

Preservation

Folios: Why They're So Big And How to Work with Them in Our Libraries

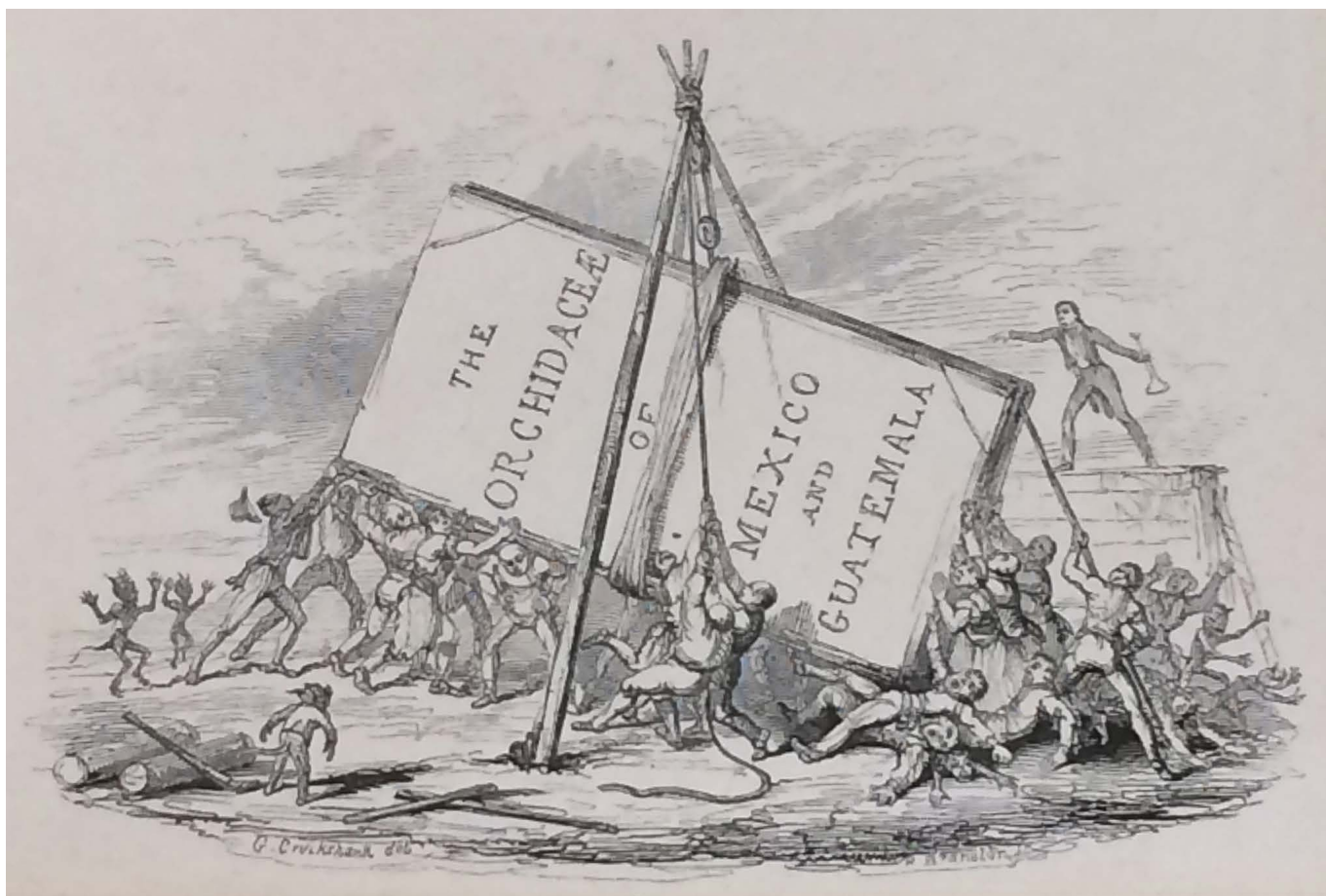
Kathy Crosby

Head Librarian, Brooklyn Botanic Garden
and

Charlotte A. Tancin

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This article has two sections: why such large books were/are made, and some technical issues about how they're made and how to store, handle, and display them. Although much of the article is about folio volumes from past centuries, folios are still being made today. The Transylvania Florilegium is an example, and there are also less pricey modern folio volumes in many of our libraries.



George Cruikshank. Vignettes from Mr. Bateman's Orchidaceae of Mexico and Guatemala. London: Cook, 1844.

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From the President

Anita Kay

Reference & Instruction Librarian, Iowa State University

Hello CBHL colleagues!

In a few weeks from now, as I am writing this, but probably before this is published in the newsletter, the fall board meeting happens. We will meet and discuss on October 26th. Next year's meeting host, Robin Everly and her colleagues at the Smithsonian, are setting up a videoconference for us. One-half of the board is going to be attending in person, and the other half are going to videoconference in for those portions of the meeting.

We have a lot to discuss at this meeting! As usual, we will be having the liaisons give summaries of what the individual committees have been working on so that we can have the big picture of CBHL activity. We will also be discussing how the communications committee merger went and what/if we need to update in the procedures manual and/or bylaws to reflect that change.

