



Hand-out, logo and New York Botanical Garden LuEsther T. Mertz Library's Reference Librarian, Samantha D'Acunto. Photograph by the author.

Plant Information Services in Context: The New York Botanical Garden Plant Information Survey by Esther Jackson Public Services Librarian New York Botanical Garden, Bronx, NY

In early 2016, the Plant Information Office at the LuEsther T. Mertz Library of the New York Botanical Garden (NYBG) sent out a survey intended to gauge the state of plant information services nationally. NYBG staff was primarily curious to learn how plant information offices were staffed and how services provided were utilized by the public. The hope was that these data would make NYBG staff aware of how the NYBG service compared to similar services, and that data would also inform directions in which the NYBG plant information service could grow and evolve in the future.

The NYBG plant information service staff did not take this survey. At the time that the survey was created, the office was staffed by two part-time employees dedicated to answering plant information questions as well as five volunteers. In the last year the NYBG plant information service received 4,925 questions, averaging 4,103 questions annually since 2001. The primary outreach vehicle of the service is online content in the form of LibGuides and LibAnswers.

The geographic reach of this survey quickly grew, and individuals at institutions around the world participated in this survey. There were 30 respondents in total. Fifteen US states were represented (AL, CA, CO, CT, HI, IL, KS, MN,

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Amy Kasameyer, lower left, coordinating the Jepson Workshop on the Flora of Rock Creek in the John Muir Wilderness of the Eastern Sierra. Photograph by Staci Markos.

From the President

Amy Kasameyer

University and Jepson Herbaria

University of California, Berkeley

Greetings, CBHL colleagues!

As I write this, the Board is preparing for our midyear meeting on October 21st at the Andersen Horticultural Library of the Minnesota Landscape Arboretum, site of the 2017 CBHL Annual Meeting. At the Board meeting we'll look at our finances to assess spending for the next year, hear reports from the various CBHL committees, get an update on the strategic planning process, and discuss the results of the 2016 Annual Meeting survey. Last but not least, we'll hear from Kathy Allen regarding her plans for the 2017 Annual Meeting and tour some of the meeting facilities. I'm looking forward to visiting Kathy's library and seeing the famous George Nakashima furniture. I hope that many of you will be able to join us in Minnesota in 2017!

At the 2016 Annual Meeting we passed a bylaws change which allows us to amend our bylaws by a vote at any time,

provided that the proposed amendments have been submitted to the membership in a written format distributed by any standard mode of communication for review, comment, and discussion not less than sixty days prior to the date of the vote. Previously, we could only amend our bylaws by a vote at the annual meeting. This change will allow us to adapt more quickly as an organization as well as let members who cannot attend the annual meeting vote directly instead of via a proxy. As part of this change, the Electronic Communications Committee is investigating our options for online voting with special consideration given to how to provide an effective method for members to discuss the issues ahead of a vote. We'll hear an update on their progress at our fall Board meeting.

I'd like to thank Larissa Glasser for editing the newsletter for the past 6 years - thanks for all the hard work! And also a big thank you goes to Susan Eubank, who stepped up to replace Larissa beginning with this issue. Thanks also go to Elizabeth Fite for taking over as Membership Chair from Nadine Phillips. Nadine served as chair for the last 3 years, thanks Nadine! If you are interested in becoming more involved in CBHL please let myself or any of the other Board members (Kathy Crosby, Donna Herendeen, David Sleasman, Bill Musser, and Esther Jackson) know. We're always happy to hear from you.

Wishing all of you and your families happy holidays!

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MO, NY, OH, PA, TX, VA, and WA) and six countries (Australia, Canada, Czech Republic, Spain, Switzerland, United States of America.)

Because the survey itself was so broad, it is hard to say that specific trends emerged as a result. However, a fair amount of information can be gathered from the results. The survey itself can be found here: <https://goo.gl/forms/hoXlwJsvfUvAlfDx1>. A spreadsheet of responses (less identifying information) can be found here: <https://goo.gl/yibflS>.

The survey solicited responses from a variety of professionals, with emails sent out to The Council on Botanical and Horticultural Libraries listserv, the European Botanical and Horticultural Libraries listserv, and each state cooperative extension office. Participants were asked to share their title through a free-text field. The majority of survey-takers were Librarians (7) or Managers (7). Master gardeners (3) were the next largest group, with other titles including Botanist, Extension Agent, and Lab Technician. The majority of responses came from botanical gardens, followed by libraries. Participants were invited to choose more than one option to define their service, and hence one survey-taker could indicate whether his or her organization falls into multiple categories. Several respondents self-reported their institutions as “Arboretum” (reported as “Other”).

Question: How would you classify your service/office? (multiple selections possible)

Academic Institution (such as a university)	8
Botanical Garden	17
Plant/Botany Information Office/Hotline	11
Extension Office/Service (state/federally funded)	8
Library	12
For-profit Institution	0
Not-for-profit Institution	8
Other	6

The majority of plant information services were staffed by full-time employees, although part-time staff and non-paid workers were reported for many organizations. Again, participants could indicate more than one category of worker.

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Question: Who answers the questions related to plant information that your institution or office receives? (multiple selections possible)

Full-time staff members	22
Part-time staff members	9
Volunteers - Master Gardeners	11
Volunteers - Other	9
Students/Interns	1
Other	5

The majority of respondents (22) reported that they track the number of enquiries they receive. Survey-takers were then asked the number of questions received annually. The majority of respondents reported the number of questions falling into the 1,000-4,999 range, with several outliers. There were 19 viable responses to this answer, detailed as follows:

- <99: 1
- 100-499: 1
- 500-999: 2
- 1,000-4,999: 10
- 5,000-9,999: 1
- 10,000-19,999: 1
- 20,000+: 3

In terms of the format of questions that plant information services receive, email accounted for the majority of questions, followed by phone or on-site (in-person) questions. It was interesting to note that three respondents listed “social media” as a way by which questions are received. (“Social Media” was reported as “Other.”)

Question: In what format do you receive questions? (multiple selections possible)

We do not track this	1
Email	28
Fax	1
Letter	11
On-site (In person)	26
Phone	27
Website form	13
Other	3

The largest source of questions was home gardeners, although most services received questions from a variety of user groups.





New York Botanical Garden LuEsther T. Mertz Library's Leslie Coleman, Plant Information Volunteer (l.), and Anita Finkle-Guerrero (r.), Plant Information Specialist, at their service desks. — Photograph by the author.

