

# NYBG

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## **Dr. J. Chris Pires to Serve as Dean of the International Plant Science Center and Chief Science Officer of The New York Botanical Garden**

Distinguished Botanist, Evolutionary Biologist, and Professor Brings Extensive Academic Research and Administrative Experience to World-Renowned Plant Research and Conservation Institution on September 1, 2021



**Bronx, NY** – The New York Botanical Garden (NYBG) has announced that J. Chris Pires, Ph.D., will serve as the institution’s new Dean of the International Plant Science Center and Chief Science Officer, effective today, September 1, 2021.

Dr. Pires brings more than 30 years of experience as a researcher, administrator, and educator to NYBG and joins us from the University of Missouri, where he served as Curators’ Distinguished Professor and Associate Dean for Research for the College of Arts and Science.

“Joining The New York Botanical Garden is a privilege. I am humbled and excited by the opportunity to contribute to the groundbreaking research being conducted at this world-renowned institution,” said Dr. Pires. “I look forward to leading the talented team at NYBG’s International Plant Science Center as we fight tirelessly to protect our planet’s biodiversity, today more than ever.”

Dr. Pires’ leadership will play an important role in continuing the growth of NYBG’s internationally recognized Science program, strengthening new research directions, elevating the program’s profile across the country and around the world, and increasing community engagement.

“The New York Botanical Garden plays a crucial role in exploring, understanding, and preserving Earth’s vast botanical diversity and promoting conservation, and we are thrilled to have a scientist like Dr. Pires joining our institution,” said J. Barclay Collins II, Chair of The New York Botanical Garden Board of Trustees. “His leadership of our dedicated and accomplished Science team will help us further expand our critically important plant research.”

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“Dr. Pires’ experience in science is broad, ranging from field discovery and collections-based research to scanning the genomes of our planet’s most familiar and valuable crops,” said CEO and The William C. Steere Sr. President Jennifer Bernstein. “His dedication to education and conservation will help usher in an era of growth and continued contributions to the scientific community.”

Dr. Pires has annotated over 10,000 specimens for treatments for the *Flora of North America*, managed large genomics projects on crop plants and their wild relatives, spent a year in the NSF-NATO Postdoc Fellowship program at Royal Botanic Gardens-Kew, and developed educational modules at the UC Berkeley Botanical Garden. He received his undergraduate degree from the University of California, Berkeley and his Ph.D. from the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

### **About The New York Botanical Garden**

Founded in 1891, The New York Botanical Garden is the most comprehensive botanical garden in the world and an integral part of the cultural fabric of New York City, anchored in the Bronx. Visitors come to the Garden to connect with nature for joy, beauty, and respite, and for renowned plant-based exhibitions, music and dance, and poetry and lectures. Innovative children’s education programs promote environmental sustainability and nutrition awareness, graduate programs educate the next generation of botanists, while engaging classes inspire adults to remain lifelong learners. The 250-acre verdant landscape—which includes a 50-acre, old-growth forest—and the landmark Enid A. Haupt Conservatory support living collections of more than one million plants. Unparalleled resources are also held in the LuEsther T. Mertz Library, the world’s most important botanical and horticultural library with 11 million archival items spanning ten centuries, and the William and Lynda Steere Herbarium, the largest in the Western Hemisphere with 7.8 million plant and fungal specimens. Committed to protecting the planet’s biodiversity and natural resources, Garden scientists work on-site in cutting-edge molecular labs and in areas worldwide where biodiversity is most at risk.

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**The New York Botanical Garden is located at 2900 Southern Boulevard, Bronx, New York 10458. For more information, visit [nybg.org](http://nybg.org)**

**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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