

NYBG

IMPACT REPORT
JULY 2022–JUNE 2023

NEW YORK BOTANICAL GARDEN







Impact Report July 2022–June 2023

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NYBG in the News
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Welcome from CEO and President



Dear Friends:

Over the past 18 months, The New York Botanical Garden undertook an extensive process of discovery, growth, and planning for the future. Together with more than 400 staff members, leadership across the Garden, and our Board of Trustees, we sought to define ways to apply our resources and expertise to fulfilling our historic mission within the context of today's most pressing issues. In short, we began a cross-cutting strategic planning process with the aim of setting the course for the next chapter in the long, proud history of this iconic institution.

Through this process we developed five strategic objectives, each representing our collective goals as an institution, and each a direct response to the world we live in.

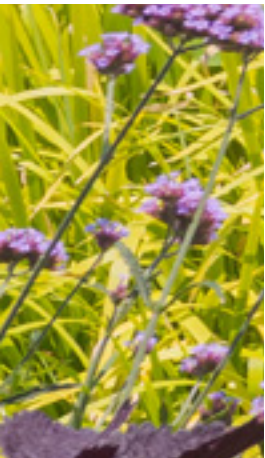
Environmental Action: NYBG will be a leader in investigating, elevating, and amplifying the importance of plants to help solve the climate and biodiversity crises.

Bronx Forward: NYBG will respond to the interests and opportunities of our borough—a diverse, vibrant, immigrant and multi-ethnic community that is emblematic of today's America.

Power of Place: NYBG will inspire more diverse audiences to seek beauty, knowledge, and well-being in the natural world through education and experiences that can only be found at the Garden.

Digital Impact: NYBG will become a leading online global resource through our unparalleled collections, horticultural knowledge, and plant science expertise.

Management Excellence: NYBG will be a model in the cultural and nonprofit sector, making us a premier place to work and a highly resilient, environmentally sustainable, collaborative, and effective organization.



These goals reflect our core values as an institution and are central to how we will approach the next era at NYBG. With these objectives in mind, we also undertook a comprehensive master site planning process. This is essential to ensuring that the growth of NYBG is in lock step with all necessary physical improvements to sustain and enhance our landmark 250 acres in the Bronx over the next 25 years.

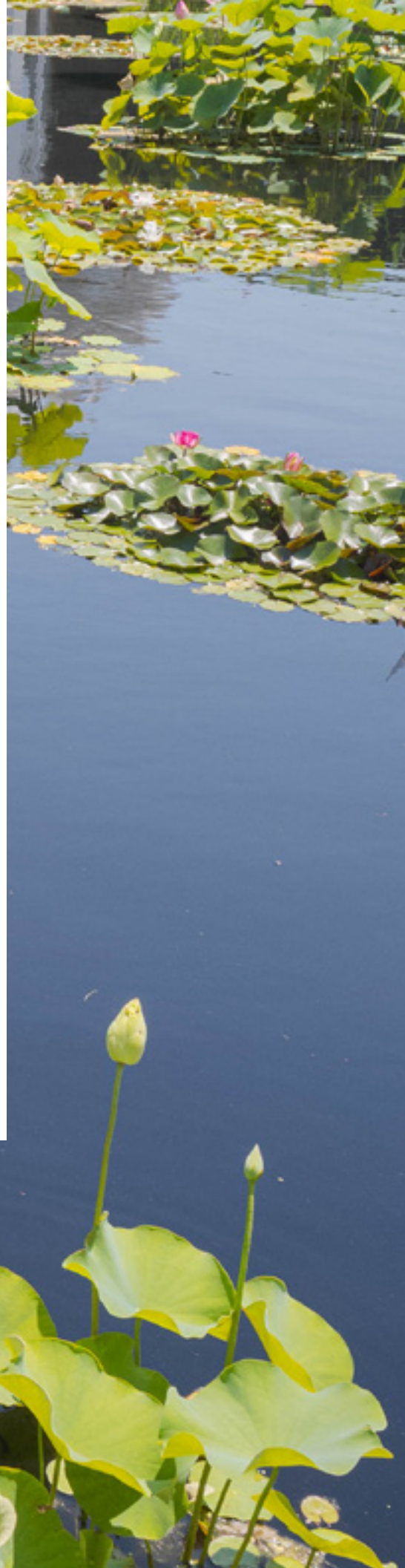
In the following report, you will learn more about some of the amazing work that was done across our layered institution in the past fiscal year, and the impact of each of these areas within the context of our strategic objectives. These accomplishments are a direct reflection of who we are, and examples of all that we can accomplish in the years ahead. In addition, we were excited to welcome several new leadership staff. Their extraordinary backgrounds and visionary perspectives will speak volumes as we shape the future of Science at NYBG and strengthen our role as a global environmental leader.

All this would be impossible without the steadfast support of our donors and friends. Your contributions are integral to safeguarding our institution; a commitment made possible by philanthropy, foresight, and a deep passion for plant life, community, and the health and vitality of our natural world.

Thank you.



Jennifer Bernstein
CEO & The William C. Steere Sr. President





Welcome from Board Chair



Dear Friends:

I am honored to serve as Board Chair during this transformative period in the storied life of The New York Botanical Garden. After the challenges of the pandemic years that saw our National Historic Landmark site closed to the public, NYBG has reemerged with renewed focus, passion, and purpose. Much of this is due to the unwavering support of the Garden community, including you—thank you!

This past fiscal year, with Jennifer Bernstein's exceptional leadership, and the energetic participation of our deeply committed and skilled staff and our hugely supportive Board, we embarked on a strategic and site planning process that is helping us rediscover our purpose and recommit to our mission. Since its founding in 1891, the Garden has been dedicated to studying and understanding the complex and incredible world of plants, and to educating the public on the importance of our natural environment. With the climate and biodiversity crises mounting, NYBG's mission is more critical now than ever before. As you will see in the following pages, we are up to the challenge thanks to our talented, and growing, team of plant scientists, horticulturists, and educators.

While we look to apply our resources and expertise in addressing these challenges, which are global in scale, we are also committed to continuing and expanding NYBG's impactful educational and exhibitions programs; to serving as a place for respite and beauty for our visitors; and to deepening our roots in our home community of the Bronx by expanding our vital, locally-based initiatives. The strategic and master site planning process has brought our mission into clearer focus, and inspired us to imagine the Garden of the future. It is an exciting and transformative time, and I hope you will join us as we embark on this journey and continue your support of this grand and growing garden.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "J. Barclay Collins II". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

J. Barclay Collins II
Chair of the Board

Environmental Action: Advancing Sustainability



McAlvay notes the many advantages of maslins, including a more reliable yield, a more complete nutritional profile, and the ability to grow in marginal soils and to survive drought. The grain mixes also appear to have natural resistance to pests, from insects to fungal diseases.