From whom do you receive plant information questions? (multiple selections possible)

We do not track this	3
Agriculturalists	9
Home Gardeners	27
Horticulturists	18
Researchers	15
Staff members	18
Students	18
Organizations: Not-for-profit	15
Organizations: For-profit	12
Other	9

Most services answer questions on a variety of topics. As expected, the most-utilized category was Horticulture (Outdoor) with 27 selections. Interestingly, this was followed by Plant Identification at 26 selections. The full breakdown of question types is below.

What types of questions related to plant information do you typically receive? (multiple selections possible)

We do not track this	1
Environmental / Ecological	17
Floral Design	3
Horticulture (Indoor)	22
Horticulture (Outdoor)	27
Integrated Pest Management	23
Landscape Design	16
Plant Identification	26
Sourcing (Recommendations for vendors or service providers.)	20
Other	10

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NYBG staff was curious to know if any plant information services are offered in Spanish or other languages. In part, this was because of the large influx of Spanish-speakers to NYBG over the past year. More generally, since Spanish-speakers are a growing segment of the population it is interesting to see how they are served (if at all) by existing public services, including plant information services. There are no plant information services available in Spanish at NYBG. Perhaps unsurprisingly, 26 respondents reported offering services in English as compared with 4 respondents reporting services in Spanish. Two respondents reported that they offered services in French, and one reported offering services in Czech.

Twenty-one respondents reported providing web resources related to plant information services. Twenty-three respondents reported doing some sort of outreach related to plant information services, including offering workshops, presentations, lectures, and classes for the public. Staff and volunteers answer visitor questions at horticulturally-focused institutional events, such as Orchid Shows, Seed Swaps, and Flower and Garden Shows.

The final question of the survey asked participants to share what they felt was the single most important plant information service that they provided. Responses to this question were as diverse as the responses to other questions. Still, plant identification was mentioned in this free-text field by nine survey-takers who responded to the question. The next most-popular area was Providing Gardening Help or Plant Care Advice, which was commented on by six respondents.

Question: If forced to choose, what would you say is the single most important service that you provide related to plant information? (Data from responses has been coded into categories.)

Arboriculture	1
Connecting People to Verified Information	4
Contributing to Institution's Reputation	2
Diagnosing Plant Problems and Diseases	2
Providing Gardening Help or Plant Care Advice	6
Insect Identification	3
Minimizing Uninformed Chemical Application by Home Gardeners	2
Plant Identification	9
Plant Sourcing (Including Native Plant Sourcing)	3
Providing Web Resources	3

Ultimately, although the survey was indeed useful in learning more about a variety of plant information services, it wasn't possible to truly identify trends amongst the variety of institutions. The services are as diverse as their staff and their audiences. In terms of meeting the NYBG staff goal of informing directions in which the NYBG plant information service could grow and evolve in the future, the survey wasn't especially successful. However, it was encouraging to see that the NYBG service is on par with many similar services. Another encouraging trend that the survey brought to light for NYBG staff was the importance of online resources as a form of outreach. Although staff sizes may shrink and organizations may lose their ability to do face-to-face outreach in some cases, online resources appear to be a way in which plant information and expertise can continue to be shared. As Rita Hassert of The Morton Arboretum says "We're a portal to a greater community of knowledge and information. When people contact us seeking plant information, we try to share with them the wide range of available resources. A resource might be: a person (expert on sedges), a website, a workshop, a journal article, a book, a class or a host of other discovery tools. So much to learn, discover and share."

*The deadline for the CBHL Newsletter
February issue is December 15, 2016.
Contact editor, Susan.Eubank@Arboretum.org, with articles and ideas.*

CBHL Members' West News

Compiled by Beth Brand
Librarian, Schilling Library
Desert Botanical Garden
Phoenix, Arizona

from Laura Blumhagen
Information Specialist
Elisabeth C. Miller Library
University of Washington Botanic Gardens
Seattle, Washington

Children and Nature: A Growing Booklist

One part of the Elisabeth C. Miller Library holds a special place in the hearts of local teachers and families: the sunny corner that houses our Children's Collection and Parent/Teacher Resource Collection.

Since the library's earliest beginnings, librarians have collected materials for children, parents, and teachers, but it wasn't until our 2005 move to a new building that we had a dedicated space set aside for these collections. Before 2005, we published a booklist to help readers find curriculum materials that were intermingled with the rest of the collection. Since 2005, it's been useful to have a document categorizing and annotating everything in this growing collection, especially when the Parent/Teacher Resource Collection doubled in size in 2007. Now over 120 pages long, that document covers online resources as well as books on the shelf. From the table of contents:

Books For Children

The Miller Library offers over 700 fiction and nonfiction titles for children and youth (birth to age 18). Whether it's *One Leaf Rides the Wind* (a collection of counting haiku), *Bug Zoo* (a guide for creating a backyard insect vivarium), or something entirely different, here you can borrow the best books to enrich kids' engagement in nature. Using this rich collection we host monthly story programs September through June, presented for families with children three to eight years old. Find the current schedule at www.millerlibrary.org. With a parent or guardian present, our youngest visitors may also register as borrowers. Topics include: Bees and beekeeping
Garden animals and wildlife

Flower gardens, school gardens
Ecology, restoration, forests
Seeds, plant parts, botany
Weather and climate
Birds, wild and domestic
Vegetable gardening, compost

Parent/Teacher Resource Collection

These are our best resources for community, family and school gardening, and nature education projects. Washington residents can borrow curriculum materials, design manuals, garden guides, and much more. We are actively developing this collection, which grew from a 2007 Northwest Horticultural Society grant. Topics include:
School garden funding, design, use, and maintenance
Vegetable gardening with kids
Environmental science; weather and climate
Plant selection for play areas
Ecology, restoration, forests

Seeds, plant parts, botany
Wildlife gardens
Family gardens
Outdoor preschool

Field Guides

Our children's corner looks out over the Union Bay Natural Area, where birders and other naturalists flock to observe wildlife, from dragonflies to bald eagles. Borrow one of these field guides before your next nature walk (urban or otherwise) to help you recognize the diversity of life all around us.

Websites

So much is on the web today, yet it can be tricky finding reliable links that are currently maintained, especially for non-profits and small organizations. Here are a few starting

places for your research into school gardens, outdoor education, and home gardening with children.

Admittedly, reading the Children and Nature booklist might not be quite as relaxing as sitting in the sun on our cushioned corner bench, leafing through books and meeting with specialist librarians in person. However, the booklist offers a virtual introduction to our resources for librarians, teachers, and researchers anywhere in the world. We hope it will be a useful bibliography and guide to our holdings for children, teachers, and families.

You'll always find the latest version of the Children and Nature booklist on our website at http://depts.washington.edu/hortlib/resources/booklists_data/children_and_nature.pdf
We welcome your feedback.

