Winter progress

The Fran Hanson Discovery Center is dramatic and imposing, perched as it is on top of a hill above the Bob Campbell Geology Museum. Sometimes, however, especially in the summer, reaching it seems quite daunting as the only route includes a trek up the hot black driveway. Recently, steps have been taken to change this situation. We have begun transforming this area to make the journey from the parking lot to the house at the pinnacle much more interesting, educational and fun!

The new route begins with a path meandering through our newly installed Chihuahuan and Sonoran Desert exhibits. Stately agave, beautiful limestone rocks and a large variety of cacti line the path as you wander through these desert landscapes. The addition of several picnic tables, colorful beds of salvia, and a fun staff-made trash receptacle resembling an explosive container completes this area.

The demonstration mine shaft and authentic mine machinery, which separates the two desert exhibits, connects the landscape to the Bob Campbell Geology Museum. The connection between the Museum and landscape will be solidified further by the installation of a Prehistoric garden. Plans are currently being drawn up for this project by well-known local landscape architect Dabney Peeples.

Further up the hill, the walkway, with several large stone slab steps en route, will wind through a South African collection and a Mediterranean Garden. This path will be very colorful since plants include callas, agapanthus, red hot pokers, Gerber daisies, pineapple lilies, delosperma, rosemary, and lavender, among many others. These plants must be resilient since there is no irrigation at this site. These additions will make a somewhat arduous route easier, as well as more colorful, fragrant and intriguing. ~ Sue Watts, Education Coordinator
Winter sometimes seems like an extended autumn that transitions to spring here in South Carolina, but in other years, winter asserts itself. So far, this winter has been the 11th coldest on record and, after so many consecutive years of warmth, it was shocking to see temperatures down to 9°F and snow on the ground. You may have seen our attempts to prevent leaf damage to some of the largest succulents and tender plants at the Garden during the coldest nights. We suffered some loss of leaves and burn down to rootstock on some plants but overall the winter did not cause catastrophic damage or change to our collections.

It is easy to get depressed about winter damage, but if you look at it from the point of view of a horticultural trial, it can also be quite exciting. We found out that a living stone, Lithops sulcila, is fully hardy even in brutal winters here and we now know that a Mexican palm, Sabal uresana, is definitely not! There were some interesting responses to the strange weather that were completely unexpected. Many of the succulents did not like the cool, wet summer and responded by growing vigorously in the autumn and then a very cold November caused damage to plants that normally can withstand temperatures to 0°F, like our big, beautiful Gentry’s Agave. On the bright side, the Palmetto trees at the entrance appear to be as happy as ever! It’s all a great learning experience, part of what a botanical garden is all about.

There are many, many areas that we wish to complete, that we want to expand and improve, and so many things we want to offer to the public. Please know that your continued support as a FRIEND of the Garden is one of the primary ways we have been able to accomplish what we have so far and, if you, or someone you know, would be interested in supporting one of our new exhibits, a portion of the Natural Heritage Garden Trail, an educational program, or any other facet of our services, I would love to talk to you.

Thank you so much for all you do to keep this place growing!

All the best, Patrick McMillan

Patrick in the field
Children’s Garden News

The Children’s Garden recently received a generous gift that has sparked a flurry of activity, which will no doubt result in major improvements and additions to this section of the Garden.

Assessing the site

Under the coordination of Children’s Garden Manager, Griffin Westbrook, a day of intense design activity was held in December. Former Clemson Horticulture professors Judy Caldwell and Mary Haque facilitated this process by calling on their former students and colleagues to contribute their time, knowledge and enthusiasm to the project. The room was filled with talented individuals: landscape architects, horticulturists, educators, naturalists, arborists, and others. The energy in the room was palpable.

During the design process, wacky, fun and whimsical were concepts frequently brought up within the framework of developing a functional garden for children and families to play and learn. We are extremely fortunate that talented landscape architect Renee Byrd agreed to render updated designs for the garden concept. Final designs should be ready by mid-spring. An advisory board for the Children’s Garden will ensure long-term stability and support for the project.

We will begin fundraising for this unique and exciting space soon. Former Garden Public Relations Director Jennifer Bausman will spearhead the fundraising: you can contact her at Jennifer_Bausman@clemson.edu.

