love to hear about it.  
Please write to Flora  
at orla.swift@duke.edu*







### blomquist garden

From left: Fern Grotto, *Baptisia arachnifera*, *Arisaema triphyllum*, *Hydrangea quercifolia* near the Blomquist Pavilion.

# from gullies to garden

By Daniel deB. Richter, *Professor of Soils and Ecology*  
*Director of Graduate Studies for the Interdepartmental University Program in Ecology*  
*Nicholas School of the Environment*

Environmental science and environmental history are often written as “declensionist” stories – stories of how humanity degrades the natural environment.

Whether it's DDT, acid rain, radioactive pollution, tropical deforestation, species extinctions or oil spills, the stories follow a similar form in which humanity disrupts a natural system, struggles with problems that follow, and lives with a degraded world and the worry that the damages are irreversible.

We cannot deny the many adverse and deeply disturbing impacts of human action on the environment, but if we are to improve human relations with the environment, we need to move beyond a monotone of environmental decline. The declensionist story will not be easy to rewrite, for the story is deeply rooted in our ideas about humanity and nature, in our ideas about how societies are built by exploiting natural resources, and in the too common idea that people are simply not fully fledged members of nature.

But recently, geologists have declared that the Holocene epoch is over, the last 10,000 years and the period that includes all of humanity's civilized development. Geologists have renamed our current era the Anthropocene, not out of hubris but because humanity is now affecting the way the Earth works in many ways on a global scale. The Earth's atmosphere, soil, freshwater and oceans are being globally influenced by human actions.

In the Anthropocene, the view that humanity is opposed to nature has become irrelevant. Like it or not, the human and Earth systems are one.

Consider the story of soil erosion, greatly accelerated by nearly every civilization, a story told well in the modern classic *Dirt: The Erosion of Civilization*, by David Montgomery. In the Southern Piedmont, the physiographic region in which Duke University resides, cultivation for tobacco, cotton, corn and wheat has eroded soils at unprecedented rates from the late 1700s to the 1930s. By the 1930s, Piedmont farmers and many of their fields were worn out and farm families abandoned the South for cities and for more promising agricultural regions of America. By this time, agriculture had eroded about six inches of soil across the entire Southern Piedmont, from Virginia to Alabama. This erosion has created major problems for nearly all of the Piedmont's rivers and will continue to do so for centuries to come. The history of Piedmont erosion is the penultimate declensionist story of non-sustainable agriculture.

One of the most intriguing perspectives of Southern Piedmont erosion can be seen in Sarah P. Duke Gardens, specifically in the Blomquist Garden of Native Plants. Soil in the Blomquist Garden is networked by a whole series of agricultural gullies, 10- to 15-foot-deep gullies that scar the soil of this famous garden that contains plants

*Over the decades, plants in the Blomquist Garden have grown spectacularly, all because fifty years of persistent human labor have created a prolific garden on played-out and eroded fields inherited from long-forgotten Durham farmers*

carefully collected and grown from across southeastern North America. Over the decades, plants in the Blomquist Garden have grown spectacularly, all because fifty years of persistent human labor have created a prolific garden on played-out and eroded fields inherited from long-forgotten Durham farmers. The growth of Blomquist plants is so overwhelming that few visitors even see the gullies, much less fully appreciate the history of this formerly cultivated land. The Blomquist Garden is certainly valuable for its incredible display of a diversity of regional plants, but it is all the more valuable for the story it tells of how seriously degraded old fields have been so wonderfully reclaimed and gardened.

Today, as environmental scientists and historians struggle to move beyond declensionist stories about the environment, the late Duke Professor John Richards' last book, *The Unending Frontier* (2003), is instructive, as he wrestled with declensionism to state:

*Environmental history should not present human-induced ... change as an unrelieved tragedy of remorseless ecological degradation ... . It is far too easy to see irreversible decline – to underestimate the resilience of ecosystems ... .*

*Humans are part of nature and they must act in order to survive. There [are great] benefits to human productivity and well-being that accrue from intervention in the environment and management of the land ... .*

*Over generations in many societies, people have devised ways to sustain productivity and retain desirable resources and even aesthetic features on the land.*

In other words, the Blomquist and Sarah P. Duke Gardens as a whole provide a path beyond environmental declensionism, because their striking aesthetic values have been created in a place that historically was endowed with the most serious environmental degradation. All farmers and gardeners who have worked the land that is now Duke Gardens remain an integral part of it, as they and the land demonstrate the human potential to garden. As long as there is a will to garden, let declensionism die a quiet and lasting death! 🌿



# serving our visitors

By Jan Little, *Director of Education & Public Programs*

Imagine finally discovering the name of that intriguing plant, coming across a view that you have never before noticed, enjoying the first fragrance of spring or the last bit of autumn color, watching a bird flit from plant to plant, a spider spin a web, or your child become aware of the wonders of nature.