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from Brandy Kuhl, Head Librarian
San Francisco Botanical Garden
at Strybing Arboretum
Helen Crocker Russell Library of Horticulture
San Francisco, California



The Park: A Love Story, Golden Gate Park Landscapes and Flora

Our September-December art exhibit features photographs and photo art of Golden Gate Park landscapes and flora by Stephen Kane. Steve's love for Golden Gate Park is evident in his vast collection of images taken over eight years of walking and photographing the abundant variety of plants and landscapes in the Botanical Garden and Golden Gate Park. This will be Steve's second show at the Library; the first was his wonderful 2014 exhibit, *Trees Love Light*.

Stephen Kane will also share his experience on how to understand and use what a camera really "sees" with *Starting at the End: A Presentation and Garden Walk* on October 22. This is a free event and part of a new series of library art exhibit-related workshops and classes.

Have you renewed your CBHL membership?

Renew online at < <https://cbhl.wufoo.com/forms/cbhl-membership-form-2016/> > or use the form printed on the back cover of this newsletter. Current memberships can be seen at < <http://cbhl.libguides.com/2016> >
Questions? Contact Suzi Teghtmeyer, CBHL Membership Manager < suzirt@gmail.com >



Flower Piano performance by Mauro ffottissimo, co-founder of Sunset Piano. Learn more at www.sunsetpiano.com.

Flower Piano 2016

San Francisco Botanical Garden's second annual Flower Piano, in collaboration with Sunset Piano, was a huge success. For twelve days, from July 7-18, twelve pianos were placed throughout the Garden and everyone was invited to play and listen. Scheduled performances were held on weekends, including performances by classical and crossover pianist Van-Anh Nguyen and a full 80-piece concert orchestra performance by Awesome Orchestra. We hope to make this an annual event.

from Beth Brand
Librarian, Schilling Library
Desert Botanical Garden
Phoenix, Arizona

Attending the Western Museums Association Meeting

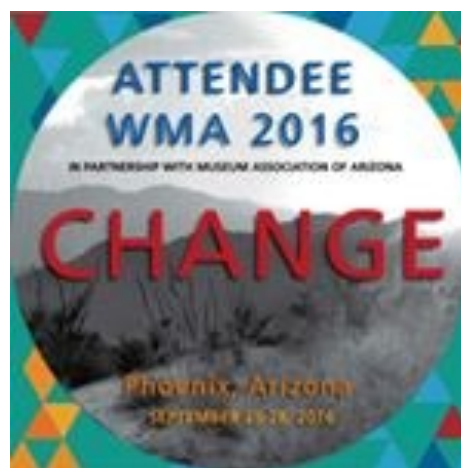
I was fortunate to attend the Western Museums Association (WMA) Annual Meeting, October 26-28, in Phoenix. The WMA is comprised of members across the western United States, as well as Alberta and British Columbia, Canada, and the Pacific Islands. The theme of the meeting was Change and there were at least 43 great sessions from which to choose. I found the experience valuable so I wanted to share a sample of what I learned.

One of my favorite sessions was "Managing Time-Based Media: Best Practices for Small Staffs (or, What Do I Do With That Old VHS Tape?). I have been asking that question about our library's stash of VHS tapes for quite a while so I was ready to get the answer. One of the speakers, Bob Nichol, owns Ping Pong Media in Tucson, Arizona. Following archival best practices, Bob digitizes video and audio tapes and also converts film and phonographic records to a variety of formats. I learned more from his talk than I can cover in this article but here are a few quick points he made regarding VHS and audio tapes: (1) Keep cool and dry. Humidity is the biggest problem so try to keep the RH no higher than 30%; (2) Store tapes on their edge like a book -- not flat; (3) Don't worry that nearby electrical wiring will cause

damage. The magnetic flux in a building is too low to affect the magnetic media. Bob also provided a list of criteria to consider when hiring a vendor for digitizing and examples of the deliverables to be requested (different types of files for different methods of access and playback). It was a very helpful session and now I know who to contact when the time comes to do something with those old VHS tapes.

Another useful session was titled "Cleaning House: Keeping Your Collection Spick and Span." It provided a good overview of how to clean collections and storage areas and how to prevent dirt and pests from entering the building. Speakers from the Museum of History and Industry in Seattle and Utah Museum of Fine Art explained that what is right outside your facility can have an effect on collections inside. Overgrown foliage or areas where water collects can attract pests and need to be removed. Also, keeping the building envelope sealed is important so gaps under doors need to be closed and gaps around baseboards, or at any point on a wall, need to be caulked. Be careful if you keep textiles, as they can be one of the most prevalent causes of pest infestation -- especially if they were loaned out and brought back. For air leaks, mold and moisture issues, hire a company to take infrared photos of the building. Moisture will show as darkened areas and can indicate where problems exist. Dust is an issue in Phoenix so I was happy to learn that the expensive Miele vacuum I purchased for use in my home (and for the library) is also the kind museum professionals prefer. Implementing a housekeeping schedule and cleaning at regular intervals, be it once a week or once a month, is important. Curatorial neglect can cause damage so consistent housekeeping is key.

Marketing is essential no matter what your job so I stepped outside my wheelhouse and went to an integrated marketing session. It was hosted by social media and traditional marketing staff at two Las Vegas museums, Springs Preserve and The Mob Museum. You read that right, there is a mob museum. The speakers contrasted the post-war technique of "inadequacy marketing" which instilled fear and need in consumers to the current "empowerment marketing" which allows consumers to tailor a brand or experience to their wishes. They discussed the non-stop nature of social media advertising, the ability to link one platform to another, and how even though it requires a lot of management, most departments are run by just one person. Kind of like a lot of small libraries (☺).



CBHL Members' East News

Compiled by Shelly Kilroy, Librarian
Peter M. Wege Library
Frederik Meijer Gardens
Grand Rapids, Michigan

from Janet Evans
Library Associate Director
McLean Library
Pennsylvania Horticultural Society
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Library Exhibits

This past spring and summer we staged a delightful and very popular exhibit by local artist MF Cardamone titled "A New American Botanical." MF Cardamone's art is a playful interpretation of the intersection of nature, taxonomy, and popular culture. In addition to exhibiting and selling some original pieces, we also sold notecards, a catalog, and posters. (For people in the New York area, MF's work is currently on view at the J. Pocker frame and print shop in NYC).

