What A Year!

By Josh Todd

What a celebrated year we’ve had at the Garden! Many thanks to you for offering your time and talent to aid the staff and our visitors in all of your various roles over the past year. Attendance and membership numbers are outstanding, Imaginary Worlds was a blockbuster, our new Center for Conservation is poised for long-lasting efforts across the Southeast, and Garden Lights is twinkling and dazzling audiences.

Remember to record your hours before the end of the year. And if you need those last few shifts to make your 100 or 200 hour goals, sign up for Garden Lights! There are openings every night in three-hour shifts. Refer to the link on any of the Garden Lights emails to sign up, or just email jtodd@atlantabg.org.

If you want to plan ahead for 2020, look for upcoming training dates in this newsletter.

Happy December! I hope you have a delightfully festive holiday season to end 2019!

Congratulations to these Volunteers Of the Month

September
Sally Crowe

October
Harry Larsen

November
Sally Finkelstein

December
Bettie Cheek

And to Gainesville’s Volunteers of the Quarter
Brian and Cheryl Schuster
Meet the Volunteers of the Month

September: Sally Crowe

With her ever-present smile and trademark enthusiasm, Sally Crowe has been a fixture at the Garden since 2010, initially as a much-loved children’s docent. A retired teacher, she finds joy in introducing children to the wonders of the Garden. Nowadays, in addition to leading groups of children as well as adults around the Garden, she pitches in with special events galore, volunteers in the Visitors Center as a welcoming greeter and has spent time as a Discovery volunteer; vanilla orchids are a special favorite. Recently she has also been helping out in the Garden’s Outreach program and not long ago visited a school where she taught years ago. You can imagine what a special day that was for her! When not at the Garden, Sally often finds herself in her home garden, a veritable wildlife sanctuary in Morningside. Always one to stay busy, she counts knitting as a pastime and is part of a Prayer Shawl Ministry, knitting shawls and scarves for the sick and homeless. She enjoys being near her two daughters - she is a fun mom, no doubt - and often travels to Rhode Island to visit family, recently attending her 60th high school reunion there. Charming and gregarious, always with a twinkle in her eye, Sally Crowe is one of those “jewels” who never meets a stranger, a treasured volunteer at the Garden who is spotlighted with gratitude as September’s Volunteer of the Month.

October: Harry Larsen

A retired forestry professor with a lifetime of knowledge about trees in the Southeast, Harry Larsen has made the Tree Identification Discovery Station his new classroom, giving visitors a unique opportunity to learn about the natural world around them. A couple of times each week, weather permitting, Harry sets up shop at the Canopy Walk entrance with his jars of samples to help visitors play a game that might be called “name that tree.” He particularly enjoys interacting with school groups and other youngsters and with the Garden’s many international visitors. “People come from all over the world to visit the Garden. Recently I talked to some folks here from Tanzania!” Harry moved to Atlanta from his Auburn University home several years ago to be near his daughter and family in Inman Park and completed Discovery training in 2013. Since 2015, he has been a Centennial volunteer, logging over 200 hours a year since 2016. “Harry adds a tremendous amount of expertise and enthusiasm to the Garden experience” says Abby Gale, public programs manager. “He sparks interest in our woodlands when he interacts with the countless scout troops, school groups, families and guests from around the globe. What an encyclopedia of knowledge!” Once a teacher, always a teacher, it seems, and the Garden is so very thankful that Harry has made Storza Woods his new classroom, saluting him as October Volunteer of the Month.
Meet the Volunteers of the Month

November: Sally Finkelstein

The “reigning” Docent chair, Sally Finkelstein has been a gracious, efficient and smiling Garden volunteer for 10 years, ably serving in many different roles. Retiring in 2009 after 38 years as a teacher, she found her perfect retirement role as a children’s docent. “I have loved giving children’s tours, trying to expand their understanding and appreciation of nature,” says Sally. Always a gardener herself, it comes as no surprise that she has also done stints as a volunteer with the Gardens for Connoisseurs Tour, joining the Steering Committee two years ago. Around the Garden if an event needs volunteers, Sally has stepped up. Orchid Daze, Holiday Lights and St. Nick, Kinder in the Garden, the Flower Show...you name it, and she has likely lent a hand and loved every minute. Through the years, she also filled volunteer roles with the Symphony Associates and at the Fox before focusing her energy on the Garden’s activities. Prior to heading the Docent group this year, she served two years as head of the group’s Food Committee, no small undertaking itself. A lifelong learner, Sally can often be found in adult ed classes of one sort or another, doing yoga or planning an exotic adventure when she’s not at the Garden. For her leadership, energy and dedication, the Garden shines the light on Sally as November Volunteer of the Month.