(left to right): Kingsbury Manx at Music in the Gardens, a Paperhand Parade, floral arranging class, Family Fun Day, Waterlily Walk.

Sarah P. Duke Gardens offers all those pleasures, providing inspiration, relaxation, learning, discovery and enjoyment to our guests. Staff members help by opening gateways for visitors and members into the wonders of nature.

Those gateways include classes, performances, programs and tours. And our staff and volunteers are always seeking additional ways to help visitors find their place in the Gardens.

## HERE IS A TASTE OF OUR OFFERINGS. PLEASE JOIN US.

• **INTRODUCE YOUR FRIENDS TO THE GARDENS:** Tours are available to visitors seeking to know a little more about the Gardens. Chuck Hemric, director of volunteer services, works with groups to determine just what they are interested in learning and then assigns them to one of our knowledgeable Gardens docents for a tour.

• **SEASONAL GARDEN WALKS:** The horticultural staff offers guided walks through different garden areas. Participants have enjoyed learning the design strategies that shape the Japanese Tea Garden in the Culberson Asiatic Arboretum. Others have

learned about plant folklore in the Blomquist Garden, flowers and herbs in the Terrace Gardens, or container plants at the Doris Duke Center.

• **BRINGING NATURE'S BEAUTY INDOORS:** Participants created their own wreaths, swags or vase arrangements with assistance from horticulturist Michelle Rawlins and horticulture superintendent Harry Jenkins in the holiday decorations class. Other members and visitors spiced up their lives with information about herbs and spices from horticulturist Jan Watson.

• **ACROSS CULTURES:** Paul Jones, Michelle Rawlins and Nancy Hamilton are providing a little bit of Japan in the popular traditional Japanese Tea Gatherings offered in the Durham-Toyama Sister Cities Japanese Pavilion.

• **THE HOME HORTICULTURE CERTIFICATE:** This program serves homeowners who are looking to improve their home garden and landscape. Bobby Mottern, director of horticulture, teaches a four-season course titled Landscape Plants for North Carolina Gardens. Jason Holmes, curator of the Doris

Duke Center Gardens, is introducing a new series on distinctive plants for your garden. And I have taught a two-season class in landscape design.

• **FAMILY EXPLORATIONS:** Families and children learn about basic science at Family Fun Days. They also have the opportunity to check out backpacks of activities, visit the Nature Ranger Cart on Friday mornings or work on a simple project at Sunday Science in the Gardens. Volunteers staff these spring and fall events.

• **SCHOOL OUTREACH:** Teachers and students extend their classrooms in programs at the Gardens.

• **ENJOYMENT:** The Garden hosts a variety of performances each year. Paul Kartcheske, associate director/administrative services, and events coordinator Marcia Julien work closely with Duke Performances and others to provide summer films and concerts in the Gardens. 🎧

## VIEWPOINTS

*Musings on favorite gardens spots*

Ryan Ziegler  
*Gardens explorer  
on water and wildlife*

...

I like to go by the creek and look for tadpoles and butterflies. I like to catch butterflies on my hand, show them to mom and then let them fly away. I like to hear the water. I also like to roll down the hills.

*Do you have a favorite Gardens vantage point? We'd love to hear about it. Please write to [orla.swift@duke.edu](mailto:orla.swift@duke.edu).*







*Too often we think of nature as wilderness and an exclusive activity. Nature is all around. Our back yards, our neighborhoods and parks.*



Norwegian filmmaker Tonje Hessen Schei

## nurturing with nature

It's not unusual to see teens ambling through Duke Gardens, focused intently on all the fascinating scenes...on their iPhones.

But even spotting a youngster outdoors is rare these days, says Norwegian filmmaker Tonje Hessen Schei. Whereas 20 years ago, it wasn't unusual for a child to come home from school and race outside to play until bedtime, nowadays they're racing to their computers, televisions and portable devices.

Distressed by the trend, Schei set out with her camera to investigate. She spoke with children about their digital obsessions and brought them on a wilderness adventure – unplugged from it all.

