

# THE NEW YORK BOTANICAL GARDEN

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*Studying, exhibiting, and conserving plants for 120 years*

For Immediate Release  
January 13, 2012

## **Take a Trip to the Tropics Without Leaving New York**

**Popular Winter Exhibition *Caribbean Garden* Offers a Look at  
The New York Botanical Garden's Permanent Collections  
In the Warmth of the Conservatory**

**Complementary Programming Includes New Virtual Tour, Photo Display,  
Kids' Scavenger Hunt, Weekend Salsa and Photography Lessons**

**January 21–February 26, 2012**

Visitors to The New York Botanical Garden this winter can escape to *Caribbean Garden*, a look at the tropical trees, flowers, and foliage, including orange-yellow crotons, fuchsia bromeliads, and rosy red hibiscus, in the Enid A. Haupt Conservatory's permanent collection. Through self-guided strolls, use of a new virtual tour, "The Beauty of the Caribbean," or participation in docent-led tours of the Conservatory, visitors can encounter many surprises in the largest Victorian-style glasshouse in the country. Visitors can also enjoy a display of photos from the International Garden Photographer of the Year competition and partake in salsa and photography lessons on weekends. Children can participate in a scavenger hunt that begins in the Conservatory.



The period between the Botanical Garden's major seasonal shows, when the climate in the Conservatory is inviting (65 to 75 degrees Fahrenheit, depending on the plant collections in a particular gallery) and when the crowds are thinner, is an ideal time for visitors to fully immerse themselves in and take advantage of these rich collections.

### **New Programming Rounds Out the Caribbean Garden Experience**

During *Caribbean Garden*, visitors can enjoy a rich selection of sights and activities. Throughout the galleries in the Conservatory, a **display of select photographs from the International Photographer of the Year competition** highlights outstanding pictures of gardens, plants, and flowers taken from around the world.

**"The Beauty of the Caribbean: A Virtual Tour"** enables visitors to travel the islands through their smart phones. During their visit to The New York Botanical Garden, they can see and learn about plants and flowers found in the Caribbean, then scan codes on exhibition interpretive signage to view additional information from the Garden's Web site directly on their enabled mobile phones.

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**“Adventures in Adaptations,”** beginning Tuesday, January 24, is a scavenger hunt with components in multiple Garden venues that teaches plant adaptation in different climates. Young visitors are offered field notebooks when they pick up their admission tickets. Inside, they will find simulated entries about plant adaptations written by a traveling scientist, and they will use the clues in the entries as well as clues sent to them by text message to solve the puzzle of where in the world the scientist has been, and where he is going next. The scavenger hunt stretches through the houses of the Conservatory and outdoors toward the Leon Levy Visitor Center, concluding at the Everett Children’s Adventure Garden. After the hunt, hands-on activities in the Discovery Center include sorting fruits and leaves and potting up plants to take home, all part of “Tropical Discoveries and Wintertime Wonders.”

Experience the thrills of salsa and learn to take pictures like the pros with weekend instructions that are free with exhibition admission. On Saturdays at 2 p.m. during *Caribbean Garden*, **“Salsa: Listen and Learn”** lets visitors discover the origins of salsa music, listen to a demonstration of the beats, and learn a few dance steps. On Sundays, from 1–3 p.m., experts offer **“Photography Tips and Tricks”** for budding photographers who wish to learn how to capture the beauty of nature like a pro. They can also enter their work in weekly photo contests for a chance to win great prizes. Check [nybg.org](http://nybg.org) for locations and more information.

### Embark Upon a Warm Ecotour of the World



The Garden’s permanent ecotour, *A World of Plants*, also allows discovery of aquatics, medicinal plants, unusual species, and the process of evolutionary change. The journey of discovery begins with the Conservatory’s expanded exhibition of palms. ***Palms of the World***, features exotic species that occur in warm regions across the globe. A diversity of palms from every known tropical habitat is displayed. The collection includes the red sealing wax palm *Cyrtostachys renda*, an exotic ornamental from Malaysia prized throughout the tropics for its bright-red crownshaft and clumping habit, as well as the Seychelles stilt palm *Verschaffeltia splendida*, a curious ornamental with a spiny trunk and stilt roots.

Towering palms, cycads, and ferns surround a large pool that reflects the magnificent and iconic dome of the Conservatory, 90 feet above.

A stroll through the Conservatory is also a journey through time, because many plants such as cycads are survivors of great evolutionary changes. Their leaves are not that different today from the leaves of their ancestors geological ages ago.



In the Conservatory’s ***Lowland Tropical Rain Forest Gallery***, a re-created Healer’s House illustrates how traditional healers use plants to treat human illnesses as well as how ethnobotanists gather and preserve the plants and the healers’ knowledge. This ethnobotanical discipline—the study of the relationship between plants and people—not only preserves centuries-old knowledge, but also points toward plants that may be useful in pharmacological research, or in the ever-growing market for herbal medicine. Nearby, visitors will discover the cacao tree, the source of chocolate. A skywalk leads up into the taller regions of the rain forest canopy, where one experiences the steady mist that rain forest explorers encounter in the wild.

