

THE NEW YORK BOTANICAL GARDEN

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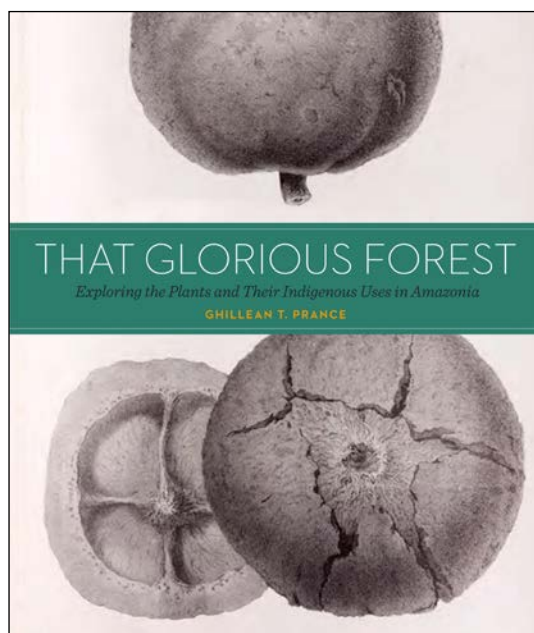
In *That Glorious Forest*, An Intrepid Scientific Explorer Recounts A Lifetime of Work and Adventure in the Amazon

**“Serious But Spellbinding Account” By Former Head of NYBG Science and
Director of Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, Now Available From NYBG Press**

Drawing on nearly five decades of experience, Professor Sir Ghilleen Prance, one of the seminal scientific explorers of the Amazon rain forest in modern times, chronicles some of his most significant and fascinating expeditions in *That Glorious Forest: Exploring the Plants and Their Indigenous Uses in Amazonia*, now available from The New York Botanical Garden Press.

In a lifetime devoted to the study and conservation of tropical plants, Prof. Prance has participated in 39 expeditions to the Amazon, beginning with a 1963 trip to Suriname as a young researcher for The New York Botanical Garden, described in *That Glorious Forest*.

“This was my first experience in the undisturbed rainforest and I was fascinated and overwhelmed by the diversity and magnificent sizes and shapes of the trees,” he writes, referring to that first expedition. “Each day brought a new treat for me, a novice in the forest.”



As he notes, his initial one-year research position turned into a 25-year career at the Botanical Garden, during which he ran Projeto Flora Amazônica, a joint Brazilian-American exploration program to survey the flora of the Amazon region, and directed the Garden’s scientific research program as Senior Vice President for Science from 1981 to 1988.

From 1988 to 1999, he was Director of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, in his native England. He is currently Scientific Director of the Eden Project, a horticultural showplace and educational charity, and Visiting Professor at Reading University, both in England.

That Glorious Forest, whose title comes from the description of the Amazon rain forest by 19th-century British naturalist Henry Walter Bates, provides a first-hand account of what it is like to explore some of the remotest regions of the world while conducting rigorous scientific research. From his vivid descriptions and compelling stories, readers gain a clear understanding of the hard physical work and determination necessary to do the vital work of plant discovery.

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The author showing the spiny undersurface of the Victoria water lily (*Victoria amazonica*). Photo by Scott A. Mori, Ph.D.

On perhaps his most ambitious field trip, he and his team trekked more than 170 miles through undisturbed forest in 1971, sleeping in hammocks, encountering anacondas and documenting how indigenous peoples used the local plants for food, hallucinogens, and arrow poisons. The trip yielded nearly 700 plant and fungi specimen collections, including five new species. On another expedition that year, Prof. Prance and several members of his team fell dangerously ill with a virulent strain of malaria, proving that fieldwork can be not only arduous but also life threatening.

In addition to these tales of adventure, Prof. Prance reflects on a lifetime of work surveying the Amazon flora and how his view of that work changed.

“Over the years, my own understanding of my role as a botanist has evolved from simply discovering and classifying the world’s flora to preserving habitats, understanding local uses, and educating the next generation in conservation,” he writes in the foreword.

The author or editor of 37 books, Prof. Prance is a Fellow of the Royal Society. He was knighted in July 1995 and received the Victoria Medal of Honour from the Royal Horticultural Society in 1999. In recognition of his ongoing dedication to the mission of The New York Botanical Garden and to botany and horticulture internationally, Sir Ghilleen was presented in 2008 with the Gold Medal of The New York Botanical Garden, the highest honor that the Garden confers.

That Glorious Forest, with 83 color photos and 90 black-and-white photos, is available in hardcover (224 pages) and as an electronic book.

Advance Praise for *That Glorious Forest*

“A splendid revelation of the incredible and intrepid efforts from expeditions to herbaria that have enlarged our knowledge of the Amazon and its botany... a serious but spellbinding account... the age of scientific adventures is still very much with us.”

—Thomas E. Lovejoy, Ph.D., University Professor, Environmental Science and Policy, George Mason University

“No one has contributed more to our understanding of and appreciation for tropical plants than Sir Ghilleen Prance.... This book will be enjoyed by anyone with interest in ‘that glorious forest,’ in how botanists work in the field, and in the adventure and wonder that [Sir Ghilleen] felt in exploring these forests in their pristine state.”

—Peter H. Raven, Ph.D., President Emeritus, Missouri Botanical Garden

“This extraordinary book gives us a behind-the-scenes glimpse of the ups and downs of [Sir Ghilleen’s] relentless botanical exploration of the Amazon between 1963 and 1988.... What comes through is the gentle tenacity of a dedicated field botanist with an enduring passion for plants.”

—Sir Peter Crane, Carl W. Knobloch, Jr. Dean of the School of Forestry & Environmental Studies, Yale University

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About The New York Botanical Garden Press

Since 1896 The New York Botanical Garden Press (nybgpress.org) has been publishing books and journals based on original research by plant scientists from around the world. Its mission is to put information in the hands of those engaged in exploring, understanding, and conserving plants and fungi. Areas of focus include floristics, systematics, economic botany, ecology, evolution, and ethnobotany. A growing list of books for general readers includes field guides and botanical history.

Ordering Information: *That Glorious Forest: Exploring the Plants and Their Indigenous Uses in Amazonia* (\$69 hardcover; \$49 e-book) is available through NYBG Press. To order, call 718.817.8721 or go to nybgpress.org. Also available through online retailers and in bookstores.

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The New York Botanical Garden is a museum of plants, an educational institution, and a scientific research organization. Founded in 1891, the Botanical Garden is one of the world's preeminent centers for studying plants at all levels, from the whole organism down to its DNA. Garden scientists conduct fundamental research on plants and fungi globally, as well as on the many relationships between plants and people. A National Historic Landmark, the Garden's 250-acre site is one of the greatest botanical gardens in the world and the largest in any city in the United States, distinguished by the beauty of its diverse landscape and extensive collections and gardens, as well as by the scope and excellence of its programs in horticulture, education, and science. Learn more: 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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