December: Bettie Cheek

Like so many Garden volunteers, Bettie Cheek started her volunteer time here shortly after retiring in 2012. Her career as a nurse over, she was ready for a new venture, so she signed up for children’s docent training and soon found that hanging out at the Garden suited her fine. She has volunteered “all over the Garden” since then, with Centennial Club honors since 2013 to prove it. As docents do, she has also found herself signing up for other roles...coming early in the morning to dust Chihuly sculptures, guarding the Ogre at various events, wayfinding at Kinder in the Garden and other opportunities, and greeting visitors from all over the world in the Visitors Center. After years of doing countless children’s tours, she has found what may be her real niche in the Children’s Garden. “Most Tuesdays from April through October, you will find me there helping the little ones make wonderful works of art. It’s a ‘no rules’ time for the kids to be creative and learn about nature, as well as a time for mothers and caregivers to have a relaxed fun time with their children. Tuesday volunteer time is often the highlight of my week!” she says. Harried moms and nannies might think so too, thanks to Bettie! She adds the “extra” that visitors love about their Garden experience and, in recognition and appreciation of her, the Garden honors Bettie Cheek as December Volunteer of the Month.
Saluting the Gainesville Garden’s Volunteer(s) of the Quarter:

Brian and Cheryl Schuster

By Wanda Cannon
Gainesville Education and Volunteer Coordinator

On any given week, Brian and Cheryl Schuster can be seen volunteering in the Garden and the greenhouses. Our Garden volunteers are special because they commit themselves weekly to being here consistently and if one word describes this dynamic duo, it is consistency.

Brian and Cheryl also volunteer for the Garden’s more fun volunteer roles like Wine in the Woodland and our summer concerts. Always with a smile and a positive attitude, they greet visitors and assist with ticketing or any other role the Garden might ask of them. This couple shares their fun-loving side by dressing up for Goblins or any other themed event we might have. It is always fun to see what they might do to enhance the visitor service experience when it comes to festival or events. Their 70s costumes for the most recent Goblins in the Garden would have won the runway contest! Brian (Rock Star Frank Zappa) and Cheryl (A Flower Power Child) decorated pumpkins with the children and they had a blast doing it!

Cheryl’s family located from Baltimore to Lawrenceville in the 70s. Always interested in science, Cheryl pursued a career in the pharmaceutical industry. Cheryl’s gardening skills were passed down from her mother who grew up on a farm in Pennsylvania. Brian, a Florida native, climbed the ladder in the retail industry, met Cheryl in a Dale Carnegie class where the two became study partners and the rest is history. After retirement, Brian enrolled in the 2015 Master Gardener Program in Hall County and soon started volunteering for the garden maintenance crew at the Garden. Cheryl later followed. “We are very grateful to be part of the Botanical Garden’s volunteer team and look forward to growing with the Garden.”

The Garden appreciates you both and values your time and commitment to our mission here. Thanks, Brian and Cheryl!

January Volunteer Opportunities at the Garden

**Bulb Planting Project**

Tuesday, January 14
9:00 - 11:30 a.m.

Join the horticulture staff and other volunteers to finish up the spring bulb plantings. We’ll be working on the Flower Walk section, which is sure to be a marvel of color this spring. Meet in the Visitor Center at 9:00 - wear closed toe shoes, bring water and a snack, and bring along your favorite gloves and trowel (we have plenty to share if needed). Bring along a friend, too, to show them how much fun we have volunteering at the Garden and see if they are interested in committing to a regular role. RSVP to Josh at jtodd@atlantabg.org.