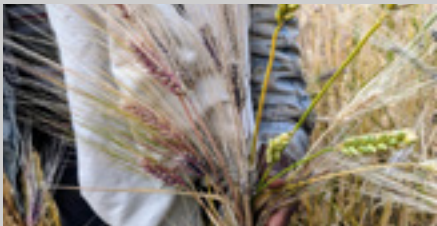
Over the past 12 months, NYBG Scientists have made great strides in their research projects, focused on sustainable agriculture through projects in ethnobotany (ancient crops), parasitic fungi research, and studies in the evolution of fruit. Each of these initiatives is a direct response to the growing challenges presented by climate change and its effects on the soil and ecosystems that allow farmers to cultivate their fields sustainably over time. Their research, borne out of key collaborations with leading scientists around the world and field work with local partners, is already having a resounding impact on how people approach farming and food production in years to come.



NYBG
in the News



Atlas Obscura



This Nearly Lost Ancient
Grain Tradition Could Be
the Future of Farming

October 13, 2022

Small grains are supposed to be hit really hard by climate change... Our research has the potential to change how we view food production toward a more sustainable future that can impact communities around the world.

Alex C. McAlvay, Ph.D.

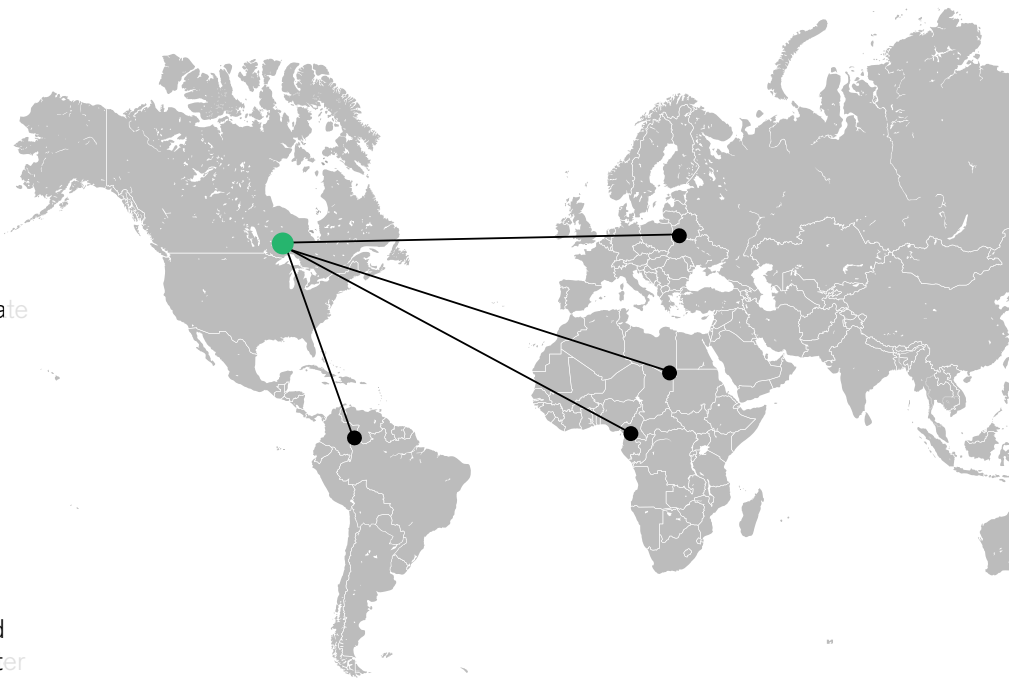
Kate E. Tode Assistant Curator, Institute of Economic Botany

Ancient Methods for Modern Sustainability

In many parts of the world, crops have been grown together in mixtures for thousands of years. Over time, this practice has stopped in most places due to an emphasis on harvest uniformity and maximizing crop yield through mechanical production. However, given immediate threats to food security from the climate crisis and growing nutritional deficiencies among varying populations around the world, there is an opportunity to reexamine these mixtures to better understand their benefits and explore opportunities for revitalizing them worldwide.

In January 2023, The New York Botanical Garden received significant funding from the Rockefeller Foundation's Periodic Table of Food Initiative to work with farmers in Ethiopia to better understand their mixtures of wheat/barley, fava beans/peas, sorghum varieties, and tef varieties. This research is coupled with agricultural field experiments to study how these mixtures, called maslins, enhance crop performance, and nutritional analyses to understand the complementarity of mixture components for health benefits.

The project, led by NYBG's Alex C. McAlvey, Ph.D., Kate E. Tode Assistant Curator, Institute of Economic Botany, is in collaboration with scientists from around the world: Addis Ababa University, Wollo University, The Ethiopian Public Health Institute, Cornell University, Clark University, and CUNY. Together scientists are rediscovering and expanding agricultural practices that can affect the future of food production and sustainability worldwide.



Discovering Hidden Diversity

At the same time, João Araújo, Assistant Curator, Institute of Systematic Botany, also conducted field work to study the hidden diversity behind the white colony-forming mycoparasites on *Hemileia vastatrix* (coffee leaf rust). His research has already generated new discoveries, including three new genera and several new species of these mycoparasites.

Coffee leaf rust is a major pest on coffee crops globally. Studying the diversity of this parasite will allow farmers and major coffee producers around the world to better understand the challenges they face, and how to combat them. This project was conducted mainly in Brazil but also in Ethiopia and Cameroon.



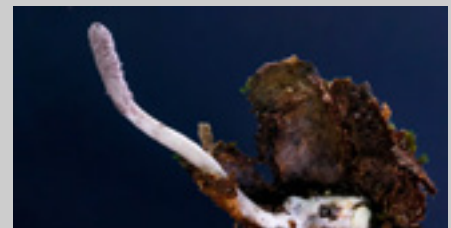
Hemileia vastatrix, causing coffee rust

image: Howard F. Schwartz



NYBG
in the News

The
Guardian

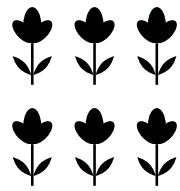


Parasitic fungus that infects and kills spiders discovered in Brazil

March 17, 2023

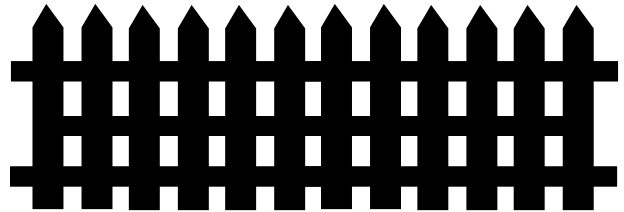
Bronx Green-Up: Expanding Access and Outreach

In the Bronx, NYBG's Bronx Green-Up Program is opening up doorways for our community to learn more about food resilience and utilizing the land as a key resource, not only for food production but as a tool for community engagement and learning more about the importance of biodiversity and urban conservationism. This program allows our staff to build bridges that allow our community to not only engage in active food resiliency and production, but explore the key role we as citizens play in fighting climate change.