We will also be discussing the ad hoc board reorganization committee. The board has asked for a short report from that committee so that we can be sure we are updated on the discussions and where the committee is headed. The committee arose out of the need for CBHL to continue looking for ways to reduce our spending so that we can have a balanced budget. We are hoping a board reorganization will help and that by the end of this year the budget will be balanced.

Then, going into the future, there will be an annual budget plan that the president and treasurer will work on together so that CBHL can continue in a financially healthy manner.

Also for the reason of cost savings, we will continue discussions on whether or not actions will be taken concerning LibGuides. Although there hasn't been high use for LibGuides in the past (beyond simply a place to store administrative files and documents), a number of people made arguments for keeping it.

Sincerely,
Anita

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SECTION 1: WHY ARE FOLIOS SO BIG?

Kathy: I've been musing about the history of seemingly oversize, sometimes elephant folio volumes. How did they come to be? Perhaps they were born in the tradition of what was considered to be divinely authoritative volumes of the sacred word; the religious books that a select few read from lecterns to the laity who thereby shared in a communal experience. This is something I have thought about, but have also connected to in my reading again and again.

The belief in the power of knowledge over time cloaks the owners of books as well; such persons attain a kind of prestige—driving the marketplace for luxury books to some extent. The intertwining of readers and their books has a long history; consider the personal aspects of herbals or the addition of coats of arms.

Large frontispieces or title pages sometimes included a succession of panels placing the current publication in a chronology of what was considered to be an authoritative tradition of knowledge reflecting divine and classical origins.

Charlotte: Yes, I love this feature of appealing to past authorities; we also see it in those large Renaissance-period herbals. One or several esteemed classical authors (like Dioscorides or Theophrastus) are depicted as part of an elaborately decorated title page, implicitly supporting the current work and giving the author of the book instant credibility!

Kathy: The role of wonder at creation – its grand design – certainly inspired science and art. Maria Sibylla Merian comments on that, but clearly she is aware of the marketplace for her work as well. Christoph Jacob Trew thought that both illustrated anatomical and botanical volumes could help teach those who could not attend “lessons” and, in the case of botany, as “preparations for excursions” according to Kärin Nickelsen.

She notes that the way botanical illustrations were published in the eighteenth century would also seem to support the assumption that they were primarily intended to serve as species-describing compendia: the illustrations mostly appeared in large format, multi-volume works. So readers were meant to use these books to obtain additional information on plant species already known to them.

Charlotte: Your mention of books helping to teach those who could not attend lessons makes me think about how in the 18th century books like Merian's and Trew's folios would not have been available to just anyone who wanted to see/read them – no public libraries, and certainly not for sumptuous books – but some lucky university students were taken under the wing of a teacher and given access to the teacher's library, and in those situations might well have been able to read some large folios along with other books. Carl Linnaeus was fortunate to have access to his teacher's library in Uppsala and then to spend time with elegant botanical folios while he worked for George Clifford in Holland in the 1730s before returning to Sweden.

Linnaeus had opinions about large, sumptuous books and commented on how the weight of these books made them less pleasant to use. He did own a few of the big ones himself, though, like Besler's *Hortus Eys-tettensis*. He noted the critical importance of patronage in making such books possible.

Kathy: Despite Trew's practical feeling about plates, I've been thinking about how Trew and Ehret took on an incredibly ambitious project inspired by exotic plants, the *Plantae Selectae* (Nuremberg, 1750-
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Christoph Jacob Trew. *Plantae Selectae* ... [Nuremberg: s.n., 1750-1773].

1773). Trew hired German botanical artist Georg Dionysius Ehret to make 100 drawings/paintings copied in the hand-colored engravings of this book, which was issued in 10 parts. This and other works that Trew published can best be described in this way: Lavish. Sumptuous. Handsome. Trew's publications also highlight Nuremberg as a center of publication that made so much possible.

Charlotte: A cool detail about *Plantae Selectae*: Linnaeus thought so highly of Ehret's plates in this work that he literally papered his bedroom walls with them – they're still there on the walls of Hammarby today, although not in very good condition at this point. He also papered the wall of the outer hall with plates from Charles Plumier's work. Immersing himself in large, beautiful images of plants.

Kathy: We like to classify and order the world around us, and this was very true in the 18th century — consider the tables of figures of parts of plants and other information that show up in these works. Also, you can really see how the technical aspects of making the illustrations would drive the size of these books.

Charlotte: In a number of these botanical folios there was an aim to show plants life-sized. For plants that were too tall for the page size, that meant cutting the plant in two and showing both halves on the plate, or bending the stem a couple of times (like an N) to show a tall grass. Another feature, although this doesn't affect the size of the plates, was adding diagnostic characters to facilitate plant identification, a practice possibly spurred by Ehret in his illustrations for Linnaeus's *Hortus Cliffortianus*.