The result is "Play Again," an award-winning documentary that Duke Gardens will present Sept. 15 as part of the Movies in the Gardens at Twilight free movie series on the South Lawn. For more information on the film, and a trailer, please go to [groundproductions.com/playagain](http://groundproductions.com/playagain).

Schei discussed the film in an e-mail conversation.

### What triggered this project?

The idea for the film started in 2005, when I came across a study that showed that kids today can recognize more than 100 corporate logos and fewer than 10 plants in their own back yards. This is very concerning to me, and I think there are serious consequences to kids growing up removed from nature.

### Was your own childhood nature-centered?

I grew up in Norway, roaming in the woods all year 'round. Rain, snow, sleet – you name it, we were outside. This is a stark contrast to how my children are growing up. I would be lost without nature. It is where I find meaning and inspiration. It is where I find perspective and peace. To me the issues of "Play Again" are at the core of who we are, why we are here and where we are going.

### Were there any surprises for you in what transpired with the children?

I was very impressed and moved by the transitions the teens went through during the film. Something strong happens when you swim in a river, hike and dig in the dirt for the first time. For some it was very stressful to be outside and active, and some felt lonelier being with a small group of people rather than in front of their computers with their gaming and Myspace communities.

### Was there one activity outdoors that had a particularly strong effect on them?

I think swimming in the river for the first time had a strong impact on many of the teens. Starting a fire from scratch and making their own bow and arrow were some of their other favorite activities.

### Do you think most children have an innate connection with nature and they only need exposure, or does nature appreciation typically need to be taught to a child?

I do think that people need nature. It is who we are and where we come from. And I think that in our virtual-media-immersed culture we as adults and parents need to think about how we introduce nature to our children – and how we prioritize our time. We are so busy, and we tend to schedule all of our children's time with activities and "enhancements." It is hard to make it out to nature in our daily lives. I think we need to take a hard look at how we live and spend our time. When we do

go outside with our kids, I think it is crucial that we inspire the sense of wonder, which very often just comes from playing and discovering our natural surroundings.

### What do you think public gardens or parks ought to consider with regard to children's relationships with nature?

Too often we think of nature as wilderness and an exclusive activity. Nature is all around. Our back yards, our neighborhoods and parks. I do think it is crucial that we find and reclaim natural places where we allow our children to play freely.

### Have you followed up with the children in the film?

Yes. We have become very close to the teens in the film, and many of them travel with the film and speak on these issues publicly. We are very proud of them; they are amazing kids and great spokespeople for their generation.

### What did you hope to achieve with "Play Again"?

In making this film, it was crucial for us to learn about these issues from the children, to understand where they are coming from and what they are up against, and most importantly to give them a voice through "Play Again." With "Play Again," we want to put these issues on the forefront of people's minds, start discussions and encourage change. The film asks important questions and offers solutions to this issue that aim to encourage our audience to action for a sustainable future. 🌱



## GOLDEN LEAF AWARD

The Durham-Toyama Sister Cities Pavilion received a 2010 Golden Leaf Award from the Durham City-County Appearance Commission and Keep Durham Beautiful.

The award was in the community properties category. Gardens executive director Bill LeFevre accepted the honor at a ceremony last fall. Duke University's Bell Tower Residence Hall, Home Depot Smart Home and Goodson Chapel have also received awards. Duke's newly renovated East Campus steam plant received a merit award at the 2010 ceremony.

The pavilion, part of the W.L. Culberson Asiatic Arboretum, was dedicated in 2007, after six years of planning and building.

## IN MEMORIAM



Duke Gardens staff and friends will greatly miss Advisory Board member John O. 'Jack' Blackburn, who passed away early this year.

Long before Jack served on our board, he served Duke University on the economics faculty from 1959 to 1980 and as provost and

chancellor from 1970 to 1976. Former Gardens Associate Director Larry T. Daniel recalls one of the most important things Jack did for Duke Gardens while chancellor in 1973, which was to direct funds left to Duke University from a life estate gift that Sarah P. Duke established for a friend. The gift went to Duke upon Sarah's friend's death to set up the Sarah P. Duke Gardens General Endowment Fund.

Jack was also a huge advocate for green initiatives, including protecting the environment, recycling and encouraging others to be more ecological. We will all miss his gentle and kind presence.

## SURVEY RESPONSES

Duke Gardens would like to thank all our Friends who filled out the benefits survey they received in December.

The survey let us know that our Friends appreciate rewards such as the Gardens wall calendar (the top-rated gift), as well as greeting cards (#2), Flora (#3) and other benefits. We were also gratified to see from the written comments how many Friends would donate to the Gardens even if there were no gifts or other rewards.