Bronx Community Garden Partners

100+



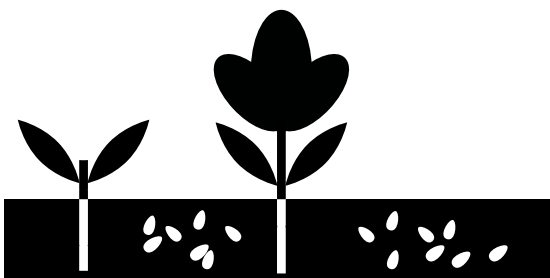
Bronx Green-Up and NYC Compost Project served more than 5,226 people in community garden and compost activities (including plant deliveries, workshops, workdays, classes, Bronx Food and Farm Tours, and other events) throughout the Bronx at more than 100 community gardens, school gardens, urban farms and other community sites.

As part of NYC Compost Project, Bronx Green-Up's Compost Project staff administered the Master Composter Certificate program, providing 24 workshops virtually and in-person as well as providing weekly service opportunities for Master Composter volunteers throughout the year.



Seedlings Distributed

25,000



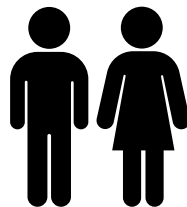


Bronx Green-Up continued to work closely with the Humanities Institute on the *Bronx Foodways Oral Histories Project*, advancing the Garden's humanities research by building on the long-standing relationships in the Bronx Green-Up network. Bronx Green-Up worked closely with the Mellon Summer Fellow and Intern to help coordinate the initiative, conduct the interviews, and record and document the food stories in the NYBG *Oral Histories Archive*.



Bronx Green-Up worked closely with community partners to start building Karol's Urban Community Farm on a 1.3-acre site in the Castle Hill/Soundview neighborhood of the Bronx. Among the first of its kind in New York City, the farm proved successful in engaging the local community and facilitating hands-on educational programs to foster urban conservationism.

Bronx Green-Up continued to coordinate and support the Bronx Community Farm Hubs by providing plants (seedlings grown at Edible Academy) to local Bronx community gardens.



Number of People Served by BGU

5,226



Plants Distributed to Partner Gardens

2,154

Volunteers

366



NYBG
in the News

The New York Times



Vital Places of Refuge in the Bronx, Community Gardens Gain Recognition

July 25, 2023

The Next Generation in Plant Education

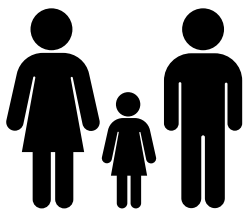


Explainer Program

In Fiscal Year 2023 (FY23), Children's Education at NYBG provided programming to over 340,000 students, kids, teens, and teachers; the highest ever recorded at the Garden. Central to this work are the Garden's Teen Explainers, a program that provides science enrichment and educational training for 150 teens each year.

Throughout the year, Teen Explainers teach at the Everett Children's Adventure Garden (ECAG), a 12-acre children's garden that provides hands-on programs that encourage children to actively investigate plants and science. Their training, like all programming offered within ECAG, is aligned with the NYC Department of Education's science curriculum, playing a major role in the science learning of 12,000 students each year.

The Garden's Teen Explainers provide active engagement with guests of ECAG throughout the year—over 185,000 kids, teens, and parents, accounting for over 50% of the Children's Education visitation.



Visitors Welcomed
to the Everett Children's
Adventure Garden

185,000

Explainers at Work

150



This class was a good reminder of how to center and build curriculum that honors and empowers student identities and cultures.

Teacher Participant



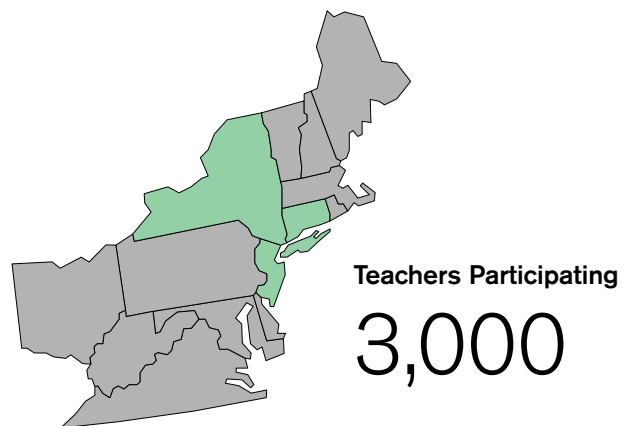
An Outdoor Classroom for Educators

The living and historical collections of The New York Botanical Garden provide a rich backdrop for leading engaging learning opportunities. From ecology concepts in the Bronx River, to the cultural importance of plants of the African diaspora in the African American Garden, the Teacher Professional Learning (PL) program at NYBG provides immersive, place-based experiences that bring these unique resources to light for teachers, informal educators, and NYBG education staff. Courses serve a range of needs in all subject areas and grade levels by bringing science, history, and art concepts to life in NYBG's living collections—an outdoor classroom for all.

With nearly 3,000 teachers attending in FY23, learning opportunities supported teachers in New York, New Jersey, Westchester, and beyond through seasonal intensive Institutes, and drew in a national audience through online courses.

Educational partnerships supported local school communities such as P.S. 8 and P.S. 159 in the Bronx, and reached a NYC-wide audience through the ongoing Urban Advantage Program as well as a partnership with the Special Education division of the NYC Department of Education.

Using the natural world as inspiration, PL sessions create communities of learners and support teachers in considering how to share this learning with their students by returning to NYBG on field trips. In FY23, only 27% of PL participants had visited NYBG before with a class. After their learning experience concluded, 100% agreed that the program increased their willingness to have their students participate in NYBG programming. If PL can provide educators with the tools, resources, and confidence to utilize NYBG as an outdoor classroom, then the next generation of learners will be much better prepared to address the challenges that face the natural world.



The Next Generation in Plant Education

School of Professional Horticulture



The School of Professional Horticulture was established in 1919 as a horticulture vocational training program for returning war veterans. In 1932, distinguished horticulturist Thomas H. Everett expanded the School into a professional gardener training program, modeling the School after Royal Botanic Gardens Kew and Edinburgh, regarding the program as an advanced training program to “broaden their knowledge and fit them for positions of greater responsibility.”