If you have any questions, would like to become involved, or would like to donate, please contact Griffin Westbrook at westbr2@clemson.edu.

Thanks

It is with gratitude that I mark the transition from paid employment to volunteering this spring.

I’m grateful for the place that is the Garden. It’s been an anchor for my journey as a natural history and garden educator and has been (and will be) a wonderful place to share the joys of the natural world with people of all ages.

I’m grateful for the company (past and present) of colleagues, volunteers, and FRIENDS, who’ve made such a difference in the Garden’s growth and development.

And, I’m grateful for the inspiration of people of all ages, engaged by the Garden’s magic.

I’ll always remember the fresh enchantment of a fall forest and brightly-colored leaves, shared with urban schoolchildren from Anderson. “The forest is beyond the fence at our school,” one of the boys told me. The excitement of children seeing squirrels, too, seemingly for the first time, reminds me that not all children live in diverse habitats with an abundance of trees. And the magic of seeing children and adults discover the beauty of flowers up close, with a simple magnifying glass; that’s been inspirational, too. It’s the vital importance of real experiences that create the alchemy of a garden visit.

And as I move forward to focusing more on outreach, teaching, and writing, I look forward to continuing to share the joy, diversity, and inspiration that I’ve found in the natural world with others. I’ll see you out there!

~ Lisa Wagner, Director of Education
Family and children

Mondays, April 7, 14, 21, 28, May 5, 12, 19
JUNIOR GARDEN CLUB
In this after school garden club, kids (5-12) learn the basics of gardening through fun and exciting hands-on activities with Sue Watts. Discover the secrets of soil and composting, and meet some wiggly worms. Plant veggie and flower seeds, tend seedlings and then transplant them into the Children's Garden. Explore the Garden's insects and birds and create wonderful habitat for them. In every class, we'll sample fresh veggies and explore different ways to prepare and enjoy them. Take home seeds and seedlings to start a garden at home. Participants present at all sessions will receive a t-shirt and certification as a South Carolina Botanical Garden Junior Gardener.
Fee: $10 per session/ $60 series
Time: 2 - 4 p.m
Must register at least 3 days in advance.

Fridays, May 9
DIARY OF A WORM
In this program, led by Kendra Vincent, dig deep to uncover the interesting lives of worms! After a fun story, take an up-close look at real worms and learn to appreciate all that these wiggly little guys do for us. While playing a game, we'll learn about compost and each participant will create his/her own miniature worm bin to take home. Register at least 3 days in advance.
Fee: $6
Time: 3:30 – 5:30 p.m.

Fridays, June 27
SUNDOWN SAFARI
Enjoy the sights and sounds of summer as we take an early evening stroll through the Garden, led by Kendra Vincent. We’ll take a look at interesting summer foliage, search for signs of wildlife and listen to the symphony of summer sounds. We’ll enjoy a story by the pond and make a craft to take home! Register at least 3 days in advance.
Fee: $4 per person
Time: 5:30-7:30 p.m.

Fridays, July 18
HIGH FLYING AVIAN ADVENTURE
In this morning program with Kendra Vincent, learn fun facts about birds and beginner birding skills for locating and identifying common birds of South Carolina. We’ll hear and see many birds on a garden walk, and we’ll finish by creating nature journals and a habitat for them. In every class, we’ll sample fresh veggies and create wonderful things to appreciate all that these wiggly little guys do for us! Join us for an early morning birding experience.
Fee: $6 per participant
Time: 10 - 12 a.m.

Fridays, August 8
TOPS & BOTTOMS, THE STORY OF BEAR AND HARE
Do you ever wonder what exactly that green stuff is on your plate? Enjoy hearing Janet Stevens’ story, “Tops and Bottoms”, and learn about the variety of plant parts we eat with educator Kendra Vincent. Children will enjoy a fruit and veggie taste test, Veggie Patch Bunko, Veggie Twister and a stroll through our Food for Thought Garden. Must register at least 3 days in advance.
Fee: $6 per participant
Time: 2 - 4 p.m.

