

NYBG

MEDIA ALERT

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: March 28, 2023

A New Corpse Flower Will Soon Bloom—and Release Its Infamous Stench—at The New York Botanical Garden

What

If you've never seen an *Amorphophallus titanum*, or the "corpse flower," now is the chance to visit The New York Botanical Garden (NYBG) where one is on display in the Enid A. Haupt Conservatory for the public to see, and eventually smell, when it blooms. The spectacular blooming flower gets its macabre nickname from the distinct odor, which some have described as similar to the smell of rotting meat, during its brief 24- to 36-hour bloom. Its smell serves a purpose, though, attracting pollinators that feed on dead animals. The final opening of the bloom is unpredictable but is expected to occur in the next week or so.

The corpse flower first bloomed in the Western Hemisphere here at NYBG in 1937 and 1939, and it took nearly 80 years for another one to bloom. The 2016 plant attracted more than 25,000 visitors to smell the bloom in person and nearly two million views of its progress on a live online video feed.

Amorphophallus titanum, also known as the Titan-Arum, is the largest unbranched inflorescence (a cluster of flowers on a spike) in the plant kingdom, growing 12 feet tall in its natural habitat and about six to eight feet tall in cultivation. Although the enormous plant in bloom resembles one giant flower, it actually comprises a fleshy central spike called a spadix that holds two rings of male and female flowers, wrapped by the frilly spathe, a modified leaf that resembles a petal. In the first several days of the bloom cycle, the bud grows about four to six inches per day. Then growth slows significantly. The two bracts at the base of the spathe shrivel and fall off. Next, the spathe, which was once tightly wound around the spadix, loosens and begins to open, revealing the deep-red color inside. During bloom, the spadix self-heats to approximately human body temperature, which helps disseminate odor particles. The spathe unfurls during the course of about 36 hours (full bloom) before withering and dying back. Generally, the life cycle of the bloom is only one or two days. A young corpse flower takes about seven to 10 years to store enough energy to begin its bloom cycle, and it will be several more years before this plant is ready to bloom again.

When

The final opening of the bloom is unpredictable, but is anticipated to occur in the next week or so. The life expectancy of a corpse flower bloom is typically a day or two.

Where

The New York Botanical Garden; 2900 Southern Boulevard; Bronx, NY

Visitors can view the corpse flower online and learn more about its history via NYBG's dedicated [Amorphophallus titanum webpage](#) or see and smell this rare plant first-hand during its limited time in the spotlight at NYBG by purchasing an *All-Garden Pass*, available at www.nybg.org.

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