Today, the School of Professional Horticulture is the oldest (91 years) and only accredited hands-on horticulture school of its kind in the country, offering a two-year, full-time, year-round diploma program that combines rigorous academic and practical training from the Garden’s renowned experts on this beautiful 250-acre campus. As part of the SoPH program, students become familiar with the cultural needs of more than 1,000 plants and their common pests and diseases. Students learn about native plants, ecological restoration, conservation, urban agriculture, composting, and sustainable practices in their coursework, during their horticulture rotations, on plant walks and field trips, and by attending special lectures and symposia.



The School of Professional Horticulture continues to pursue excellence and innovation in academic and hands-on training. The focus will remain true to its mission: to develop the vital skills and knowledge needed to protect and care for landscapes and plants by educating and training motivated individuals to become horticulturists of the highest caliber, equipped to succeed in green industry leadership positions in both the public and private sectors.

Through my scholarship, I have been given the opportunity to attend the School of Professional Horticulture, providing me with the necessary education and training to turn my passion into a successful career.

Matthew Orrego

Charles M. Yurgalevitch Scholar, 2023–25



Training New Botanists

At NYBG, the presence of graduate students in our laboratories and student scholars in programs such as the School of Professional Horticulture (SoPH) build upon the Garden's dynamic ecosystem of learning and education. Graduate fellows are integral to our plant science laboratories and research initiatives, strengthening our scientists' ability to produce and develop their critical work in plant and environmental science. In turn, the Garden provides unique access to our living and historical collections, and the outstanding expertise of renowned botanists and horticulturists.

Increasingly, students are dependent on the support of scholarships and fellowships in order to advance their training. Through dedicated supporters, scholarships and fellowships have provided this funding to students, providing them with the opportunity to pursue their passion for plant science, and to become future botanists and horticulturists.

In 2022, the Charles M. Yurgalevitch Scholarship was established within the School of Professional Horticulture to provide support for underrepresented students pursuing careers in horticulture. The scholarship was named in honor of the School's former longtime and visionary Director, and generously funded by longtime Patrons of the Garden.

Scholarship support has allowed me to become a full-time student, focusing on the coursework without the burden of financial worries.

Ming Hua

Charles M. Yurgalevitch Scholar, 2023–25

It is a privilege to be able to support graduate fellowships at NYBG. The work our scientists do here is critical, and impacting plant science and research on a global scale. It is important to safeguard the next generation of botanists so that this work continues.

Barbara Robinson
NYBG Trustee



Exhibitions and Events

The Bond of Live Things Everywhere

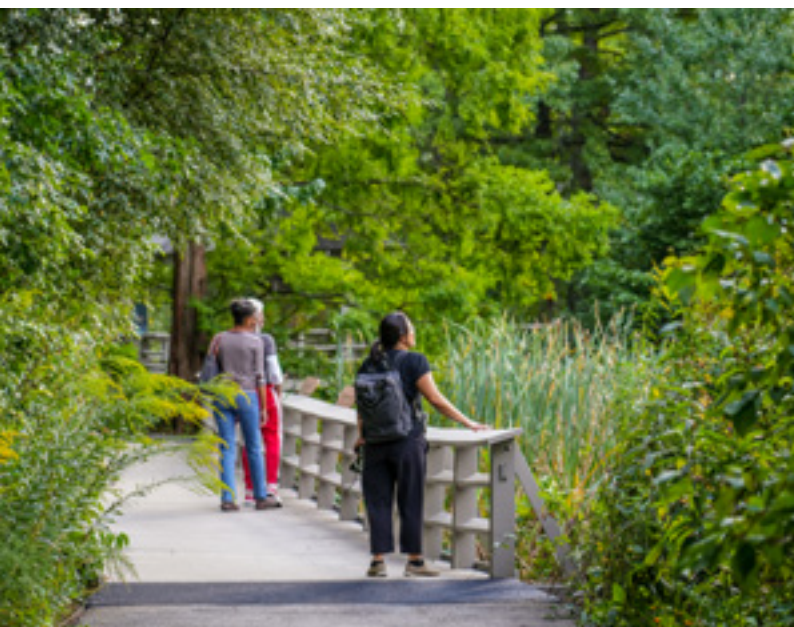
Mitsubishi Wild Wetland Trail

September 17–November 6, 2022

The Bond of Live Things Everywhere was the first exhibition-program collaboration developed by the newly formed Exhibitions & Programming department. This presentation was a partnership with Poetry Society of America, curated by Joshua Bennett, and showcased a sound and poetry installation examining the Black experience in nature.

For opening day, Bennett moderated a two-part symposium that reflected on the role of Black ecological thought from the panelists' own work and life, and drawing from the poems featured in the exhibition. Panelists included Abra Lee, Aracelis Girmay, Leah Penniman, Sonya Posmentier, and Terrance Hayes.

During closing weekend, on November 6, 2022, Bennett was joined in conversation by Arvolyn Hill, Manager of the Everett Children's Adventure Garden, and featured poetry readings by the selected winners of the Youth Poetry Contest, and music by Uptown Vinyl Supreme. Over 100 guests attended the weekend celebration.

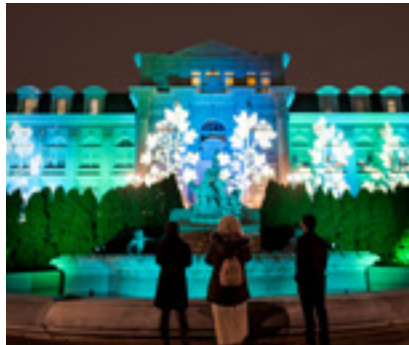


Watch the Bond of Live Things Everywhere Symposium

Joshua Bennett and Camille Dungy discuss their work from the Black ecological perspective, using their writings, experience, and our history as a framework.

Holiday Train Show® and NYBG GLOW November 19, 2022–January 16, 2023

In its 31st year, the *Holiday Train Show* featured an exhibition of G-scale model trains and more than 190 models of historic landmark structures of New York City and the Hudson River Valley, all fabricated from plant materials by artists at Applied Imagination. Returning for the third consecutive year, *NYBG GLOW* offered an expanded footprint, more lights than ever before, and a newly programmed experience with synchronized light and sound.