Our fall exhibit, just in time for the election season, will be "All the Presidents' Flowers" (October 3 – December 2). This exhibit of archival photographs and nursery catalogs from the library's collections, features plants named in honor of U. S. presidents and first ladies and also reflects aspects of the garden history of the White House, with some Philadelphia connections. PHS has invited Marta McDowell, author of the very lively and entertaining book *All the Presidents' Gardens*, to speak on this topic in early October. Marta graciously lent us some White



MF Cardamone's Bluebell with Soldiers captivated the exhibit attendees

House garden-related ephemera for inclusion in the exhibit. The exhibit and lecture are also partnered events with Archives Month Philly. See <<https://archivesmonthphilly.com/>> for details. During the month of October, everyone is invited to



Tricia Nixon married Edward Cox in 1971, in the White House Rose Garden

celebrate archives, the work of archivists, and the rich history of Philadelphia at events across the city and surrounding area.

On the digitization front, we continue to send items to Internet Archives scanning centers for uploading to the Internet Archives and, more recently, for inclusion in the Biodiversity Heritage Library via BHL's expanding access program. BHL staff wrote a very nice piece on us in their blog at <http://blog.biodiversitylibrary.org/2016/07/the-pennsylvania-horticultural-society.html>.

As we celebrate the 15th anniversary of our library book group, we welcome the return of a founding member Jane Alling, who has moved back to Philly! I'm so hoping she will volunteer in the library!

Janet is now serving on the board of directors of PACSCL, the Philadelphia Area Consortium of Special Collection Libraries. See what we do at <http://pacscl.org/>.



Calendar of upcoming events:

January 29-24, 2017. Atlanta. American Library Association Midwinter Meeting. <http://www.ala.org>

March 22-25, 2017. Baltimore. Association of College and Research Libraries. <http://conference.acrl.org/>

March 28-30, 2017. Arlington, VA. Computers in Libraries 2017. <http://computersinlibraries.infotoday.com/2017>

March 29-April 1, 2017. Louisville. Visual Resources Association's 34th Annual Conference. <http://vraweb.org>

April 9-15, 2017 – National Library Week. <http://www.ala.org/nlw>

April 19-22, 2017. Cleveland. Museums and the Web 2017. <http://mw2017.museumsandtheweb.com>

June 6-10, 2017. Chaska, MN. Council on Botanical and Horticultural Libraries 49th Annual Meeting. <http://www.cbhl.net>

June 16-20, 2017. Phoenix. Special Libraries Association 2017 Annual Conference. <http://www.sla.org>

June 19-23, 2017. Hamilton, ON. American Public Garden Associations 2017 Conference. <http://www.publicgardens.org>

June 22-27, 2017. Chicago. American Library Association Annual Meeting. <http://www.ala.org>

—Rita Hassert, Library Collections Manager,
The Morton Arboretum, Lisle, Illinois

CBHL Conference Collaboration Grant Program

During the 2010 mid-winter CBHL Board Meeting, the Board established a grant program to encourage CBHL members participation in other like-minded organizations' conferences. Currently there is already a wonderful reciprocal relationship with the European Botanical and Horticultural Libraries Group (EBHL). To expand collaboration, this "CBHL Conference Collaboration Grant" will pay up to \$500 towards conference fees (not including accommodations, travel expenses, or meals) for a CBHL member to go to the conferences of Garden Writers Association, American Public Garden Association, Special Libraries Association, Internet Librarian, or similar organizations.

The grantee would receive the funds before the meeting (up to \$500) with the agreement the participant would present a report to CBHL (either through the CBHL Newsletter or as a presentation at the Annual Meeting). The report should include useful aspects of the conference that will help other CBHL members. The report is intended as continuing education for the CBHL members. The grantee is also intended to serve as a CBHL ambassador to the conference and is required to register as the CBHL representative.

To receive the grant, the prospective grantee needs to submit a letter addressed to the CBHL Secretary and include:

- Name of conference
- Date of conference
- Amount of grant request
- URL to the conference website
- Reason for choosing the conference, including the benefit to CBHL
- The date when you will submit your report about the conference to either the CBHL Newsletter or as a talk at the CBHL Annual Meeting.

Please give the Board one month prior to the registration deadline for the conference to make a decision about the grant. Funding will be awarded based on the amount of funds made available by the Board during that particular fiscal year.

Submission address and/or email: CBHL Secretary, Esther Jackson <ejackson@nybg.org> LuEsther T. Mertz Library, The New York Botanical Garden, 2900 Southern Boulevard, Bronx, NY 10458-5126

Biodiversity Heritage Library News and Collection Highlights

by Grace Costantino
Outreach and Communication Manager
Biodiversity Heritage Library
Smithsonian Libraries
Washington, DC



Greetings! My name is Grace Costantino, and I'm the Outreach and Communication Manager for the Biodiversity Heritage Library (BHL). BHL has very kindly been invited to contribute a regular column to this newsletter, and I'm excited for this opportunity to share the latest BHL news and progress updates with the CBHL community! In each column, I'll also include some collection highlights

to give you a glimpse into the wealth of botanical resources available in BHL.

My entry into the world of libraries was fairly serendipitous. In 2008 I was looking for an internship at the Smithsonian while completing my Master's in Information Management and Systems at the University of Maryland. Based on my program, I was directed to the Smithsonian Libraries, and it was during my internship in the Digital Programs and Initiatives Department that I discovered my love for libraries. After completing my Master's, I became the BHL Librarian at Smithsonian Libraries, where I managed the libraries' digitization workflow. In 2012, I became the BHL Program Manager, and as part of that position I managed the program's outreach and communication activities. Through this work, I discovered my passion for library marketing and public affairs. In 2014 BHL secured funding to create a separate Outreach and Communication Manager position, and I jumped at the chance to expand my efforts in this area to a full-time position.

As the Outreach and Communication Manager, I manage all public communication on traditional (print, press releases, events) and online (digital and social media) outlets for BHL. Within this capacity, I serve as the Library's communication and digital campaign strategist, marketing and branding specialist, graphic designer, social media and community manager, media relations manager, outreach performance analyst, events planner, and product development manager.

For anyone who is not familiar with BHL, we are an open access digital library for biodiversity literature and archives. Our online collection of over 50 million pages includes publications from the 15th-21st centuries and encompasses a range of disciplines related to the study of biodiversity. Visit our website

to explore our collection and learn more about BHL: < <http://biodiversitylibrary.org/>>

Many CBHL members' libraries are active contributors to BHL. You can explore BHL's Members and Affiliates here: < <http://biodivlib.wikispaces.com/BHL+Consortium>> .