We are still receiving feedback, which is very helpful to us. If you would like to let us know what Friends benefits you most value, we're happy to hear from you anytime. Please call 668-1711 or write to [millicent.snow@duke.edu](mailto:millicent.snow@duke.edu).

Ecology was also a concern expressed in the comments, with many Friends urging us to move toward online publications to save paper. **Would you like to read Flora and/or Annual Report online-only, instead of receiving a printed copy?** Please call or e-mail Millicent to let us know.

## NEW BOARD MEMBERS

A warm welcome to the new or returning members of Sarah P. Duke Gardens' Advisory Board. The Gardens welcomes supporters interested in sharing their expertise and passion by serving on its boards or committees. If you'd like more information, please contact Teresa Dark, assistant director of development.

*Here's a brief introduction.*

**RICHARD W. FISHER** Rick retired from Biogen Idec as vice president of human resources in 2007. He is an active Duke Gardens and community volunteer, president of Treyburn Homeowners Association and co-founder of the Durham Garden Forum that meets at Duke Gardens. He was born and raised in Pittsburgh, Penn., and earned a bachelor's degree in business administration with a major in accounting from Waynesburg University. Rick and his wife, Beth, have been married for 30 years and live in Durham's Treyburn community with their two dogs.

**ANNA HO** Anna was a board member from 1997 to 2003. She earned her bachelor's degree in 1987. She also served on the Duke Law School Board of Visitors from 2001 to 2007. Anna is active in the community, including board service with Durham Academy, The Hill Center and the Museum of Life and Sciences. Anna and her husband, Bob Whalen, live in Durham's Hope Valley community.

**AMY M. MOSS** Amy is an arbitrator and involved in arts organizations in the Raleigh/Durham area. She practiced law on Wall Street, specializing in securities as well as mergers and acquisitions, in private practice with Winthrop, Stimson Putnam and Roberts and with American Express Company as associate general counsel. She received her bachelor's degree cum laude from Harvard University and her law degree from New York University School of Law, in addition to a Certificat Assez Bien at L'Institut d'Etudes Politiques (SciencesPo) in Paris and a master's in connoisseurship and the art market from Christie's Inc. Amy's husband, Bill Brown, is a visiting professor at Duke Law and they live in Durham's Croasdaile community.

**MICHAEL J. SCHOENFELD** Mike is Duke's vice president of public affairs and government relations, and he serves as an ex-officio member of the Sanford School of Public Policy Board of Visitors. A Duke graduate (T'84), he is a longtime friend of the Gardens, having married at the Pergola in 1987. Mike and his wife, Elizabeth (T'84), live in Durham's Hope Valley community.

**E. FAYE WICKERSHAM** Faye was a Gardens board member from 1991 to 1997 and from 1999 to 2005. She is married to Warren Wickersham (T'60), and has two sons who graduated from Duke in 1990 and '92. She is engaged in women's issues internationally and is an active cultural and community volunteer in Washington, D.C., where she lives.

**SARA B. ZABLOTNEY** Sara is a partner in the law firm of Kirkland & Ellis LLP. A Duke graduate (T'99), Sara and her family have strong connections to Duke and the Gardens, including her mother, Gene Barron Zabolney (W'68), and her grandmother, Betty Gene Gilbert Barron (W'38). There is a bench in Betty's memory along the path above the Fish Pool. Sara and her husband, attorney Matthew Solum, live in Manhattan.



Our free **Movies in the Gardens at Twilight** series will continue for its third season this summer on the South Lawn. We've had great attendance, with lots of families bringing picnics and making an evening of it. Series organizer Paul Kartcheske is always looking for ways to improve the program, and this year he has decided to schedule the films every week instead of in alternating weeks, in order to maintain the momentum.

Paul hasn't selected the films yet, but animation will be the theme. The planned dates are the four Thursdays in August, beginning on the 4th. They begin when darkness hits. If a film is rained out, it'll be shown the week after the final scheduled film. Please check our website for updates.

Then, **on Sept. 15, we'll have a special presentation of "Play Again,"** an award-winning documentary that looks at the consequences of a childhood removed from nature (see interview on page 16). The Gardens is partnering with the Nicholas School of the Environment to present this ecologically important film.

We hope you'll join us for these twilight treats.



## STAFF CHANGES



Annie



From left: Sara and Marcia

Duke Gardens welcomed two new staff members in the last year, and we bid farewell to a longtime employee.