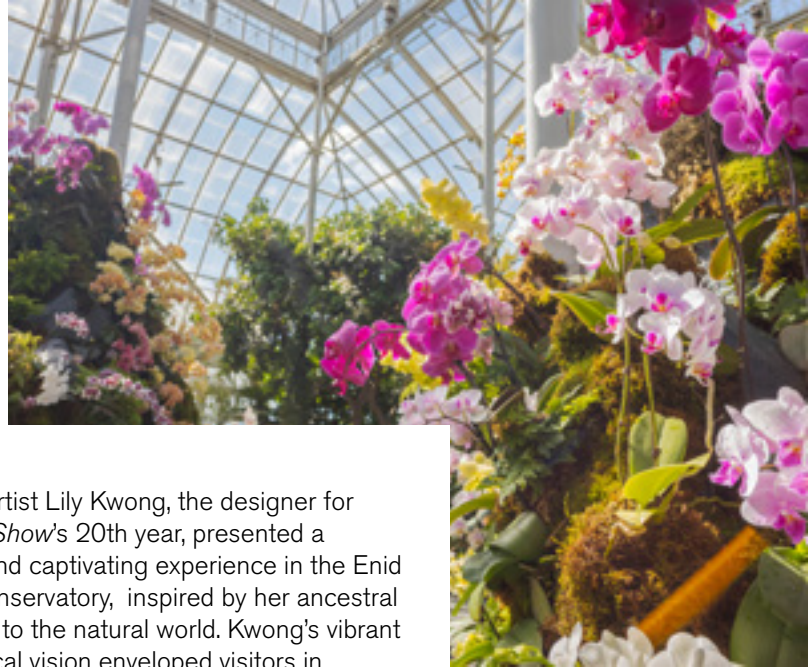
Holiday Train Show Family Benefit

On November 30, 2022, NYBG was excited to present the return of a family-favorite, the *Holiday Train Show* Family Benefit. The event was the perfect kick-off to the holiday season, and brought Garden families together to experience kid and family-focused activities and entertainment surrounded by the magic of the *Holiday Train Show* and *NYBG GLOW*. This event raised vital funds in support of the Children's Education Program at NYBG.



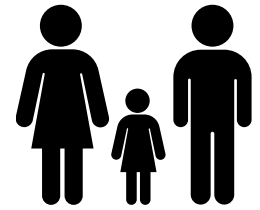
Exhibitions and Events

**The Orchid Show:
Natural Heritage by Lily Kwong**
February 17–April 23, 2023



Acclaimed artist Lily Kwong, the designer for *The Orchid Show's* 20th year, presented a meditative and captivating experience in the Enid A. Haupt Conservatory, inspired by her ancestral connections to the natural world. Kwong's vibrant and fantastical vision enveloped visitors in thousands of orchids, allowing them to reconnect to nature amidst picture-perfect beauty. A former student in NYBG's Adult Education program, Kwong works at the intersection between landscape, wellness, and art, connecting people to nature through transformative projects and site-specific botanical art installations. She was the first woman and the first Asian-American to guest design an Orchid Show at NYBG.

Orchid Nights at the Garden presented the opportunity to work with up-and-coming musician ADAI and the New York Chinese Cultural Center (NYCCC). ADAI created vibrant one-hour performances each night that blended traditional and contemporary Chinese dance with her own signature electronic dance style music. All Saturday events sold out and additional Orchid Nights were scheduled due to popular demand.



Visitors to the Exhibition

264,000

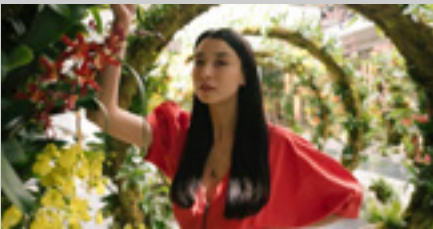
**New Members Joined
During the Exhibition**

5,400



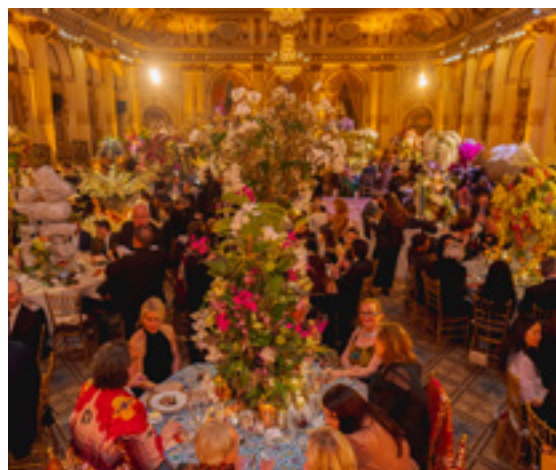
NYBG
in the News

Forbes



**Meet Lily Kwong,
The Visionary Behind The
Orchid Show At NYBG**

February 14, 2023



The Orchid Dinner at the Plaza

On February 23, 2023, NYBG hosted the annual The Orchid Dinner at The Plaza. Known for its unique and imaginative orchid-centric tablescapes, this year's event attracted over 400 attendees in support of the Garden's global plant research and conservation initiatives, programs in horticulture, and education for all ages.



...things come to thrive...in the shedding...in the molting...

by Ebony G. Patterson

May 27–October 22, 2023

Known for her lavishly detailed mixed media installations, celebrated contemporary artist Ebony G. Patterson brought her signature style to the Enid A. Haupt Conservatory, and NYBG's landscape and galleries, in a major site-specific exhibition featuring breathtaking and provocative displays of art and nature. Patterson's larger body of work explores entanglements of race, gender, and colonialism. Patterson is the first artist-in-residence to be hosted at NYBG.

...things come to thrive...in the shedding...in the molting... was the artist's largest installation to date, and extended from the Conservatory Lawn through all the seasonal exhibition galleries of the Conservatory. The artwork comprised more than 400 glittering vultures, hundreds of flame-worked glass representations of extinct plants inspired by specimens in the William and Lynda Steere Herbarium, and many other components. Throughout the LuEsther T. Mertz Library Building galleries on the 2nd and 6th floors, Patterson's latest works on paper and mixed media were presented along with an immersive video installation examining uncultivated, wild nature. The exhibition invited visitors to contend with the colonial legacies of harm that underpin gardens and curated landscapes.



The Conservatory Ball

On June 1, 2023, NYBG's signature event brought over 450 guests to the Garden to celebrate the opening of *...things come to thrive...in the shedding...in the molting...* by Ebony G. Patterson. The evening was a smashing success and honored Patterson's seminal work at the Garden. Proceeds from The Conservatory Ball are integral to advancing NYBG's mission to protect biodiversity around the world and cultivate important partnerships with communities here in the Bronx and beyond.