Labelled *Elaeis melanococca* (current name *Elaeis guineensis*, common name African oil palm) from Martius, Karl Friedrich Philipp von. *Historia naturalis palmarum: opus tripartitum*. 1823-1850. Digitized by the Missouri Botanical Garden, Peter H. Raven Library. <<http://biodiversitylibrary.org/bibliography/506>>

Collection Highlights

Historia naturalis palmarum: opus tripartitum

("Natural History of Palms, a work in three volumes") describes and illustrates all then-known genera of the palm family (*Arecaceae*). The work was authored by German botanist Karl Friedrich Philipp von Martius and was published in three folio volumes between 1823-1850. In all, the title includes over 550 pages of text and over 240 chromolithographs.

The work was based on Martius' and zoologist Johann Baptist von Spix's 1817-20 expedition to Brazil and Peru - an expedition sponsored by the King of Bavaria, Maximilian I. The three volumes of this work include a modern classification of palms, palm biogeography (containing the first maps on the subject), and a description of Brazilian and all then-known genera in the palm family. A majority of the chromolithographs are based on Martius' own drawings.



Labelled *Cocos botryophora* (current name *Syagrus botryophora*) from Martius, Karl Friedrich Philipp von. *Historia naturalis palmarum: opus tripartum*. 1823-1850. Digitized by the Missouri Botanical Garden, Peter H. Raven Library. <<http://biodiversitylibrary.org/bibliography/506>>



Prune de Monsieur from Vincent, Henriette Antoinette. *Études de fleurs et de fruits : peints d'après nature*. 1820. Digitized by the Chicago Botanic Garden, Lenhardt Library. <<http://www.biodiversitylibrary.org/bibliography/106700>>

Études de fleurs et de fruits: peints d'après nature by Henriette Vincent is a book of beautiful botanical illustrations. With 48 color plates of stipple engravings of flowers and fruits, this work was first published in Paris, France in 1820. Only a few copies of this title are known to exist in libraries.

Madame Vincent was a student of renowned botanical artists Pierre-Joseph Redouté and Gerard van Spaendonck. She had the opportunity to exhibit her work in the Paris Salon about the time this volume was published. The plates are signed "Peint par Mme. Vincent, gravé par Lambert aîné," which translates to "Painted by Mrs. Vincent, engraved by Lambert elder."

You can learn more about this title in this article on the BHL blog, written by Leora Siegel, Senior Director, Lenhardt Library, Chicago Botanic Garden <<http://blog.biodiversitylibrary.org/2016/04/madame-vincents-studies-of-flowers-and.html>>. The text in this column highlight is derived from this post.

Program Highlights

Collections Growth

This August, BHL reached a major milestone by surpassing 50 million pages in its online collection. This represents over 187,000 volumes and over 110,000 titles. BHL's in-copyright content has also grown extensively this year, with over 220 licensors granting permission to include over 500 in-copyright titles in BHL under Creative Commons licenses.

New Members and Affiliates

BHL has welcomed several new Members and Affiliates in 2016. BHL Australia, which represents six Australian institutions to date, is BHL's newest Member. New Affiliates this year include Internet Archive, the Naturalis Biodiversity Center (Leiden), the Canadian Museum of Nature (Ottawa), Smithsonian Institution Archives (Washington, D.C.), Národní Muzeum (National Museum in Prague), the Mendel Museum (Brno, Czech Republic), and the Bibliothèque cantonale et universitaire – Lausanne (Switzerland). The BHL consortium now consists of 16 Members and 15 Affiliates.

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Using Collections to Support Food Security

How can scientific collections, including library collections, help “feed the 10 billion”? On 19-21 September, BHL participated in the Scientific Collections International Food Security Symposium at the National Agricultural Library to discuss strategies to promote the use of collections to support food security research. BHL’s botanical and agricultural collections were prominently featured during the symposium. For example, staff demonstrated how publications related to crop species and crop wild relatives, as well as seed and nursery catalog collections, can provide valuable data to researchers working in this area. Learn more: <<http://blog.biodiversitylibrary.org/2016/09/stressors-and-drivers-of-food-security.html>> .

I look forward to sharing more program and collection highlights with you in future newsletters. In the meantime, you can stay up-to-date with all the latest BHL news by subscribing to the BHL newsletter <<http://library.si.edu/bhl-newsletter-signup>> or following our blog <<http://blog.biodiversitylibrary.org/>> .



Lis St. Jacques (*Sprekelia formosissima*) from Vincent, Henriette Antoinette. *Études de fleurs et de fruits : peints d'après nature*. 1820. Digitized by the Chicago Botanic Garden, Lenhardt Library. <<http://www.biodiversitylibrary.org/bibliography/106700>> See p. 13.

On the Web: Physalis & Capability Brown's 300th Birthday

Stanley Johnston
Mentor, Ohio

A month or two ago we went to one of our local farms looking for fresh fruits and vegetables and stumbled across some small cartons of brown husked vegetables. When we asked what they were, we were told that they were known as ground tomatoes or ground cherries and that you peeled back the paper-like husk to eat the small sweet fruit underneath. While those of you affiliated with agriculture or seed organizations probably are familiar with them, I had no idea of their existence and thought it would be useful to see what I could find online. As nearly as I can gather this is also known as a tomatillo, a plant native to the Americas bearing the scientific name *Physalis philadelphica* <en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tomatillo>. However, other plants in the same family are also called ground cherries, such as Aunt Molly's Organic Ground Cherry <www.seedsavers.org/aunt-mollys-organic-ground-cherry>, offered for sale and discussed by Seed Savers Exchange as *Physalis pruinosa*, and a tomatillo offered by Southern Exposure Seed Exchange <www.southernexposure.com/husk-tomatoes-ground-cherries-tomatillos-ezp-58.html> as *Physalis ixocarpa*. The genus *Physalis* is discussed by the University of Minnesota Extension <www.extension.umn.edu/garden/yard-garden/vegetables/physalis/> and the entry on Wikipedia <en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Physalis>, which also gives an extensive list of species with their scientific and common names. Those wanting fuller lists of the species can look at the U. S. National Plant Germplasm System <npgsweb.ars-grin.gov/gringlobal/taxonomylist.aspx?category=species&type=genus&value=a%20genus&id=9338> or in the University of Melbourne's Multilingual Multiscript Plant Name Database <www.plantnames.unimelb.edu.au/Sorting/Physalis.html>. *Physalis* Facts and Health Benefits <www.healthbenefitstimes.com/physalis/> discusses the nutritional values of the plants and their medicinal values. Another member of the family, the “Chinese lantern” popular for its colorful orange husks in both gardens and floral arrangements, is *Physalis alkengi* <en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Physalis_alkengi>.