**ANNIE NASHOLD** retired in March from her job as director of children and family programs. Annie's contributions to the Gardens reach back to the first volunteer training session in 1993. The programs created under her leadership – from the award-winning Native Tales curricula to Healing and Hope Through Science – have introduced countless children to the wonders and excitement of nature and gardening. Our community is better for her efforts.

Events coordinator **MARCIA JULIEN** moved to North Carolina 14 years ago from Trinidad and Tobago. She began coordinating events while earning her bachelor's degree in art history at UNC-Chapel Hill, and she grew to love helping people prepare and organize their special occasions. Before coming to Duke Gardens, she was an event manager for The Catering Company of Chapel Hill for 10 years.

**SARA SMITH**, our education registrar, developed a love for plants and gardening while growing up in tropical places like Taiwan, Vietnam and Ethiopia. She has supported the Gardens for years as a member of our volunteer propagation team, and she is also a Master Gardener volunteer for Durham County. Formerly a Duke University compensation associate in Rewards and Recognition, Sara earned a bachelor's degree in business administration.

## NATIONAL PUBLIC GARDENS DAY

Duke Gardens is proud to have been selected by the American Public Gardens Association as a key garden to spotlight on National Public Gardens Day, May 6.

Many of the nation's 500-plus public gardens will commemorate the day with special events. Durham Mayor William V. Bell has written a proclamation noting the occasion, and he and other local and state dignitaries have been invited to a brief celebration featuring a haiku

and dance performance at the Frances P. Rollins Overlook. The Gardens will also offer special family activities for visitors to mark the event.

Now in its third year, National Public Gardens Day was created in partnership between APGA and irrigation product and service provider Rain Bird. Its intention is to underscore the vital role public gardens play in promoting environmental stewardship and awareness, plant and water conservation, and education. Duke Gardens will also invite its online followers to submit comments, photos and poetry in tribute of public gardens. If you would like to submit a tribute, please send it to [orla.swift@duke.edu](mailto:orla.swift@duke.edu).



From left: Amanda, Tate and Heather

## 2010 SUMMER INTERNS

The Gardens has welcomed horticulture students from around the nation for many years, giving them invaluable work experience. Their dedication and hard work helps make the Gardens a better place.

Intern **HEATHER SEIFERT** was a familiar face, having previously volunteered in the Historic Gardens. She has been studying at Alamance Community College, earning her degree in horticulture, and she has also worked with nonprofits. She hopes to combine both of those passions in her next job.

**TATE WARREN** came to us from Mississippi State University, where he is studying horticulture. His background was mostly in greenhouse production, having assisted his professor with poinsettia trials and cold treatment experiments with other flowering crops. During his time here, he was able to expand his knowledge of public gardening so he can combine it with his greenhouse experience.

**AMANDA WILKINS** is a junior at N.C. State University, studying horticulture science. Her love for horticulture was visible through the lens of her camera, as she took some spectacular shots of the Gardens. In addition to working outdoors, she also wrote some Duke Gardens blog entries and a newspaper column.

- Michelle Rawlins

## a closer look: Duke Gardens curators on interesting plants in their gardens



### ASIATIC LILAC (a)

Fragrance is such a wonderful asset in the garden – roses, lilies, gardenias, lilacs...ahh lilacs. Who doesn't love to cup their palms around a handful of lilac flowers and bury their nose deep in sweet-scented ecstasy? The stereotypical lilac of gardens is a selection or hybrid involving the southeast European species *Syringa vulgaris*. Except for those magnificent flowers *S. vulgaris* has little elegance otherwise. And worse, it's a magnet for powdery mildew, especially in the warm humid summers such as occur south of where Mason and Dixon trod.

Fortunately for southern gardeners, lilac species are pretty well dispersed from the Mediterranean east to the Pacific, and from this wealth of species several good alternatives are available. A splendid example is *Syringa meyeri* from northern China. The cultivar 'Palibin' is a fine textured, 4- to 6-foot slow-growing shrub, maturing about as high as wide. It's easy to grow; as with all lilacs, more sunlight equals more flowers...and a happy 'Palibin' will reward one with many nasal delights.