NYBG
in the News

The New York Times



Ebony G. Patterson Brings a Crowd to the New York Botanical Garden

June 15, 2023

Collections

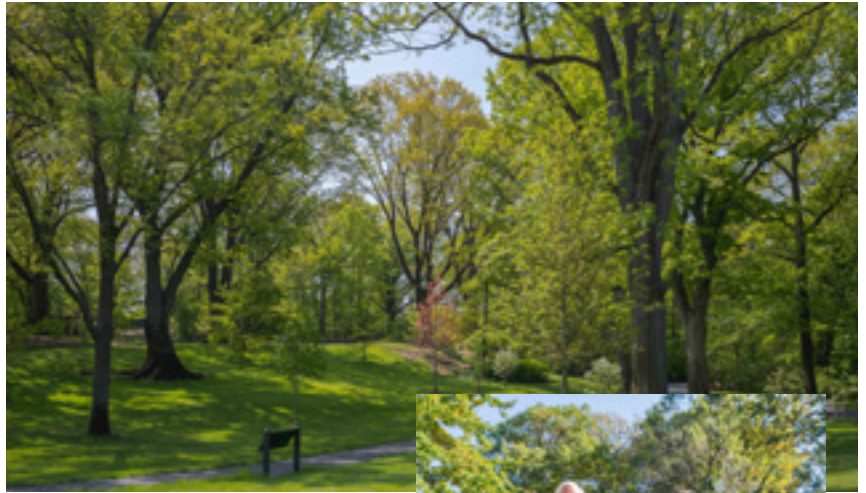
The Burke Oak Collection at NYBG

The historic Oak Collection was revitalized thanks to the generosity of Susan Burke and her late husband Coleman Burke, who loved oaks. Reestablished as The Coleman and Susan Burke Oak Collection, the landscape features more than 150 oaks representing 44 taxa planted across 5 undulating acres along the eastern edge of the Garden's 250-acre National Historic Landmark landscape.

NYBG curators sourced more than two dozen new oaks for planting in the collection prior to its dedication in October 2022. These new oaks include a mix of fastigiate cultivars well-adapted for planting in an urban environment, taxa intended to test cold hardiness including *Quercus* × *comptoniae* and *Quercus hemispherica* 'Avalyn', and a mix of oak species from North America, Europe, and Asia. These new plants complement the historic oaks in the collection and other recent additions such as *Quercus baronii*, *Quercus pagoda*, and *Quercus variabilis*. Going forward, curators will continue to source both cultivars and botanical taxa to add to the collection to test hardiness and demonstrate the remarkable diversity, and beauty, of oaks.

The Burke Oak Collection was one of the first living plant collections established at NYBG and is home to some of the Garden's oldest accessioned trees, including swamp white oaks (*Quercus bicolor*) grown from seed collected in Staten Island in 1896 by NYBG's founding director Nathaniel Britton. While the Burke Oaks introduce visitors to *Quercus* from across the North Temperate Zone, native oaks are a defining feature of the rest of NYBG's historic landscape.

Britton decreed that the native trees on the Garden's site should be preserved during the initial construction of NYBG's roads and buildings in the late 1800s. Modern visitors are the beneficiaries of his wisdom. Seven oak species (*Q. alba*, *Q. bicolor*, *Q. coccinea*, *Q. montana*, *Q. palustris*, *Q. rubra*, and *Q. velutina*) are native to the Garden and today thousands of oaks, including hundreds that sprouted before NYBG was founded in 1891 and some approaching 300 years old, grow in the 50-acre Thain Family Forest and across the landscape.



I owe my commitment and devotion to The New York Botanical Garden to the mentorship and guidance of Kay Douglas, Nedda Lockwood, and (Mary) Tod Rockefeller, the three women who introduced me to this magnificent institution. My extensive interest in gardening and horticulture dates back to age three—inspired by my grandmothers, both gardeners. I was happy to take on the challenges then and continue to take on challenges now.

Susan Burke
NYBG Trustee

Collections at Work

As plant research and education at the Garden proliferates in myriad ways, NYBG staff scientists have the unique opportunity to study diverse, living plant specimens literally at their fingertips. Our scientists work closely with horticulture staff and volunteers to document, collect, freeze, and process tissue from the living collections to investigate the plant diversity present on our grounds.

One major endeavor taking place at NYBG is the “Living Fossils” project, funded by the National Science Foundation, and led by NYBG’s Barbara Ambrose, Ph.D., Director of Laboratory Research and Curator in Genomics. As part of the New York Plant Genomics Consortium, NYBG is sequencing the genomes of 5 gymnosperm species—*Metasequoia glyptostroboides*, *Juniperus communis*, and *Gnetum gnemon*—which can be found among NYBG’s living collections.



The Library in Action

The LuEsther T. Mertz Library has long served as a central landmark for The New York Botanical Garden. Over the years, the Library collections have not only grown in size but also in scope, expanding both onsite and online offerings through extensive collecting, archiving, and information sharing efforts. In 2023, the Garden


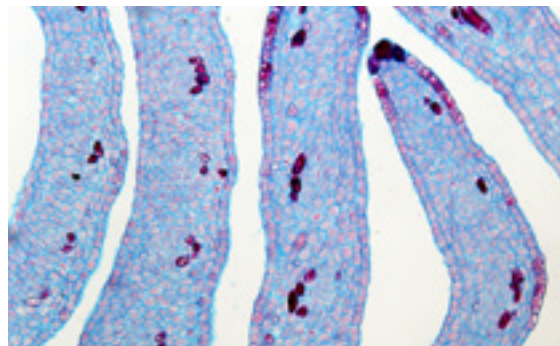
welcomed Rhonda Evans, Director of the LuEsther T. Mertz Library. Under Rhonda’s leadership and with the entire Library staff, the department strengthened efforts in interdepartment collaboration and accessibility, to better utilize the immense resources carefully collected and curated at the Library for over a century.

The Plant Information Office adjusted to shifting trends in plant interest and a resumption of less home-based activities in most areas of the world. Resource Sharing Librarian Rose Octelene facilitated the collaboration between the Plant Information team and the NYBG Shop to implement QR codes on select plant products in the shop, which allowed customers to view the Plant Information care guides before purchasing the plant. This partnership increased viewers to the Plant Information guides and encouraged sales.

The living collections are not only beautiful but also integral to scientific research and allow staff to collect plant species throughout their life cycle to sequence their genomes or to investigate seed and fruit development, critical to advancing plant research and taxonomy.

Barbara Ambrose, Ph.D

Director of Laboratory Research and Curator in Genomics at NYBG



New
Library Cards
Issued
325

Leading Voices at NYBG

Several key appointments in Science were made across the Garden. Each of these staff members brings in a wealth of expertise, all working together to shape the future of science and education at NYBG. Together they are poised to propel our institution forward as a leader in the fight against climate change, and an example for how plant education can be approached and expanded for audiences around the world.

This is the time for institutions like NYBG to start providing solutions to the world.

Mauricio Diazgranados

Chief Science Officer and Dean of the International Plant Science Center



Sharing Scientific Discoveries with the World

Mauricio Diazgranados joined The New York Botanical Garden in June 2023 after a seven-year tenure as a Nature-based Solutions Initiative and Research Leader at the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew in London, England. Previously, he served as Director for Science at the Bogotá Botanical Garden in Colombia (2014–2016) and as a postdoctoral researcher at the US National Museum of Natural History of the Smithsonian Institution (2012–2014).