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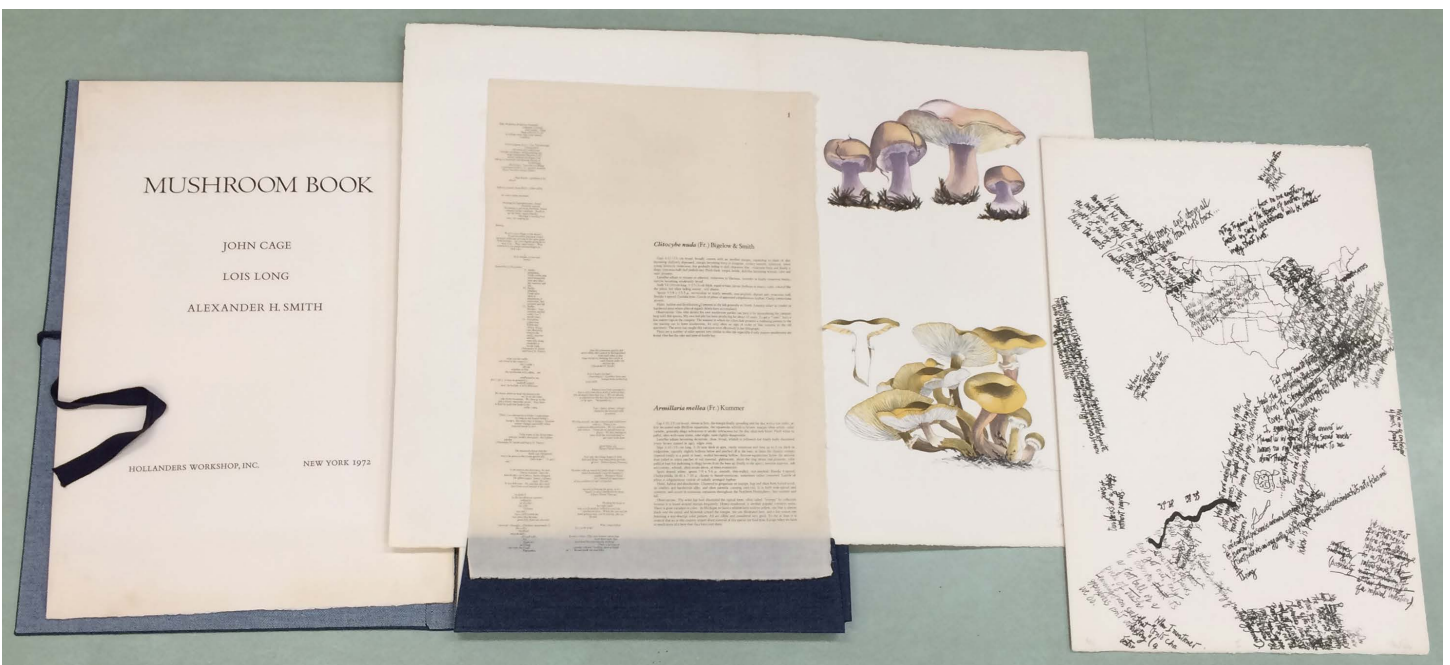
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A great example of a very large late-19th-century folio is James Bateman's *The Orchidaceae of Mexico and Guatemala* (London, for the author, James Ridgway & Sons, [1837-1843]). Its plates were large and beautiful orchid illustrations by Augusta Withers and Sarah Ann Drake. The image at the top of this article (page 1) is George Cruikshank's fantasy of a legion of workers straining to hoist the Bateman volume. It was also used on the tote bags for the CBHL annual meeting in New York in 2003!

And in terms of authors/artists wanting to showcase their work in a grand folio format, we still see that in modern times, both with bound folios and also unbound leaves in portfolios. At Hunt Institute we have a copy of John Cage's *Mushroom Book* (NY: Hollanders Workshop, 1972). It's a group of loose folded sheets in a 59 cm. denim portfolio (ah, the '70s!): 10 double leaves (large sheets folded in half), each containing a lithograph of Cage's handwritten stream of consciousness text on the first recto and a color illustration of fungi by Lois Long on the second recto, with an overlay inside each folded leaf containing the botanical texts by Alexander H. Smith, printed on transparent Japanese papers that overlay the mushroom illustrations. Quite the production, and it seems clear that this was felt to be not only a way to highlight selected, favorite mushrooms and Cage's musings about them – he was a big mushroom enthusiast in addition to being a musician, composer and artist – but also a work of art and a tribute to fungi.

And then there are the large florilegia that are being published now, like the *Transylvania Florilegium*. Some of the same motivations that drove the publication of sumptuous folios 300 years ago are still at work today.

Kathy: Historically we see the coming together of wonder and inspiration, the technical expertise of artists, reproductive technologies, and a shared interest in the science of natural history that occasions support of publications by subscribers. Today those of us who have such books in our libraries can think about how their use can still be a communal experience. For example, consider our rare book room talks.



John Cage. *Mushroom Book*. New York: Hollanders Workshop, 1972.

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Charlotte: Yes, we too offer talks with book displays for visiting groups, and these almost always include folios. For folks who haven't really encountered these kinds of books before, botanical folios can be an eye-popping experience, and often generate a sense of wonder that such things were created. We get questions about why they're so big, who the intended audience is, why anyone would want such an impractical volume, how many were made – interspersed with absorbed contemplation of the plates. The reason for large folios is completely tied up in the plates.