- Paul Jones, Curator, Culberson Asiatic Arboretum

### WEeping ROSTRINUCULA (b)

Here is one that most people would have a hard time pronouncing; I am not even sure I say it right. *Rostrinucula dependens* is an unusual shrub member of the mint family that is endemic only to south-central China. Growing 3 to 5 feet tall and spreading as wide, weeping rostrinucula receives many second looks during late summer when the stems reveal long, pendent pink flowers at the tips. These flowers appear out of gray-felted bracts and travel down the weeping 8- to 10-inch racemes beginning September and lasting through October with continued interest through the cold months of winter. Another great feature I have witnessed is the attraction that butterflies and other late-season pollinators alike have to these flowers. I suspect they must provide the nectar they need to carry on their journey. Easily grown in full sun and well-drained soil, rostrinucula would make a great addition to a border, as it mixes well with other small shrubs and summer-blooming perennials. Finally, it is fairly heat- and drought-tolerant and worthy of a special place in your garden.

- Jason Holmes, Curator, Doris Duke Center Gardens



### LILAC DAPHNE (c)

This small- to medium-sized (4- to 5-foot) deciduous shrub is unlike the more common evergreen winter Daphne (*Daphne odora*) often seen in our landscapes. *Daphne genkwa* loses all of its leaves in winter and blooms later in the spring, while winter Daphne blooms in February and March. Also, the flowers of winter Daphne are exceptionally fragrant; lilac Daphne flowers unfortunately are not very fragrant. The deciduous aspect of lilac Daphne is actually a bonus when flowering. By flowering without the leaves on, the beautiful lilac-colored flower clusters can be seen without obstruction from foliage. This plant can be grown here if given a well-drained soil in a sunny or lightly shaded location. If the soil is too wet, it can be a temperamental plant. But it's well worth trying, for it is quite striking in flower.

- Mike Owens, Curator, Historic Gardens

### CURLYHEAD (d)

Over the last 200 years, hundreds of plant species have slowly migrated to roadsides. This is due mainly to lack of the natural fires needed to keep woodlands open. Lacking adequate sunlight, these floral hobos have hitched and hobbled their way to the only open spaces left to them.

One of these plants once accustomed to better digs is *Clematis ochroleuca*, also known as curlyheads. A native of the vanishing Piedmont prairies of the Southeast, an ecosystem dependent on fires to maintain healthy diversity, this bush clematis emerges in early spring and maintains a compact collection of arching stems that reach two feet in height. From April to June, creamy yellow umbellate flowers emerge and hang suspended like a floating chorus of hirsute bells in the front of the mixed border or woodland edge garden.

While not common in cultivation, curlyheads are available from a small number of mail-order nurseries and a handful of retail native plant specialists. I encourage you to find a spot in your heart and your garden for this wonderful wanderer.

- Stefan Bloodworth, Curator, Blomquist Garden of Native Plants

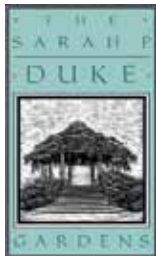




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## Friends of Duke Gardens Annual Gift Societies Membership

### Groundbreakers Society: \$50-\$249

(Student Groundbreakers – current students with valid ID: \$15)

*Benefits include:*

- Flora newsletter and Annual Report
- Invitations to special Friends events
- Education program discounts at Duke Gardens & other participating gardens
- Reciprocal admissions benefits to gardens throughout the United States
- 10% discount on Terrace Gift Shop purchases
- Invitation to preview sales preceding our Plant Sales

### Terraces Society: \$250-\$999

*Groundbreakers benefits plus:*

- Discounts on Gothic Bookshop purchases (must show valid member card)
- One complimentary Groundbreakers gift membership  
(Please provide name & address of recipient)

### Pergola Society: \$1,000-\$2,499

- Terraces benefits plus:
- Complimentary Gardens parking
- Two complimentary Groundbreakers gift memberships

### Directors Society: \$2,500-\$4,999

*Pergola benefits plus:*

- Special tour of the Gardens and reception with members of the Directors Society
- Three complimentary Groundbreakers gift memberships

### Mary Duke Biddle Society: \$5,000+

*Directors benefits plus:*

- A plant propagated from Duke Gardens stock (available at the Gardens' Annual Spring Plant & Craft Festival, or upon request; plants cannot be mailed)
- Four complimentary Groundbreakers gift memberships

### Corporate Friends: \$5,000+ (Excludes matching program gifts)

- Flora Newsletter
- Annual Report
- Invitations to special events
- One free space rental at the Sarah P. Duke Gardens or Doris Duke Center (Monday-Thursday) per availability within membership year

All Friends memberships are part of the Duke Annual Fund and are used entirely for the benefit and purposes of Duke Gardens. Duke alumni also receive reunion class gift credit.

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of duke gardens!