Mauricio's career spans almost 30 years, publishing 91 papers and books (56 peer-reviewed journal publications, 18 book chapters, 8 authored books, 2 edited books, and 7 published scientific reports), and he has also provided 88 extinction risk assessments for plants. Mauricio aims for his studies of the plant world, in its entirety, to contribute to the quality of nutrition, economies, and awareness of biodiversity for local communities that live alongside it. He brings this vision to NYBG.



Library

Rhonda Evans joined The New York Botanical Garden in June 2023 as the new Director of the LuEsther T. Mertz Library. Rhonda is an experienced librarian, having worked in the profession for over a decade. She joined The New York Botanical Garden from the New York Public Library (NYPL) after eight years of service, spending the last four years as the Assistant Chief Librarian at the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, a world-leading cultural institution devoted to the research, preservation, and exhibition of materials focused on African American, African Diaspora, and African experiences. Rhonda has a prolific academic career, studying several disciplines; a Media, Culture and Communications degree from New York University; an MFA from Columbia University; a law degree from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill; and finally a Masters in Library and Information Science from Pratt Institute, where she later taught in the same program.

Rhonda's experience as a librarian is integral to the academic foundations NYBG is built on. From her work at the Schomburg Center, to co-leading a podcast—*The Librarian Is In*—about amazing literature and the work of NYPL librarians, Rhonda's previous work reveals that she has a clear understanding and appreciation for the Mertz Library's holdings and what the Library's place is in enabling the Garden's triad mission of education, plant research and conservation, and horticulture.



NYBG
in the News

The New York Times



Mauricio Diazgranados Is a Botanist in a Hurry

July 31, 2023



Herbarium

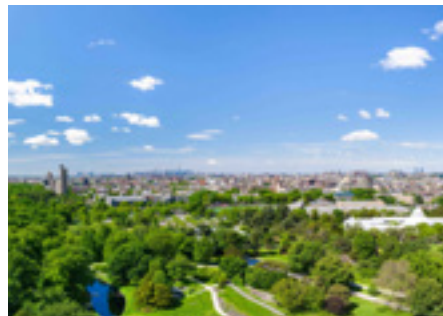
Emily B. Sessa joined The New York Botanical Garden as the new Patricia K. Holmgren Director of the William and Lynda Steere Herbarium in August 2022. Her personal research focus is plant ecology and evolution, and what it reveals about the relationships and natural history of ferns and lycophytes. She has spent the last 10 years in extensive research at the Universities of Florida, Arizona, and Wisconsin-Madison.

She is the Principal Investigator of the Sessa Lab, focusing on plant systematics to gain insight into the evolutionary and ecological processes that shape plant biodiversity, with phylogenetics as a main focus. The lab integrates several research techniques, including computational and evolutionary genomics, phylogenetic systematics, physiological ecology, and traditional specimen-based botany.

Herbaria and other biological collections hold the keys to understanding the past and future of biodiversity on Earth.

Emily B. Sessa

Patricia K. Holmgren Director of the William and Lynda Steere Herbarium



Urban Conservation

Eric W. Sanderson is a lifelong conservationist who believes that cities are how we change the world for the better. Trained as an ecosystem and landscape ecologist, Eric is known locally for his work uncovering the historical ecology of New York City through the Mannahatta Project and his best-selling book, *Mannahatta: A Natural History of New York City*. He joined the garden in March 2023 as the Inaugural Vice President of Urban Conservation Strategy.

In his new role, Eric is building a program in historical ecology, ecological democracy, active restoration, and environmental governance by working with talented scientists, horticulturists, exhibition planners, and educators at the Garden and partners across New York. He speaks all the time about why cities need nature, and why nature needs cities. New York City's landscape is his home and his passion. He hopes that the example New York sets will serve as an example for cities around the world, especially as the city grapples with climate change. He is currently working on an atlas and gazetteer to the indigenous landscape of the five boroughs of New York City and rebooting Visionmaker 2.0, a platform for allowing everyone to imagine, test, and share their ideas for the future ecology of the city, as part of NYBG's new strategic plan.



NYBG
in the News

GARDENISTA



A Museum of Plants: Centuries of Dried Flora and Fungi at the NYBG's Herbarium

December 21, 2022



**SCIENTIFIC
AMERICAN**



How Zombifying Fungi
Became Master Manipulators

April 7, 2023

NYBG in the News



Tracing roots of Lenape people
at New York Botanical Garden

December 21, 2022



BRONXTimes



Botanical Garden explores the
enduring botanical legacy of
the African diaspora

February 4, 2023

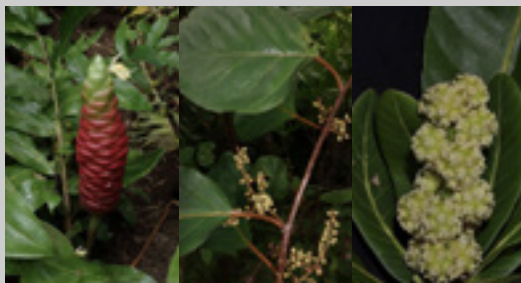


DAILY NEWS



Mother Earth's future is
rooted in her plants

February 22, 2023



Sage Journals



Weather Magic as
Environmental Knowledge
in Southern Vanuatu

March 29, 2023



CNN



Inside the New York Botanical
Garden's Urban Oasis

July 21, 2023

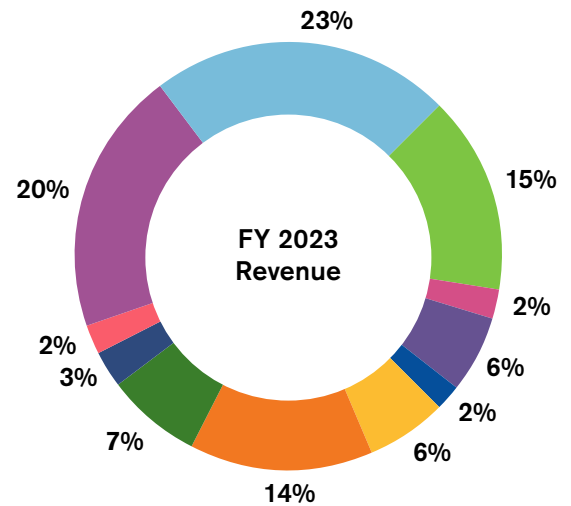


FY 2023 Financial Highlights

Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which ended on June 30, 2023, marked a year of growth and investment as we launched our strategic planning and campus master planning processes.