**Truly Living Well Urban Farm Project**

Monday, January 20
9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

The Garden is assisting at the Truly Living Well Center for Natural Urban Agriculture for a service project on MLK Jr. Day. Through Moe Hemmings, ABG has fostered a growing relationship with TLW that supports both organizations’ work with urban agriculture and community outreach. We would like to support this relationship by offering volunteers to assist during their day of service. Projects at Truly Living Well, located at 324 Lawton Street SW, Atlanta 30310 (about 6 miles SW of ABG), will include building a treehouse, installing garden beds, clearing debris, leaves, and general clean up, weeding and trimming shrubs, building a greenhouse and seed table, wood chipping, mulching garden beds and the orchard, and beautifying the worm bins. RSVP to Josh at jtodd@atlantabg.org.
What’s Growing in Gainesville

By Wanda Cannon,
Gainesville Education and Volunteer Coordinator

The year’s final days are upon us, but the Garden is still full of color and winter blooms! Even at this time of the year, the Garden is stunning! The trees and shrubs have been showcasing gold, red and orange throughout the last few months.

October was an eventful month with Wine in the Woodlands ‘Fest of Ale’, Goblins in the Garden, Scarecrows, and our annual fall Woodland Ramble and Garden plant sale.

The Gainesville Garden volunteers gave their time throughout the late summer into fall volunteering for Visitor Service, docent tours, Discovery Stations, Storytime and Smiles. Greenhouse and Garden Maintenance volunteers busily gave their time organizing plants for the plant sale and maintain our beautiful Garden for visitors.

The Garden is awaiting the much anticipated opening of the new Ada Mae Pass Ivester Children’s Garden. Late November saw a soft opening of the new garden featuring many wonderful interactive play areas for young children and families! I am recruiting “Nature Ambassadors” now for the many volunteer opportunities that will be available in the Children’s Garden. The Grand Opening is scheduled for March 21, 2020. Nestled on the highest spot in the Garden, the Children’s Garden will be a wonderful addition to our unique woodland setting. Our children and family programming will grow as we add new events and festivals!

Our holiday potluck brunch for volunteers -- always fun and festive -- was Wednesday, December 11, and plans are ongoing for our annual “Thanks for Giving” luncheon on Saturday, February 8, 2020. We always look forward to saluting our volunteers at events like these.

In this issue look for our new Volunteers of the Quarter. The Garden selected a dynamic volunteer couple, Brian and Cheryl Schuster.

I hope all of our volunteers get to visit Holiday Lights in Atlanta, and I wish everyone a wonderful holiday season through the end of the year! 2020 will be an exciting year full of growth.

As always, the Atlanta Botanical Garden Gainesville appreciates its volunteer force! We are blessed to have such a wonderful group of people who give their time and efforts toward a common goal to make the Garden a place where visitors can come and enjoy its beauty and the many opportunities the Garden offers.

News from the Volunteers at
Atlanta Botanical Garden, Gainesville

By Diane Korzeniewski

We have had some “firsts” for weather this fall, including our first fall plant sale with temperatures in the mid 90s! Wonder why we only sold plants under the tent? No volunteers or buyers wanted to leave the shade! We sold those in the sun, but truthfully no one DID want to leave the shade.

Our final Thursday Wine in the Woodlands got underway with a power outage that started just prior to opening, and heavy rain which barely cleared before the event. It was super windy to boot! Only the brave (or crazy) went out in the Garden for a stroll. Another one for the books.

Who knows what the winter will bring, but we are excited to be opening the Children’s Garden soon. The greenhouse area is naked now that so many plants have found their permanent home in the Children’s Garden. We were immersed in the seasonal change pulling the annuals, which had, in some cases, become a jungle. We spent time installing bulbs in mid-November, just in time for the arrival of the first arctic freeze of the year. Here comes winter!
Have you ever noticed the stone balustrades scattered around Piedmont Park? Actually, they are the only remaining part of the enormous main building constructed for the Cotton States International Exposition held in 1895. This 100 day festival was held from September 18 to December 31. Its purpose was to foster trade between southern states and South American nations and to show products and facilities of this region to the rest of our country and Europe. Over two million dollars were spent on the transformation of Piedmont Park. Our government allocated $250,000 for the construction of a government building. Six states and other countries such as Argentina also constructed their own buildings. Over 6,000 exhibits ranged from the latest technology in transportation, mining, manufacturing, agriculture and other fields. The best in each category were awarded medals. Just imagine being able to see the demonstration of C. Francis Jenkins and Thomas Armat's motion picture device called the Phantoscope!