Three *Physalis* (also known as Cape gooseberries), one partially opened. Photograph by Shandris from Wikipedia.



Capability Brown by Nathaniel Dance. Circa 1773,
National Portrait Gallery (London)

There seems to be some disagreement over whether this latter fruit is bland, but edible, according to Reference.com's [How to Grow a Japanese Lantern](http://www.reference.com/home-garden/japanese-lantern-plant-c4add5bd5f303c7c) <www.reference.com/home-garden/japanese-lantern-plant-c4add5bd5f303c7c> or whether the unripe leaves and fruit are poisonous according to The Gardener's Network, [Growing Chinese Lantern Flowers](http://www.gardenersnet.com/flower/chineselanterns.htm) <www.gardenersnet.com/flower/chineselanterns.htm>.

Those interested in exploring other less commonly seen and discussed fruits might enjoy a brief glimpse of the slideshow assembled by Brian Nelson for Mother Nature Network's 16 Fruits You've Probably Never Heard Of <www.mnn.com/food/healthy-eating/photos/15-fruits-youve-probably-never-heard-of/think-exotic> featuring everything from ackee to rambutan. The descriptions are brief and vary greatly in what aspects are discussed and whether common or scientific names are used, but Physalis and Jackfruit are the only ones I had ever heard of.

As a long-time stamp collector, I learned recently that Great Britain was issuing a series of stamps in honor of Lancelot "Capability" Brown's 300th birthday. This prompted me to look on the web where I found 300 Years Capability Brown <www.capabilitybrown.org/http://www.capabilitybrown.org/>, which features all the activities associated with the celebration of the noted landscape architect who found capabilities in any site presented to him. Unfortunately, by the time this reaches our readers just about all the events will be over, but it may still give you a brief look at the man and his career as well as the capability to find the sites Brown is believed to have worked on.

To continue with historical sites, Leslie Overstreet posted the link to the BHL's article on Catesby's Magnificent Natural History in Three Editions <blog.biodiversitylibrary.org/2016/09/catesbys-magnificent-natural-history-in.html>, by Grace Costantino, briefly discussing Catesby's life, work and the production of the three editions, all of which are now accessible online thanks to the Biodiversity Heritage Library.

One of the items that appeared on AOL's headlines in

the last few months is [Stunning Tubular House Built Around a Tree](http://www.architecturendesign.net/stunning-tubular-glass-house-built-around-tree/) <www.architecturendesign.net/stunning-tubular-glass-house-built-around-tree/>, which left me and other readers wondering about the possible ill effects on the tree and what happens as the tree and its branches grow and leaves drop. It hits close to home with some of the proposals for Cleveland's waterfront where the architects seemingly ignore the effects of the open lake and Cleveland winters. I have an equally uneasy feeling about 12 Architects Who Build Houses Around Trees Instead of Cutting Them Down <www.demilked.com/green-architecture-houses-built-around-trees/> concerning the long term welfare of both the buildings and trees – it is not the same as building a house around an open courtyard integrated into the design of the house.

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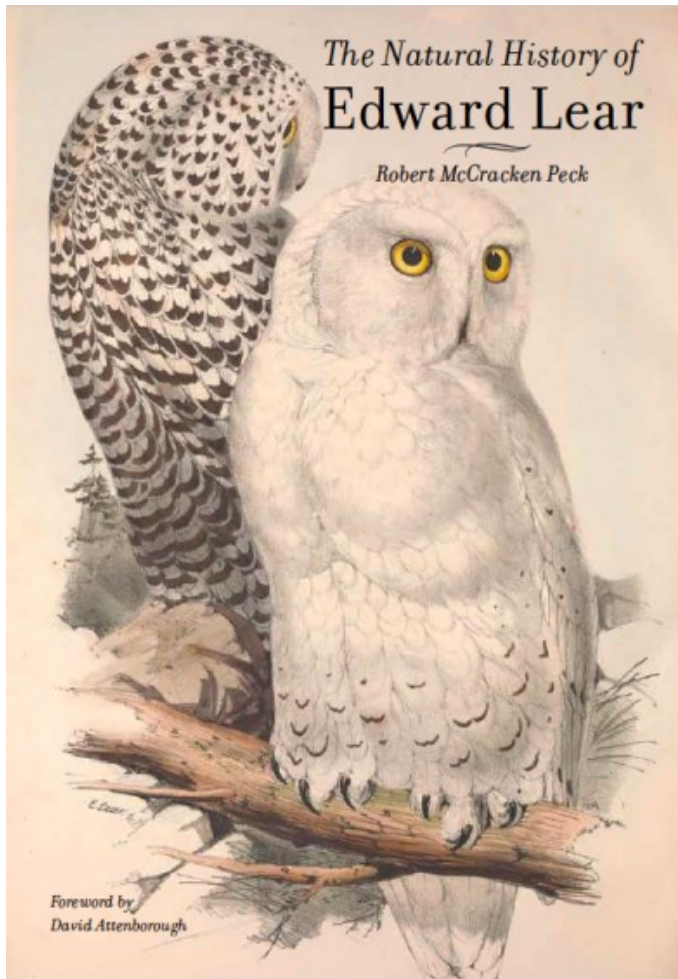
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Book Reviews

Patricia Jonas, Book Review Editor
New York, New York



The Natural History of Edward Lear by Robert McCracken Peck. Foreword by David Attenborough. Jaffrey, New Hampshire: David R. Godine, 2016. 224 pages, 175 illustrations. Hardcover. \$40.00. ISBN: 978-1-56792-583-8

Most book jacket author photos convey seriousness; but, no matter how serious his purpose, it is clear from the photo of Bob Peck on the jacket of *The Natural History of Edward Lear* that he is having fun. Lots of fun. Maybe because the subject of Peck's more than thirty years of exemplary research was the author of some of the most memorable nonsense verse ever written: who doesn't know "The Owl and the Pussycat" and—more relevant to CBHL's world—*Flora Nonsensica*, which includes his famous drawing, *Manypeepia Upsidownia*? Maybe because, in an age when science and art are such separate, highly specialized

academic disciplines, Peck—a naturalist and explorer (anomalies in the twenty-first century)—gets to study both.

Robert McCracken Peck also has a weighty title: curator of art and artifacts and senior fellow of the Academy of Natural Sciences of Drexel University. He is the author of many books (most recently a book on Arctic exploration and *A Glorious Enterprise: The Academy of Natural Sciences of Philadelphia and the Making of American Science*, 2012) and essays on a stunning variety of natural history subjects (notably for CBHL, those included in *Of Green Leaf, Bird, and Flower – Artists' Books and the Natural World*, 2014 and in *Knowing Nature: Art and Science in Philadelphia, 1740-1840*, 2012).