Sundays, May 7, 14, 21, 28
GARDEN SPROUTS
Preschool children and their caregivers discover the wonders of the Botanical Garden with the guidance of Garden naturalist and educator Sue Watts. Garden Sprouts blends the Garden’s unique resources with imaginative and fun ways to learn about plants and animals using music, stories, arts and crafts, nature walks, movement, touch and observation to explore each week’s seasonal theme.
Fee: $4 per family
Time: 10-11 a.m.

Gardening Class Information

WEDNESDAYS, MAY 7, 14, 21, 28

Children’s Garden. Explore the Garden’s insects and birds and create wonderful habitat for them. In every class, we’ll sample fresh veggies and explore different ways to prepare and enjoy them. Take home seeds and seedlings to start a garden at home. Participants present at all sessions will receive a t-shirt and certification as a South Carolina Botanical Garden Junior Gardener.

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Fee: $6 per participant
Time: 2 - 4 p.m.

Summer Camps

Monday - Friday, July 7–11
GARDEN EXPLORATION NATURE DISCOVERY CAMP
An exciting summer day-camping adventure. Garden Explorations brings nature discovery to life. Why do bees and butterflies like to visit certain flowers? Follow the path of a raindrop! What lives in the garden’s ponds and streams?
Fee: $6
Time: 10 - 12 a.m.
Must register at least 3 days in advance.

Monday - Friday, July 14–18
TIME TRAVELERS CAMP
Live the past! History comes alive in this week-long camp. Join us at the Hunt Cabin to learn the survival skills needed in the 19th Century. Learn how to build a cabin, play period games, track animals, make clothes and much more.
Fee: $6
Time: 2 - 4 p.m.
Must register at least 3 days in advance.

Monday - Friday, July 21–25
GARDEN CREATIVITY CAMP
In this camp creativity reigns! The garden is our palette and provides our media - we will cook, craft, paint and explore many dimensions of our creative spirit through garden based activities. Explore famous artists who were inspired by gardens and learn their techniques.
Fee: $6
Time: 2 - 4 p.m.
Must register at least 3 days in advance.

Volunteer help

Hunt Cabin Open
May - August
Sundays: 1 - 4 p.m.
Once the Natural Heritage Garden reopens in the spring, the Hunt Cabin will open to the public on the weekends. We are seeking volunteer help to enable this to happen.

Hunt Cabin: Harvesting our Heritage
Visit the Hunt Cabin and learn about life in 19th Century up-country South Carolina. Participate in hands-on activities from the time period. Free.
May 4: Historical planting
June 8: Medicinal herbs
July 6: Fabric arts
August 3: King Corn

Nature Center Open
April - August
Sundays: 1 - 4 p.m.
The Nature Center is a wonderful resource that we would like to share with the public. We are seeking volunteers to greet visitors, hand out themed activities. Explore some simple hands-on activities related to the month’s theme.
April: Signs of Spring
May: Monarch Magic
June: Bug Hunt
July: Life in a pond
August: Dragons and damselflies

All camps:

- Ages: 6-12
- Fees: $90 (10% discount members & volunteers)
- Program Time: 9 a.m. - noon
- Drop-off: 8 - 9 a.m.
- Pickup: noon - 1 p.m.
- All camp participants must dress for being outside and be prepared to get messy.

Please preregister for all programs - call to check for last minute availability.

Use our ONLINE REGISTRATION SYSTEM at www.clemson.edu/scbg to register.

The Garden's Gate • The Garden's Gate
The nursery staff and dedicated volunteers have been hard at work preparing for the spring plant sale. Production greenhouses are full as we transplanted perennial and annual plugs and our propagation houses are at capacity with vegetables, annuals and perennials. Come look around when you are in the garden. We would love to show you what’s growing.

Many new plants will be available this spring including the perennials ‘Sangria’ crinium, ‘Samurai’ toad lily, and two selections of giant hyssop. Our selection of native species has increased and a number of plant from the SCBG collection will be available including the tea camellia (direct descendents of one of the original Charleston tea plants) and many hydrangea species/varieties. We also have an outstanding selection of native azaleas (species and hybrids) on hand. Many varieties of warm season vegetables will be available and ready for transplanting in your garden. Our annual selections will be brilliantly colorful!