Lush tropical gardens that later became the Atlanta Botanical Garden were also developed. At that time, Lake Clara Meer was only a pond. It was enlarged to 11.5 acres for this important event. What a peaceful and stunning site awaited the public. On September 18, 1895, Grover Cleveland threw an electric switch at his Massachusetts home to officially open the Atlanta Cotton States and International Exposition. Railroad cars were jammed with people coming to the city. Vast stucco hotels located on Fourteenth Street were crammed with visitors, and downtown streets were crowded all day long. People from all over the world were selling their wares. Professional midway entertainers, American Indians, Hindus, Japanese and people from every corner of the globe came to the exposition. A cast of important people was encouraged to participate by the organizers of the event. Booker T. Washington delivered his famous Atlanta Exposition Speech promoting racial cooperation. John Philip Sousa performed his "King Cotton March" created especially for this festival. At a later time, the President and his wife came to view the exhibits. Over 800,000 visitors from the United States and other countries came to the festival. After purchasing a 50 cent adult ticket, one could view the exhibits, see the Liberty Bell and have access to Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show! This exposition showcased Atlanta as a regional business center and helped attract investment. Most of the buildings were torn down and sold for scrap afterward. The city eventually purchased the grounds which became the present-day Piedmont Park and the Atlanta Botanical Garden.

The Garden Associates is a dynamic service organization that offers leadership, creative energy and support for Garden events and fundraisers. Associates volunteer their time and financial support to further the mission of the Atlanta Botanical Garden. The benefits of Associate membership include exclusive tours, educational programs, special events, networking and the opportunity to work with others who share a strong commitment to the Garden.

We enjoyed our Holiday Party on December 4 and look forward to more events in the Spring. Please be watching your email for dates and information on the Spring 2020 Luncheon, monthly Lunch & Learn events and, of course, the fabulous Gardens for Connoisseurs Tour the weekend of May 9 and 10. We’d love your participation!

From ideas for educational and behind-the-scene-tours to luncheon table decorations design, our ears are open to hear what YOU would like to do to be more engaged to serve the Garden. After all, that’s who we are as Garden Associates!

If you would like to join the Garden Associates, please email us at gardenassociates@atlantabg.org or join online at https://atlantabg.org/join/garden-associates/.
Volunteers Needed for *Expressions*

By Paula White
Flower Show Volunteer Chair

The 2020 Flower Show “Expressions” opens at the Garden on February 21. This three-day event, focused entirely on plants, will showcase horticulture, floral design, landscape design and photography.

After a five-year hiatus, the Flower Show returned to Atlanta in 2018 as a newly envisioned event. The 2020 show will build on the success of 2018, and your help as a volunteer is what will make it a success. Volunteer opportunities abound the week of February 17, starting with exhibition set up, moving on to entry registration and assisting exhibitors. During the three days of the show, volunteers will be welcoming guests to the exhibit areas, scanning tickets, providing information and serving as way finders. In addition, help will be needed for setup, registration and check-in for the Preview Party and the special lecture event at the Piedmont Driving Club. The Flower Show will take a very large village of volunteers, and the Garden is looking forward to you being part of this.

A general call for volunteers will be sent to your email soon. Identify the days and places you can help. Not only will you be part of an inspirational event, you will be spending your days at the Garden surrounded by the early beauty of Atlanta Blooms and relishing Orchid Daze. What could be better? Learn more about the Flower Show, including information for Exhibitors, here: https://atlantabg.org/events-exhibitions/flower-show/

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**Flower Show Details**

**Dates:**
Friday, February 21 through Sunday, February 23, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

**Cost:**
*Non-members:*
General Admission ticket INCLUDES admission to Flower Show
Adults: $21.95
Children: $18.95 (Children under 3 are free.)

*Members:*
$10 to enter Flower Show
Member children 17 and under are free.

Members may enter the Garden as usual for free, but if they want to enter the indoor venues where the Flower Show is being held, they will need to pay $10 at Admissions and be given a wristband. Flower Show venues will be indoors in Day Hall, Mershon Hall and the GardenHouse Gallery.