Peck has an obvious passion for his subject and so Lear emerges as a vibrant individual from the archival materials Peck has plumbed. He has done dogged detective work and reaches some original conclusions about work previously analyzed and sometimes misunderstood by other biographers, like his argument about the dating of a watercolor study of a Rock Hyrax in the



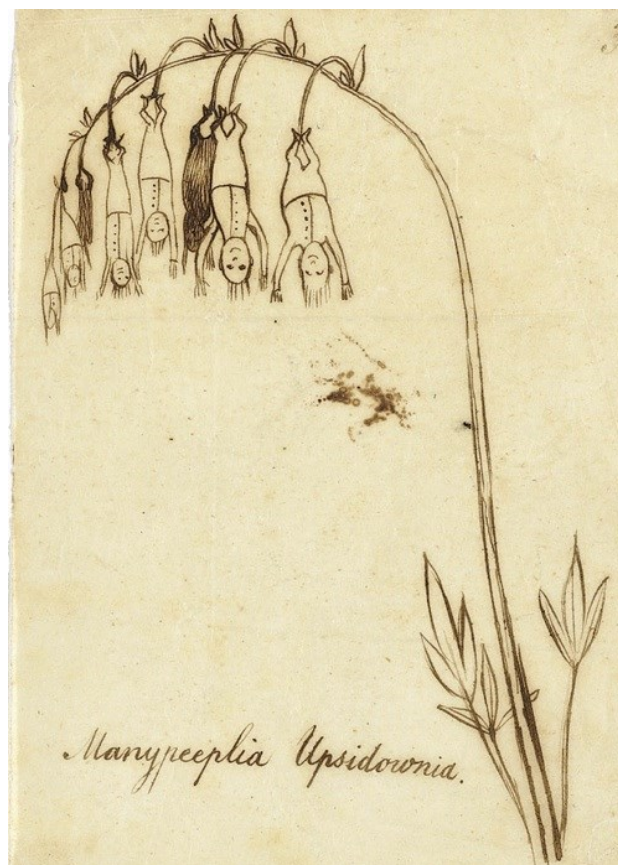
Red and Yellow Macaw, now Scarlet Macaw (*Ara macao*), hand-colored lithograph from *Illustrations of the Family of Psittacidae, or Parrots*

chapter “A Curious Beast.” Peck has explored a far larger oeuvre than most realize Lear produced:

At the time of his death in San Remo, Italy, in 1888, Lear left behind more than 7,000 watercolors of his travels in Europe, the Greek isles, the Middle East, and India; about 2,000 studio watercolors; more than 300 oil paintings; almost 400 natural history paintings, five illustrated travel books, two books of natural history illustration, and more than 100 other published lithographs documenting birds, mammals, and reptiles from various parts of the world.

Peck brings much of this together in Part I where he examines the evolution and reception of Lear’s work and its influence on natural history artists of his time. During the comparatively brief part of his career when he was kept very busy by commissions from England’s most important naturalists, like John Gould, and his most important patron, the thirteenth Earl of Derby, Lear produced what many regard as some of the finest natural history illustrations of the nineteenth century, for which, Peck points out, he did not always receive credit. Peck goes further and places him “among the greatest natural history painters of all time.” None of his paintings are more highly praised than those of the parrot family, which he began when he was just eighteen and comprise his spectacular *Illustrations of the Family of Psittacidae, or Parrots: The Greater Part of Them Species Hitherto Unfigured* (1830-1832). John James Audubon so admired Lear’s painting that he bought a copy, despite its high price. Peck writes in depth of the monograph’s forty-two hand-colored plates and concludes:

“As so often happens with ambitious projects attempted by the very young, when Lear embarked on his great parrot monograph, his inexperience may have been the secret of his success. His lack of academic training, his unfamiliarity with publishing, and his relative naiveté in the field of scientific illustration had the serendipitous effect of freeing him from the confines of existing traditions . . . painting every bird that he encountered not as a generic “type,” as was the norm, but as an individual. The outsized personality and loud voices of his subjects literally cried out for individual attention. Thus his parrots – and later his other subjects – seem to live in his lithographs in a way that similar subjects had rarely done in the illustrations that preceded them. If Lear had been formally trained, or had grown up surrounded by the bird books of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, his unique,



Manypeepia Upsidownia, Houghton Library, Harvard University (MS Typ 55.14 (13))

uninhibited approach to drawing birds and other natural history subjects might have been stifled.”

Two short chapters in Part I (most of Peck’s chapters are short) will delight anyone who has ever been exasperated by plant taxonomy and nomenclature: “Spoofing Science from the Sidelines – Lear’s Nonsense Botany” and “Lear’s Botany – The Serious Side.” Peck writes: “Lear’s nonsense that applies to botany provides the best example of his fondness of blurring the line between the real world of botanical taxonomy and his own fictional world of visual and verbal fun.” Those who had an opportunity to see “The Natural History of Edward Lear,” an exhibition guest-curated by Peck at the Houghton Library in 2012—the bicentennial of Lear’s birth—will know that the library holds the world’s largest and most complete collection of Lear’s original paintings, much of it now digitized. Among the thousands of items are the original ink drawings (MS Eng 797.1) for *Flora Nonsensica*.

Peck examines Lear’s legacy in Part II. Contemporary artists and writers from Jan Brett (“Timeless Stories for All Ages: Lear’s Impact on Children’s Books”) to Walton Ford (“Taking Lear in a New Direction”) offer insights into Lear’s meaning for

(Continued on page 18)

their own work. The connections made are a wonderful surprise and to see contemporary work reproduced next to Lear's is a revelation. Ford is particularly eloquent: "Lear's birds radiate life and personality," he observes. "When you are with one of Lear's birds, you feel as though you are in the presence of an animate being. You can practically tell the temperature of the room they were painted in!" "There have been many good painters of natural history over the centuries, and a few great ones, like Barraband and Audubon," says Ford, "but Lear is one of those very rare artists you can truly call a genius."

The book is chock-a-block with dazzling illustrations and, although I have read the book only in electronic format, I suspect they will be beautifully reproduced in print, knowing the publisher's high standards. There are also a bibliography and a terrific sixteen page index (created by Helene S. Ferranti). This is an essential acquisition for libraries with natural history and art collections.

Briefly noted

The Bold Dry Garden: Lessons from the Ruth Bancroft Garden by Johanna Silver. Photographs by Marion Brenner. Portland, Oregon: Timber Press, 2016. 236 pages, 279 color photos, 1 map. Hardcover, \$34.95. ISBN: 978-1-604696-70-7.