SECTION 2: SOME TECHNICAL ISSUES

Paper and bindings

Charlotte: It used to be the case that book sizes were determined by the size of the sheets of paper used and how many times the sheets were folded. Available sheet sizes varied but there were some general size ranges somewhat standardized. A sheet would be printed with page texts and images laid out so that the sheet could be folded a certain number of times to make a certain number of pages per sheet (see Gaskell in Resources, his section on imposition), and this is where the bibliographic terms folio, quarto, octavo, etc. come from. A folio was the largest size because each large sheet was only folded once, giving 2 leaves, or 4 pages if printed on both sides of the leaf. Usually several folded sheets would be nested together and then sewn through their folds to make a signature, and then all of the signatures would be stacked up and sewn together to make the volume. Another way of making folios that we see sometimes, especially with larger covers but not very thick text blocks, is a situation where instead of using folded sheets they just printed single pages of text or images on unfolded large sheets or broadsides, stacked them together, and side-sewed them through the whole stack (the stack couldn't be too thick), a fast and easy way to put a large book together but one that results in less than desirable openability. In both cases, the size of the sheets and whether they were folded once or not folded at all is what gives us folio volumes.

We can't go into detail about folio bindings in this article, but we can offer a few comments on issues around problems with them. The materials used for large folio bindings and covers vary in terms of how thick/strong they are and they were often selected for strength. Yet durability is often compromised by the sheer size of the bound volumes after they have been used repeatedly – opened, closed, propped or laid open, and pages turned. The pull of a heavy open cover from the hinge, the downward pressure from the text block on the open spine, the effect on the outer cover along the spine as the leather, cloth or other covering ages, dries, cracks, or tears through multiple openings and closings over time ... you eventually can see effects like detached covers, detached spines, torn endpapers, cracked spines, and other manifestations of a volume whose binding is failing or damaged.

Those realities point toward conservation needs, but in the meantime they suggest some easy practices for handling and storage that can prolong the usability of these large volumes. These tips might seem like we're really getting down into the weeds of detail, but instead we think of them as reflecting immediate experience leading to simple techniques.

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Storage and shelving

Charlotte: Generally folios are shelved separately from smaller volumes, and usually are shelved horizontally. While you could shelve them vertically all together, there's an issue with the text block potentially sagging from its own weight as time passes, so better to just lay them down instead. I've seen flat shelves, shelves with rollers, pull-out shelves ... At Hunt Institute we have about a third of our folios on shelves with rollers and the rest on flat shelves. In both cases, we've been cutting mat board to a size just a bit larger than the book to put between the volume and the shelf, both to protect the back covers from dents and abrasion and to make it easier to slide the book out from the shelf (just slide the mat board with the book on it).

In some cases we have stacked two or three books on one shelf. How do we make that decision? It depends on what the bottom book will be, and how light the upper book(s) are. Some volumes you would simply not put anything on top of. They're too valuable/rare/fragile to risk any adverse effects that way. Others would not be hurt by a slim/light volume or two sitting on top of them. Some issues to consider: What is the front cover like of the book that would be on the bottom – would it need to be protected from abrasion from another volume sitting on it? How heavy is the volume that would be sitting on it? How frequently do you think you might be accessing these books? Occasionally we will stack two or sometimes three folios (much lighter ones on top) and we might put a layer of mat board between them, depending on the covers of both books. For stacked volumes, when accessing either book we don't SLIDE that upper mat board forward across the book cover beneath it but we lift the mat board and the book(s) sitting on it. Another reason why the upper book(s) have to be light.

Kathy: You and I have talked about shelving books horizontally and appropriate methods of stacking books on top of each other before. I also try to vary the items that have been stacked from time to time. At some point, I am going to try to rearrange and avoid having anything stacked.

I like the idea of placing some kind of board underneath the large volumes. Did you use a particular kind of mat board for any reason? Except for "eco-based" book boards, I suppose the latter would be too rough or too full of impurities? What about foam core?

Charlotte: We use white acid-free 4-ply mat board – we buy it in 32" x 40" sheets and cut it down. The thing to remember about putting something underneath the folios this way is that we're not dragging the volume across the surface of the mat board – the board and book slide forward together and then we either lift both or just lift the volume off the board once it's far enough forward to grasp it.

Picking up and moving large volumes

Charlotte: So, the most obvious thing about these large folios is that they can be HEAVY, which is a factor regarding how your hands and wrists can affect a cover where they come into contact with it once you're lifting it. Especially for older volumes, rare books, special bindings, heavy volumes, a good rule of thumb (pardon pun) is to remove rings and other jewelry that would come into contact with the edges of the book when you apply pressure to the edges of the covers and lift it, or when you're removing it or replacing it on the shelf. I just put them in my pocket for a minute when I lift something that they might come into contact with and damage.

Kathy: Ha, same for my ID badge or other neck-related wear, wrist wear, even certain clothing.

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Charlotte: Right, a shirt with buttons on the front could also scratch or nick the edges if the book comes into contact with your torso as you're carrying it. That's less of an issue for modern trade bindings, perhaps, but a big issue for older volumes with leather covers. Also along these lines, for heavy folios it's good to also be aware of stress on the edges where you pick them up. For moving them any distance (across the room, to another room) it's easier on those edges if you put the book on a flat cart to move it. But in general, it's good just to be aware and sensitive to how and where you're holding these books when you apply the pressure needed to lift and carry them. Gloves can be helpful but they don't resolve the whole issue and in some cases might be too slippery; they can also sometimes catch on bits of leather that are beginning to separate from the rest of the cover. Ditto while you're positioning the book on a table so that you can open it. And putting down several thicknesses of felt to cushion the spine while you're propping the book open will also help avoid damage to the spine.