**Flower Show Preview Party:** Thursday, February 20, 7 p.m. at Longleaf
Cost: $100

**Flower Show Featured Speaker Event:** Saturday, February 22 at Piedmont Driving Club at 2 p.m.
Cost: $75
Check It Out:

New Finds in the Garden’s Sheffield Library

By Michelle Li, Library Volunteer

THE HOME PLACE: MEMOIRS OF A COLORED MAN’S LOVE AFFAIR WITH NATURE by J. Drew Lanham

This memoir by Dr. J. Drew Lanham, a black professor and master teacher at Clemson University, is deep and profound, filled with writing so beautiful it ought to be poetry (Dr. Lanham is a published poet). He is a birder and born naturalist whose years spent on the acreage and wilderness of his grandmother’s Home Place in Edgefield, South Carolina grew and flourished into an abiding love for nature.

Race is never far from the narrative; it’s impossible, as a black man, to ignore it. That’s what makes this book remarkable. Race is not ignored, but it isn’t the focus. It is matter-of-fact. These days, we are sold anger. We expect it. My reaction to the first chapters of the book were mixed because the narrative lacked anger, though anger is in the book. Dr. Lanham speaks on his experience with clarity and firmness. He would not be here without racism, and the intersection of it and his love for living things tints every page of his book.

Books like this are rare, and reading them is the kind of satisfying work found in preparing garden beds or hiking untrod woods. Sit down ready to digest, and prepare to come back to this book the way we come back to the earth, season after season.

THE WILD TREES: A STORY OF PASSION AND DARING by Richard Preston

Richard Preston, author of The Hot Zone and The Demon in the Freezer, returns once again with a gripping, eminently readable book about forest canopy scientists and their quest to discover what lies in the uncharted tops of giant redwood trees. A master of narrative nonfiction, Richard Preston focuses the lens on a handful of scientist-explorers who spend many of their days between earth and sky, anchored to trees which are home to an incredible number of living things. The forest canopy is itself a biome, though it was thought of as barren until the 1970s.

Though the book is about the redwoods, Preston infuses it with the stories of the humans discovering them, climbing them, and then keeping their location a secret. The Wild Trees is a glimpse into their world - one that’s over too soon.

Upcoming Volunteer Trainings

Time to plan for 2020!

Children’s Docent Training

Tuesdays, January 21 - March 3, 9 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

This is an intensive seven week course to learn each of the various tours offered to school groups. Must be a Garden member, submit a background check, pay a $20 training fee and commit to leading two tours a month, about 1.5 hours each. Most importantly, must like working with children of all ages! Interview required.

Discovery Training

Informal education stations are available Thursday-Sunday at 10 a.m. and 1 p.m. in three-hour blocks. Stations include exhibition information, conservation work and collection themes in the outdoor gardens and conservatory. No interview required; training will be on a Saturday morning in March.

OKRA Training

Kitchen volunteers are needed for the Outdoor Kitchen. Volunteers assist during weekend afternoon demonstrations and weekday evening classes. Assignments include helping the chef, plating food, serving samples, washing dishes and running supplies. Interview required, followed by a training session, likely on a Saturday 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. in March or April.

GEM Training

This is perfect if you want to dig in the dirt with the horticulture staff and other volunteers. Choose one weekday morning a week, 9 a.m. until noon, to dig, plant, water, deadhead and other garden tasks. No interview required; the spring training will take place on a weekday morning 10 to 11:30 a.m. in March.

If you have experience with orchids or are a Master Gardener, please let Josh know to discuss Orchid Specialist and Plant Hotline roles.
Meet the Staff:

David Ruland
Greenhouse Manager

By Josh Todd

Greenhouse Manager David Ruland recently celebrated his 20th anniversary working at the Garden. The Long Island native moved to Georgia in 1987 and attended Clayton State College and Georgia State University. During that time, despite being an English Major, he fostered a growing interest in horticulture by frequenting the Rare Plant Nursery in Sharpsburg, Georgia.

Ruland began his career at the Garden by volunteering, starting in February of 1999, mainly in the Desert House, but he also spent time in the Tropical House and Greenhouses. After a few months of free labor, Ron Determann hired him for a temporary part-time paid position in the Conservatory. “Temporary” turned out to be over a year in the part-time role, then turned into a full time position, and then turned into 20 years.