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In the *Aquatic Plants and Vines Gallery*, lush curtains of tropical vines drape from the arching lattice of the glasshouse roof around an elegant fountain and pool displaying aquatic plants. The Conservatory's aquatic collection—plants adapted to life in the water—includes *Cyperus papyrus*, the plant used to make some of the earliest paper.

As visitors enter the *Upland Tropical Rain Forest Gallery*, they will see an encased orchid display featuring an assortment of exotic specimens from the Garden's spectacular collection. High-elevation plants dangle and weave throughout the gallery, reminiscent of the tree ferns, mosses, relatives of blueberries, ferns, bamboos, and bromeliads one would find in a cloud forest.

The *Deserts of the Americas* and the *Deserts of Africa Galleries* house plants such as cacti, agave, boojum trees, euphorbias, aloes, and “living stones” or *Lithops* that have adapted to dry and challenging climates. Many of the desert plants on display in raised beds are succulents, the collective name for the thick-fleshed species designed for water storage. The two galleries provide a contrast between the older deserts of Africa and Australia—with their undulating plains and vast expanses of sand—and the geologically younger deserts of the Americas, with their mountains, basins, and flats.

A display of carnivorous Venus' flytraps and pitcher plants and deliciously fragrant citrus flowers and fruits in the *Hanging Baskets Gallery* concludes the educational and enticing trek.



### **Other Attractions Both Indoors and Out**

Another indoor exhibition at The New York Botanical Garden is located in the Library building in the Britton Science Rotunda and Gallery. *Plants and Fungi: Ten Current Research Stories* offers a peek at some of the mysteries of the plant world that are being unraveled by Garden scientists through their field trips around the globe.

Since the 1890s, scientists at the Garden have traveled far and wide to better understand plants and fungi, their relationship to their environments, and their many uses by people around the world. Visitors can get a glimpse of their valuable work through this exhibition. Photographs, diagrams, unusual plant specimens, artifacts from explorations in remote locales, and audio/visual presentations bring to life ten current research projects, from the study of mosses and lichens to Brazil nuts and vanilla orchids.

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The displays and presentations reveal how they use modern tools such as DNA fingerprinting as well as classic techniques of plant exploration, and how they are studying topics like genetic diversity in rice and a nerve toxin in cycads that may provide insight into Alzheimer's disease.

For intrepid lovers of winter, outdoor attractions abound. A **Tram Tour** highlights collections on the Garden's 250 acres of historic landscapes and tree specimens from around the world. The 50-acre **Thain Family Forest** is the largest remnant of original forest that once covered most of New York City. The **Arthur and Janet Ross Conifer Arboretum**, 37 acres surrounding the Enid A. Haupt Conservatory, exhibits 250 specimens of the world's temperate pines, spruces, and firs as they live in the wild. This collection, the first ever planted in the Garden, is more than 100 years old. The **Benenson Ornamental Conifers**, 15 acres in the southeastern corner of the Garden, is a collection of more than 400 hybrids and horticultural selections of conifers, including some of the world's rarest dwarf, weeping, and unusual forms of conifers.

Younger visitors can enjoy the **Everett Children's Adventure Garden**. They can participate in hands-on activities, interactive lessons, and crafts projects. Children and their families can use their senses and creativity as well as basic scientific tools to explore the vital sparks of life that lie just below the surface of this cold and quiet season.

**Adult Continuing Education classes** provide opportunities to start a new career or hobby in botanical art and illustration, botany, floral design, gardening, horticultural therapy, horticulture, and landscape design. **Shop in the Garden** offers a wide assortment of items for sale for garden enthusiasts and nature lovers. **Two cafes** present a Caribbean-inspired menu of entrees, sandwiches, soups, desserts, and beverages.

No matter what the weather is like outside, there is plenty to see and do at The New York Botanical Garden. For more information, visit [www.nybg.org](http://www.nybg.org) or call 718.817.8700.

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The New York Botanical Garden is a museum of plants located at Bronx River Parkway (Exit 7W) and Fordham Road. It is easy to reach by Metro-North Railroad or subway. The Garden is open year-round, Tuesday through Sunday and Monday federal holidays, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. The best way to enjoy the Garden is with the *All-Garden Pass*, which includes admission to the grounds as well as to seasonal gardens, exhibitions, and attractions such as the Enid A. Haupt Conservatory, Everett Children's Adventure Garden, and Tram Tour: \$20 for adults, \$18 for seniors and students with ID, \$8 for children ages 2–12, free for children under 2. A *Grounds-Only Pass* is also available: \$10 for adults, \$5 for seniors and students with ID, and \$2 for children ages 2–12, free for children under 2. Grounds admission is free all day on Wednesdays and from 10 to 11 a.m. on Saturdays. For more information, please call 718.817.8700 or visit [www.nybg.org](http://www.nybg.org)

The New York Botanical Garden, 2900 Southern Boulevard, Bronx, New York 10458

The New York Botanical Garden is located on property owned in full by the City of New York, and its operation is made possible in part by public funds provided through the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs. A portion of the Garden's general operating funds is provided by The New York City Council and The New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation. The Bronx Borough President and Bronx elected representatives in the City Council and State Legislature provide leadership funding.

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