Perhaps you have wondered where the plants for the sale originate. We grow as many species as possible with the assistance of Horticulture classes and Master Gardener volunteers. This often takes more than one growing season so planning is very important. Specialty plants are on occasion purchased from local sources. Many of our perennials are divisions from garden plants. New perennial species are purchased as small transplants from large greenhouse growers. Our annuals are donated by Pleasant View Gardens out of New Hampshire.

The plant sale catalog will be available on-line prior to the sale.

If you have any questions, please contact Jeanne Briggs at jeanneb@clemson.edu or 864-656-2458.
May 10, 2014

The 3rd annual South Carolina Botanical Garden Moonlight and Magnolias Garden Gala is a premiere social event of the year. Join Patrick McMillan, garden staff, community leaders, and garden supporters for an evening of fine food, great music and fun times to benefit the on-going recovery and continued maintenance of the garden.

This year’s Gala is themed “Metamorphosis” and is a celebration of this season of renewal. Larry Mellichamp, Professor of Botany and Director of UNC-Charlotte Botanical Gardens will be our guest speaker for the evening and Dr. David Bradshaw, Professor Emeritus of Horticulture at Clemson University, will be our honored guest.

“Metamorphosis” will take place on the grounds of the Fran Hanson Visitor Center, the former Southern Living Showcase Home located in the Garden. This elegant garden party feature will fresh from the farm cuisine, elegant music, silent auction, local wines and craft beers, but most importantly provide an opportunity for friends to come together and support the mission of the garden. Ladies and gentlemen alike are requested to don their garden party finery and show their support for celebrating our season of renewal. Dress will be elegant garden party (garden hats are encouraged) and awards will be given out at the end of the evening to the fanciest garden party hat.

Tickets for individuals and couples are available for purchase as well as sponsorships. Ticket prices will remain at $575 each. Sponsorships include four or more dinner tickets to the gala, tickets to a VIP garden tour, reserved seating, and a signed and numbered print of the 2014 Moonlight and Magnolias artwork. To become a sponsor, contact Darlene Evans or Shaunda Soto (864) 656-3405. Community members are strongly encouraged to become Friends of the Garden and purchase tickets soon, as tickets are in limited supply and special tables will sell out quickly.

More information about the event, as well as instructions to purchase tickets, is available at http://www.clemson.edu/public/scbg/events/garden_gala

Thank you for making generous donations between 11/1/2013 and 2/7/2014. New donors are listed in green-Welcome! All at the Patron, Magnolia, Diamond, Maple, Emerald, Camellia, and Sapphire levels are joint Garden and Museum members.

GARDEN FRIENDS

Patron Members ($1000)
Bill and Bonnie Ledbetter
Holly Parrott

Magnolia Members ($500)
Dana Anderson & Joe Calin
David & Eranda Bradshaw
Dan & Marcia Radakovitch
Susan Smiley-Baker
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We apologize for any errors or omissions. Please contact Membership & Gifts Manager Allison Jones at 864-656-4602 or allison@sclemson.edu with any corrections.
Wildflower ecology:
Dimpled Trout lily (Erythronium umbilicatum)
~ a spring ephemeral that lights up the forest

Dimpled trout lily (Erythronium umbilicatum) grows in rich moist woods to somewhat dry habitats including alluvial forests, cove forests, and granite outcrops. Because it has a very short spring growing season, it is referred to as a spring ephemeral. Plants emerge in late winter-early spring as soil temperatures rise. A few weeks later, when the canopy trees leaf out and the forest floor is shaded, it goes dormant persisting as an underground food storage organ (bulb) for up to 48 weeks each year. One of the earliest woodland herbs to bloom (February at lower elevations; May at high elevations), its flowers track the sun and close at night (the sepals and petals curve backward as the flower opens each morning). Unlike some early spring-flowering plants, pollination success (and fruit set) is high because the individual flowers can persist for 10 days or more and large amounts of nectar and pollen attract a variety of bees. The ant-dispersed seeds germinate in spring forming tiny bulbs that get larger and bury themselves deeper into the soil with age. Smaller bulbs produce single-leaved plants; larger bulbs produce 2 leaves and a single flower. Some populations form dense patches of vegetative plants, with few plants flowering in any one year. Markings on the leaf surface resemble splotches on a brook trout, hence the common name.