In 2002, Ruland helped with the opening of the Orchid Center. He had an interest in orchids, along with succulents, and found a fondness for other tropicales, especially aroids like anthuriums and amorphophallus. While working with these collections, he added caretaking for many of the Conservatory animals like the frogs and turtles.

In the spring of 2010, David was promoted into the Greenhouse Manager role, which at the time included the main three houses, along with the Conservation Greenhouse (since moved under the management of the conservation staff).

“The greenhouses are the primary core of our collections,” he explains, “housing many of the plants that we use to propagate for public displays as well as safeguarding and distribution, along with other curated collections of materials. Houses 1 and 2 are humid and warm, tropical, holding plants you see in the Tropical House and Orchid Center. Number 3 is a bit cooler, temperate, but non-freezing, and also stays brighter and drier to house more xeric collections, including desert type plants and our world-class conifer collection.”

Day-to-day responsibilities include hand watering as needed, adjusting and monitoring temperature and humidity settings correct for the season, checking on the mechanical systems for climate control, like wetwalls, evaporative cooling, roof and side vents. Another responsibility is pest control – soap and oil if possible -- as needed for common aphids, mealybugs, and scale. Ruland also works on propagation for safeguarding, adding and maintaining plant numbers based on display and back of house populations. “The winter months are conifer heavy, which are among my favorites. About 15 years ago I took a real interest in conifers, learning propagation and cuttings. We do lots of re-potting this time of year and work on Torreya taxifolia collections in collaboration with the Conservation Team.”

“My greenhouse volunteers put in hours of manual labor, hands-on plant work with cuttings and re-potting, and also grooming plants, weeding, and trimming. They work in the headhouse, too, cleaning pots, and pressure washing. I also oversee one part-time assistant, Rina Guerrero, who helps with the day-to-day operations and watering, along with the Amphibian Team, Chelsea Thomas and Zach Lim.

A highlight of his career was a two-week trip to Scotland this past October and November. Ruland spent time at national gardens and building international relationships with horticulturists who have provided some of ABG’s initial plants for reproduction, especially in the conifer collection. Staying in Edinburgh, he visited the four royal botanical gardens – Edinburgh of course, with Logan, Benmore, and Dawyck – and visited historical ruins, palaces and castles. “Linlithgow

Some of David’s favorites in the Garden’s Greenhouse:

- The Calathea “peacock” collection, native to tropical Americas, popular as house plants with decorative leaves
- Ant plants like ferns and myrmecophytes that have a symbiotic relationship with ants that often find their way into the greenhouse
- Begonias, Gesneriads and Tuberous Aroids

He has many others, some of which are detailed in his accompanying article (next page).
Meet the Staff  

...and Holyroodhouse Palaces were really neat. It was fun to see the history of these ancient places in person. Taking a day trip to the Machrie Moor Stone Circle formation on the Isle of Arran was another highlight. And I had to have a cider at the Sheep Heid in Edinberg, supposedly quite haunted and one of the oldest standing pubs in Scotland.”

As you can imagine, David has quite a few of his own houseplants, along with pets that include cats, tarantulas, snakes and tortoises, under his care in the Woodland Hills area. He also enjoys concerts and other performing arts, hiking and the outdoors and spending time with his daughter, Ursula. Though quiet at first, if you can track him down in the greenhouses and get him talking, David Ruland is a true plantsman and happy to share his 20+ years of horticulture knowledge. Bonus points if you stop by with Indian food and a good ghost story.

The Garden’s Greenhouses: A Personal Look

By Greenhouse Manager David Ruland

The Dean Day Support Greenhouses of the Atlanta Botanical Garden were constructed in 1988 as a non-public facility to support and complement the plant collections housed in the Fuqua Conservatory, also under construction approximately the same time. It was during these early days that many of the Garden’s interior plant collections were obtained and established by Ron Determann and Becky Brinkman, among others. While the nature of any living collection is bound to slowly shift over time, many of our plants and collections are still traceable back to these formative years and original intentions for the greenhouses. Throughout the greenhouses are a slew of collections including Bromeliads, Nepenthes, Orchids and Succulents that are long-running stalwarts of the greenhouses. It is within these haunts that I have grown to appreciate and adore many different plant species. I can state the obvious collections that I really enjoy, such as the aroids or conifers, but for now I would like to mention a few relatively obscure plants I find enchanting that make their home in the greenhouses. Anyone who knows me is aware that I am a sucker for a shimmery velvety leaf, iridescence and great fragrance. So with these qualifiers in mind, I would like to highlight a few species.