Revenue & Expenses

- FY23 revenue totaled \$92.8 million, with earned income (ticket sales, membership, parking and food service) representing our largest revenue source at 27%. Of note, *The Orchid Show* was the biggest ever, with 263,722 visitors and \$6.8 million in gross revenue.
- Government support from the City and State of New York remained strong, representing 15% of revenue. Additionally, we received nearly \$2 million in Employee Retention Credits in recognition of our ability to maintain our full-time staffing throughout the impacts of COVID-19.
- We drew on accumulated reserves to make key investments in the Garden's future, including deferred maintenance, endowment growth, operating support, capital projects, and strategic plan investments. In FY23, 6% of revenue reflected spending from reserves in these key areas. Reserve spending in the operating budget will cease in FY25, with some capital investments continuing into FY26.
- FY23 expenses totaled \$92.8 million, a modest 1.7% increase over the prior year, particularly given this was a period of increasing inflation.



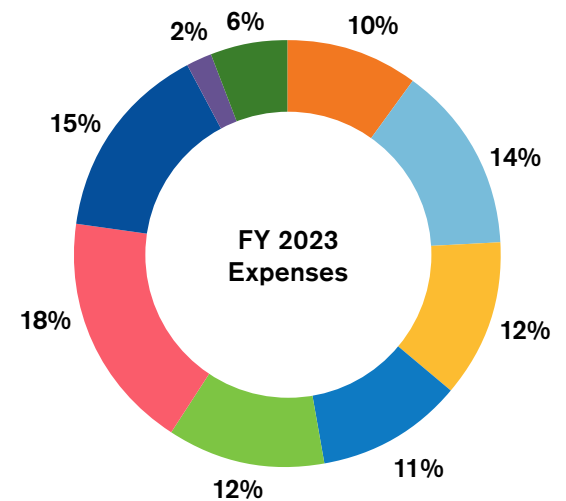
23%	Private Fundraising
20%	Endowment Income
15%	NY State and City
14%	Admissions & Parking
07%	Membership
06%	Retail & Food
06%	Reserves
03%	Tuition & Fees
02%	Federal Grants
02%	Federal Employee Retention Credits
02%	Misc. & Other
100%	

Standard & Poor's

On July 20, 2023, S&P affirmed the Garden's A+ underlying issuer rating and stable outlook, as well as our A+/Stable unenhanced rating on our outstanding \$39 million 2009A variable rate demand bonds. S&P noted our stable membership and attendance, strong fundraising, and adequate resources to cover operating expenses and debt payments.

Assets & Liabilities

Assets totaled \$655 million and liabilities were \$55 million, equating to \$600 million of net assets (similar to FY22). Net assets include the total book value of land, buildings, and equipment constructed or purchased by the Garden net of accumulated depreciation and debt, as well as endowment funds and other long-term investments.



18%	Maintenance, Security, Operations & Energy
15%	Administration
14%	Horticulture
12%	Earned Income Activities
12%	Exhibitions
11%	Education
10%	Science
06%	Fundraising
02%	Special Events
100%	

*Unaudited FY23 financial data as of 10/23/23.

How to Make an Impact

The New York Botanical Garden relies on the generosity of our visitors, members, and donors to safeguard our historic 250-acre landmark institution. With your support, we are able to sustain our renowned garden collections, strengthen education programs and offerings, and propel plant research forward. Consider the many ways to give, below.



We have been enjoying our visits to NYBG for many years. We joined the Perennial Society in 2022 and are happy to continue our support of NYBG so that it can continue to thrive and provide enjoyment to future generations.

Joseph Arena and Thomas D'Eletto

Patrons and Perennial Society Members

Give to the Annual Fund

The Annual Fund provides essential support for all of NYBG's programs in horticulture, education, and plant research and conservation. Unrestricted support to this fund allows our staff to maintain and develop initiatives with confidence, and respond to the diverse needs of the communities we serve.

Grow a Living Legacy

By including a bequest to NYBG in your estate plans, you can help support the Garden's endowment and safeguard our historic landscape for generations to come. Supporters with a bequest commitment to NYBG are recognized as members of the Perennial Society, and enjoy special privileges and invitations.

Become a Garden Patron

Garden Patrons enjoy the best of NYBG year-round, including concierge service, exclusive exhibition preview parties, behind-the-scenes access, private golf cart tours, and more. Join the Garden Patrons program with a tax-deductible annual contribution of \$1,500 or more, which supports the full breadth of NYBG's mission-driven programs.

Join the Young Garden Circle

Plant and art enthusiasts between the ages of 21 and 40 are invited to join the Young Garden Circle with an annual gift of \$500 or more. Young Garden Circle members enjoy free admission year-round; special opportunities to gather as a group, like behind-the-scenes *Sip & Stroll* tours; and invitations to many Garden Patron events.

Attend a Special Event

NYBG hosts a multitude of special events each season. From the *Holiday Train Show*® Family Party featuring festive kid-friendly activities; to the floral-forward The Orchid Dinner in Manhattan; to the carefully curated Collectors' Plant Sale and Silent Auction; to the annual Conservatory Ball celebrating our summer exhibition—there is something for everyone to enjoy. Proceeds support the Garden and its premier programs in horticulture, science, and education.



Make Your Impact

Click to Support the Annual Fund Now

For more information on ways to give, contact Isaac W. K. Thweatt at ithweatt@nybg.org or 718.817.8775

Learn more at nybg.org

A Legacy of Giving at the Garden

For more than 40 years, **The Starr Foundation** has been a trusted partner of The New York Botanical Garden. Our partnership has enabled NYBG to build and strengthen its International Plant Science Center, and advance and expand its efforts in research and environmental and biodiversity conservation, as well as train the next generation of plant scientists. Major endowment and operating support for the C.V. Starr Virtual Herbarium allowed the Garden to significantly increase digitization and access to plant research collections and associated data. In addition, the Foundation's generosity to the Maurice R. Greenberg Scholarship Fund supports doctoral-level study in the Commodore Matthew Perry Graduate Studies Program. Taken together, our collaborative efforts have empowered NYBG to escalate its global science reach and impact to scientists, conservationists, and decision-makers across the globe.

The Foundation's second president and former NYBG trustee, Florence Davis (d. 2023), was a strong and devoted advocate for the Garden who equally delighted in extraordinary gardens and our botanical and plant science programs. Her commitment and collaborative partnership resulted in significant growth of NYBG over time, and her "roll-up-your-sleeves" approach to partnership—whether it was digging up the weeds and cultivating her flowers and vegetables or diving into the intricacies of plant conservation—is one that all NYBG staff greatly appreciated and admired.

The New York Botanical Garden is grateful for the longstanding support of The Starr Foundation. We know the future will bring more opportunities to create meaningful change in the synergistic areas of importance for both NYBG and the Foundation, especially in environment and education, and we look forward to continued collaboration for years to come.



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