Also, these volumes can be dimensionally very large and so it's awkward to carry them without leaning them against yourself, so again that brings up issues around pressure and abrasion as you move – using a flat cart removes that issue. So this is less of an issue for lightweight folios and for modern folios with what I think of as standard covers – more of a big deal for larger volumes and volumes with leather spines, tooled spines, cracked spines that could catch on your clothing or even be affected if pressed against your torso.

And our assistant librarian Jeannette McDevitt reminds me of a very important piece of this process: prepare your destination in advance so that you don't have a giant book in your hands and nowhere to put it!

Using and displaying these large volumes

Kathy: In the past, you and I have also talked about making a book spine comfortable. It's important not to be beholden to the images in the documentation of the use of Benchmark supports, foam wedges, and other supports. Even though the base of your display might look a bit jury-rigged with a combination of supports, that's okay, if your effort better supports the spine.

Charlotte: Agreed. The primary purpose for supporting an open volume like these is not have to open them all the way – so the book isn't open further than it can comfortably open – and to ensure that there's not stress where the covers connect to the spine, or that gravity isn't causing the covers to bow. In terms of how far to open them, the idea is not to strain the book, the sewing, the paper, the covers ... some books can actually open flat, but for many it's better to prop them up a bit on either side.

Thinking of your jury-rigged comment, for a formal exhibition naturally you would want the supports to either look the same or at least look harmonious, but for informal display that's less of an issue, I think. For these large volumes, especially when they're also heavy, we lay down a large piece of felt folded several times to make a cushion for the spine, and then place supports on either side of that to support the open covers. For very large books (I'm thinking of something like 50+ cm.) we add an extra support on each side so that there are two points of support for each cover, better distributing the support across the length of the cover.

So, those are our comments on folios, and we hope they are helpful. If you haven't been showing your visitors some of the beautiful large books in your collection, please consider situations in which you can do that! It really adds another dimension to your visitors' experience of books and libraries.

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Resources

Philip Gaskell. *A New Introduction to Bibliography*. New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1972.

John L. Heller. "Linnaeus on Sumptuous Books." *Taxon* 25(1): 33-52, 1976. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/1220404.pdf>

Kärin Nickelsen. *Draughtsmen, Botanists and Nature: The Construction of Eighteenth-Century Botanical Illustrations*. Dordrecht: Springer, 2006, 2010.

David W. Rose. "Notes from Underground: A Plurality of One - John Cage and the People-to-People Committee on Fungi." *Fungi* 1(4), 2008.

Image Credits

All images courtesy of Hunt Institute for Botanical Documentation, Carnegie Mellon University, Pittsburgh, PA.

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 GardenComm (Garden Writers Association), American Public Gardens 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 including:

- Name of conference
- Date of conference
- Amount of grant request
- URL of 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 conference registration deadline 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

The John Torrey Papers: Increasing Accessibility with Full Text Transcriptions in Biodiversity Heritage Library

Richard Jones
Transcription Coordinator
New York Botanical Garden

Since July 2016, the papers of taxonomic botanist John Torrey (1796-1873) have been the focus of a digitization and crowdsourced transcription project at the New York Botanical Garden (NYBG). Digitizing and Transcribing the John Torrey Papers project, organized in coordination with the Biodiversity Heritage Library (BHL) and funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities and the Carnegie Corporation of New York, was created in an effort to digitize and make virtually accessible the correspondence of John Torrey and his colleagues, specifically letters received by Dr. Torrey. Access to the correspondence of Dr. Torrey is particularly useful to natural scientists and natural historians alike as these letters provide a glimpse of the thought process and workflow for many of the 19th century's greatest botanical minds. These letters are filled with a variety of different content including commentary on plant taxonomy, personal biographical details, and anecdotal information on the daily lives of these natural scientists. The content within these letters aids in our understanding of the realities faced by these pioneering botanists, including the shift from the Linnaean system to the natural system and the systemic challenges faced by individuals in a field still constructing its foundation.