The Ruth Bancroft Garden is regarded as one of America's most important and original gardens. Its role in the Garden Conservancy's creation story is well-known. By the time most of us in the East learned about it and when Frank and Anne Cabot visited in 1988, Ruth had been gardening on the site for more than forty years. She began with roses and irises, for which she was locally famous, and started collecting succulents in the 1950s. At sixty-three years old, in 1971, she made the bold decision to move her green house collection of 2000 cactus and succulents from pots to the ground. With the help of Lester Hawkins of Western Hills Nursery, she installed the dry garden for which she would become internationally famous.

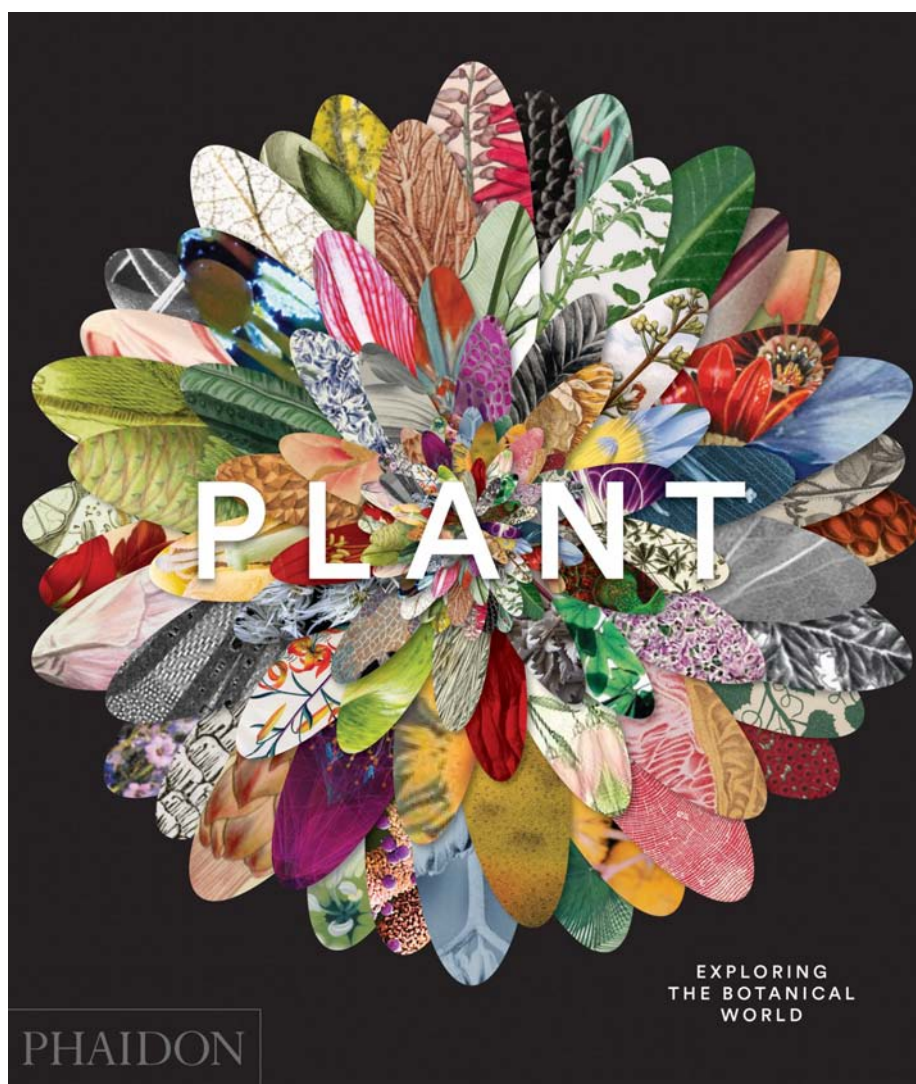
The first two sections of *The Bold Dry Garden*—"Meet Ruth" and "The Beginning of the Dry Garden"—are filled with period photos of the family and snapshots of the developing garden. These are interspersed with Marion Brenner's photographs of the current garden and of boxes of carefully organized, labeled and preserved shells. Their story provides insight into Ruth as a collector. "Signature Plants of the Dry Garden" is the longest section and a catalog of the garden's inspiring plants. Johanna Silver supplies brief, basic information on each and commentary on how they are used in the design; stunning and perceptive photographs by Brenner bring the garden and Ruth's vision to life.

Brenner is one of the best garden photographers working today and her insightful and beautiful photographs for this book do not disappoint. I am not sure that Silver's passion for her subject matches Brenner's. I found myself, perhaps unfairly, comparing Silver's text to Frank Cabot's in *The Greater Perfection* (CBHL Annual Literature Award Winner in 2003). That is one of the best books ever written about the creation of a garden and Ruth—a "patient perfectionist"—deserves a great book about her garden masterpiece. This book is not it but, if Ruth was ever inclined to write about what she has created, that time has passed; and Richard Turner, who wrote a forward and seems like he would have been an obvious choice, may not have been able or willing to be the writer. Now at 108, Ruth Bancroft must be happy that Timber Press got it done and has published such a handsome book—one that deserves to be in all CBHL collections, whatever its shortcomings.

Plant: Exploring the Botanical World by Phaidon Editors. Phaidon Press, 2016. 352 pages, 300 illustrations. Hardcover, \$59.95. ISBN: 978-0714871486.

Since I was a contributor to *Plant*, I can't actually review it; nor can Chuck Tancin whose reviews regularly appear here since she, too, was a contributor. I will admit that when I was invited to participate in this project, it seemed both too broad in scope and hobbled by egregious omissions. The final book has succeeded well beyond my imagination. It is not only gorgeous to look at, as one would expect from Phaidon, but intellectually provocative. Its organization is not chronological or thematic, which we have come to expect in books on botanical art, but instead the editors at Phaidon have taken a unique curatorial approach.

The result reminds me of the exciting exhibition in 2008 at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, which was organized as a tribute to Philippe de Montebello's thirty-one years as director. The Met's curators collaborated across the museum's seventeen departments to choose 300 works of art—from more than 84,000 acquired during his tenure—to represent 5,000 years of artistic achievement. And then they mixed it up, just as Phaidon has done, so that even the most familiar works are seen with fresh eyes as a result of unexpected adjacencies. Almost every double-page spread stops one short. The project started (at least for the international panel) with 900 works in every medium, from every age and culture, and like the Met's curators, Phaidon editors limited the selection to 300 works of art and then they had fun creating this spectacular exhibition in a book. Am I permitted to suggest you acquire it?





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