While there are many Aroids and Begonias that have stunning foliage, I would like to highlight this Asian gesneriad, Cyrtandra splendens (right, above). This is a relatively large species with amazing texture and color. When in flower the stem is covered with white and pink flowers. It appears to enjoy the darker humid regions of Greenhouse 1 near the propagation fog, conditions that aren’t easily replicated outside of the greenhouse.

I love anything iridescent, be it aquarium fish, certain stones and shells, and even plants! There are a few plants in the greenhouse that show lovely iridescent foliage, including quite a few awesome begonias and even a tropical grass relative. One truly fascinating fern that shows an amazing metallic blue, almost indescribable color is Microsorum thailandicum. As the name suggests, it is a rainforest species from Thailand. It never fails to impress those who see it.

In recent years I have begun to really appreciate and enjoy Amaryllis and their relatives. We recently added to our indoor species collection with a generous donation from the USDA of their research collections. Most are housed in Greenhouse 3 close to the Tropical conifers. One of my favorites to flower recently is a South American species, Leptochiton quitoensis (right, below). It is a frilly white flower similar to a Peruvian Daffodil, with a powerful nocturnal perfume, presumably to attract moths or bats. Fragrant and night blooming is a perfect combination as far as I am concerned, and the flower is beautiful as well. I look forward to working with this particular collection more in the future.

There are many more here in the Garden that I find fascinating, and even the completely different personal favorites I keep at home are an endless source of enjoyment and inspiration.
I am excited about our second Atlanta Botanical Garden Flower Show which will be presented on February 21 – 23, 2020. The theme, *Expressions*, presents so many creative opportunities to showcase flower arrangements, photography, landscape design and horticulture. The first show in 2018 was a resounding success due to talented volunteers, diligent staff, great planning and leadership as well as amazing competitors who assured a top quality show. It also helped to have a warm and sunny February weekend to attract many visitors and members.

The upcoming show will honor someone very dear to us all, Deen Day Sanders, a woman who has dedicated much of her life to flower shows, gardens and nature. Deen is a remarkable leader and mentor to so many people involved in flower shows; it’s truly a privilege for us to honor her. We have a dynamic duo with our show chairs, Liza McSwain and Kathy Powell; they have the knowledge, passion and organizational talent to put together another fabulous flower show. Of course, they will be leaning heavily on the Garden’s volunteer core to help with the details.

The 2020 Show will be a juried competition in floral design, horticulture, photography and landscaping. An invitation-only Ikebana Floral Design Exhibit will feature the art of Japanese floral design and will be one of the highlights of the show.

As an added component, we will showcase the work of our Southeastern Conservation Center with a focus on how the Garden protects and saves plants throughout the region. Our generous board member, Roger Smith, is graciously hosting a Patron Party on January 14th in his iconic and newly renovated Randolph-Lucas-Jones house. The Preview Party will be in Longleaf on Thursday, February 20th and will mark the official opening of *Expressions*. Starting a new Flower Show at the Garden is proving to be a more sustainable way to continue a time-honored tradition of flower shows. I love that we will bring together the beauty of the Garden with the exhibits created by so many talented and dedicated people in celebration of the importance and beauty of plants.

The 2018 Flower Show was a benefit to our International Plant Exploration Program and netted $150,000 which we put to good use. With those funds, Scott McMahan was able to build a new nursery to grow the Asian species he collects as part of the Explorers Program. His work is now focused on preserving important species from China and Vietnam and working with our partners there and in this country to assure that Asian magnolias, hydrangeas and orchids will protected in their native habitat. I love that the Flower Show has become an important fundraiser for our conservation work overseas and look forward to another wildly successful Show in 2020 and to seeing our Chairs and volunteers create a spectacular event brimming with beauty in support of saving plants.