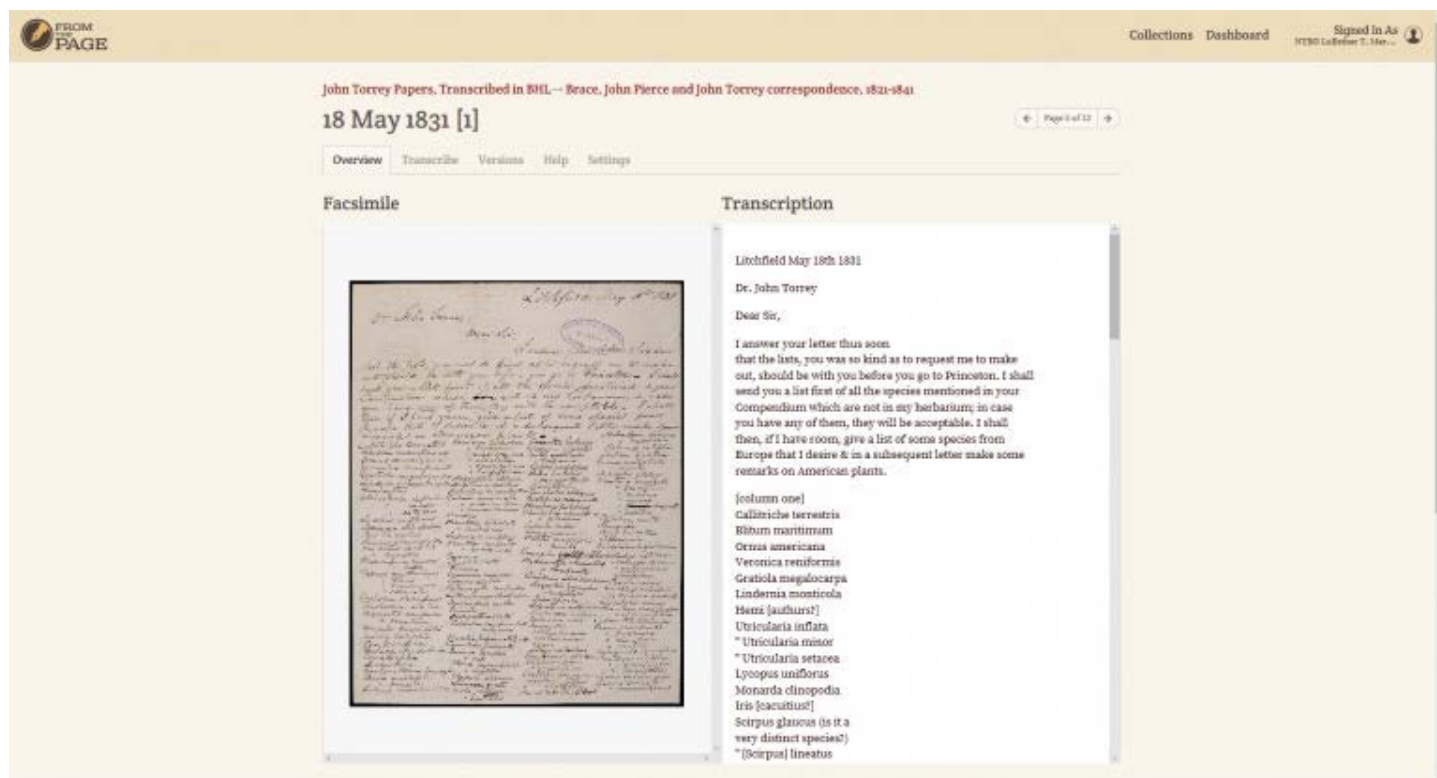


The [John Torrey Papers](#) collection contains over 9,500 pages from more than 350 correspondents including [Asa Gray](#), [Amos Eaton](#), and Joseph Henry. The collection is organized alphabetically by correspondent, then chronologically by the date each letter was written. Each page of each letter is scanned as a .tif file and uploaded to Macaw, BHL's metadata management system, which aggregates the .tif file with a New York Botanical Garden MARC XML record. Once appropriate metadata has been applied in Macaw the correspondence is uploaded to the [Biodiversity Heritage Library Collection](#) in the Internet Archive. The correspondence's placement in the BHL Collection then allows for BHL to harvest new material from the Internet Archive on a weekly basis.

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Digital content management is a crucial aspect of the project but the heart of the process lies in the crowdsourced transcriptions done by volunteers from the New York Botanical Garden. These volunteers, recruited through citizen science outreach events, workshops, and tabling opportunities at various locations work on the transcription platform [From the Page](#) which is one of three transcription platforms whose exports are currently accepted by the Biodiversity Heritage Library.



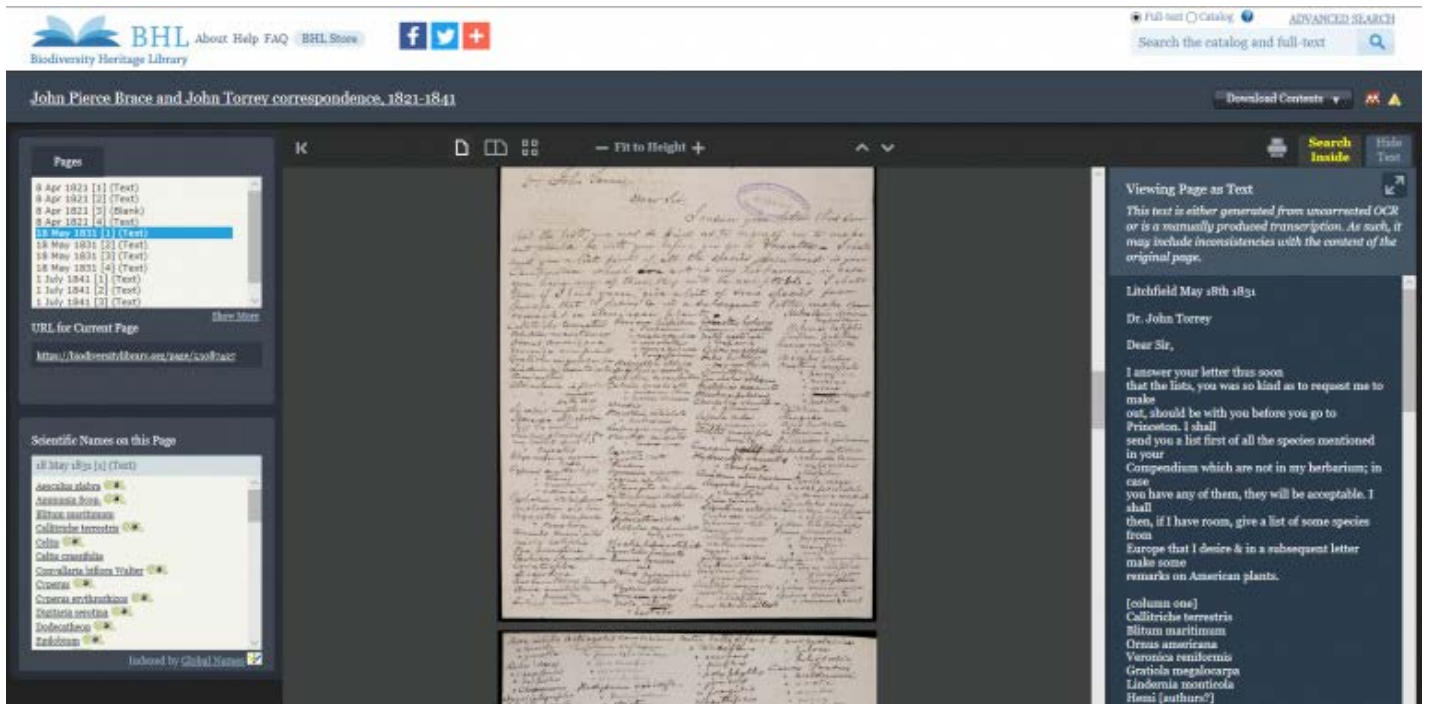
Screenshot of a completed transcription from John Pierce Brace to John Torrey (May 1831) in From the Page.

The work done by these volunteers is a contribution to the project for two reasons. First, the handwriting, colloquialisms, and personal shorthand of many of Dr. Torrey's correspondents are exceptionally difficult to read or interpret. With the correspondence of many correspondents containing several hundred pages it takes a considerable amount of time for our volunteers to develop a proficiency capable of accurately deciphering poor handwriting, but also to uncover the intention or context of particular writings. Second, the transcriptions produced by the Garden's volunteers coupled with BHL's new support for transcriptions facilitates full text searching of materials that would otherwise be unavailable. The introduction of full text searching to the world of transcriptions is extremely impactful as it allows researchers to execute a more thorough examination of resources available to them at a faster pace and with higher levels of productivity. A prime example of this is the Biodiversity Heritage Library's page index of scientific names as seen in the lower left-hand corner of the screenshot below. In effect, the Digitizing and Transcribing the John Torrey Paper's volunteers are the bridge between the content we are looking for and how we look for it.

To date, more than 7,000 pages have been transcribed and more than 6,000 transcribed pages are available for view in BHL but the goals of the Digitizing and Transcribing the John Torrey Papers project still have not been met. With less than 1,500 pages remaining, the New York Botanical Garden is in search of

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new volunteers to help reach our goal and transcribe some of our most interesting correspondents remaining to be done, such as [William Jackson Hooker](#), the former Director of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, and New England natural scientist [Dewey Chester](#). While many of our volunteers are drawn to the project due to their interest in botany many more are captivated by narratives not typically associated with botany such as Carl Bogenhard's struggles as an immigrant in the United States or Jacob Whitman Bailey's experimentation with photography.

If you would like to become a volunteer transcriber for the Digitizing and Transcribing the John Torrey papers project you can sign up online [here](#) or email transcribetorrey@nybg.org for more information or assistance with the sign-up process. If you would like to learn more about the life of John Torrey, works he published, or plants named after him please visit our digital exhibit "[John Torrey: American Botanist](#)."

CBHL Board of Directors, 2019-2020

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Calendar of Upcoming Events

Compiled by Rita M. Hassert
Library Collections Manager
Sterling Morton Library
The Morton Arboretum

January 24-28, 2020
ALA Midwinter Meeting
Philadelphia, PA
<http://www.ala.org>

March 24-27, 2020
Visual Resources Association's 36th Annual
Conference
Baltimore, MD
<http://vraweb.org>

March 31-April 2, 2020
Computers in Libraries 2020
Arlington, VA
<http://computersinlibraries.infotoday.com/2020/default.aspx>

March 31-April 4, 2020
Museums and the Web 2020
Los Angeles, CA
<https://mw20.museweb.net>

April 19-25, 2020
National Library Week
<http://www.ala.org/nlw>

May 4-10, 2020
Children's Book Week
<http://everychildareader.net/cbw>

May 19-23, 2020
CBHL 52nd Annual Meeting
Washington, D.C. and Beltsville, MD
<http://www.cbhl.net>

June 6-9, 2020
SLA 2020 Annual Conference
Charlotte, VA
<http://www.sla.org>

June 21-26, 2020
APGA 2020 Conference
Portland, OR
<http://www.publicgardens.org>

June 25-30, 2020
ALA Annual Meeting
Chicago, IL
<http://www.ala.org>

CBHL Members' West News

Compiled by Beth Brand
Head Librarian, Schilling Library
Desert Botanical Garden

Out and About in Denver!

Allaina Wallace
Head Librarian, Denver Botanic Gardens

At Denver Botanic Gardens, we are eagerly awaiting the completion of the Freyer-Newman Center for Science, Art and Education. While the Helen Fowler Library is closed, we are taking advantage of the downtime to visit other similar institutions, evaluating them for future CBHL 2022 meeting tours. So far, we have traveled to Mount Goliath, the highest cultivated garden in the U.S. and managed by Denver Botanic Gardens in conjunction with the U.S. Forest Service and the Betty Ford Alpine Garden, located in the small resort town of Vail, Colorado. We have also toured the Denver Bookbinding Company, established in 1929 and the Rocky Mountain Land Library, whose mission is to help connect people to nature and the land.

CBHL Members' East News

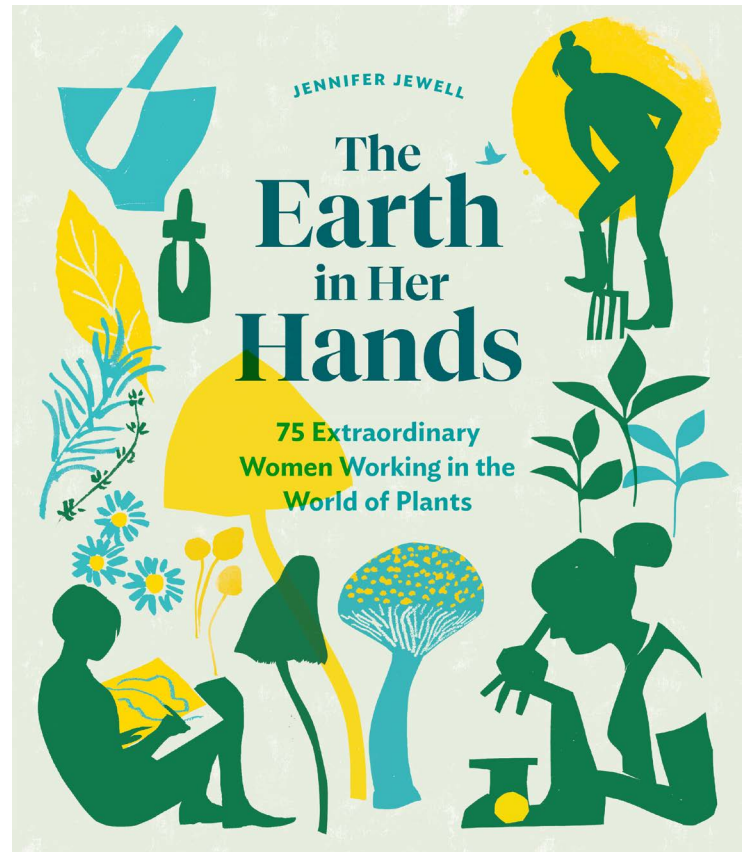
Compiled by Shelly Kilroy
Librarian, Peter M. Wege Library
Frederik Meijer Gardens & Sculpture Park

Jennifer Jewell

*The Earth in Her Hands:
75 Extraordinary Women Working
in the World of Plants*

Lecture at the Cherokee Garden Library
Thursday, April 16, 2020
7:00 PM
Atlanta History Center

Staci L. Catron
Library Director
Cherokee Garden Library
Atlanta History Center



We all rely on plants for food, shelter, even the air we breathe. For some, though, plants are more than sustenance. They are a calling. In *The Earth in Her Hands*, Jennifer Jewell, host of public radio's award-winning national program and podcast *Cultivating Place*, introduces us to 75 inspiring women who are making important contributions in everything from botany to floral design, landscape architecture to farming, and herbalism to food justice. Rich with personal stories and insights, these portraits reveal a devotion that transcends age, locale, and background, reminding us of the profound role of green growing things in our world—and our lives. Jennifer's first book, *The Earth in Her Hands, 75 Extraordinary Women Working in the World of Plants*, is due out in early 2020 from Timber Press.

Book signing and reception will follow the lecture. Tickets are \$25. Reservations are required. For information or tickets, please call 404.814.4150 or visit AtlantaHistoryCenter.com.

CBHL Membership Committee: New Roles and Upcoming Membership Drive

Stacy Brody
Reference and Website Support for Agriculture and Natural Resources
National Agricultural Library

The CBHL Membership Committee members are changing roles! Stacy Brody, Reference and Website Support for Agriculture and Natural Resources at the National Agricultural Library, is the new Membership Chair. Janis Shearer, Public Services and Engagement Librarian at the University of Illinois, is the new Membership Manager. Suzi Teghtmeyer, Agriculture, Botany, Forestry, Natural Resources, and Recreation

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Librarian at Michigan State University, is transitioning from the role of Membership Manager to Recruitment Coordinator.

As Membership Committee Chair, Stacy oversees the committee, provides reports to the Board and the membership, and liaises with other CBHL committees. If you are another committee chair and want to partner, please email sbbrody90@gmail.com.

As Membership Manager, Janis works with current and prospective members on special membership types, such as EBHL affiliates and student memberships. Additionally, she maintains the membership directory. Got questions? Reach out to janisjshearer@gmail.com.

As Recruitment Coordinator, Suzi reaches out to prospective members to encourage them to join our friendly community of experts.

As a friendly reminder, our membership drive will start in early 2020. If you have any questions about renewal, please do not hesitate to reach out. Our online membership directory is not only that, it is also a renewal system for you and your institution or business. Simply log in with your username and password at membership.cbhl.net. If you or your browser can't remember your password, use the 'Forgot password' reset option. Once logged in, select 'Renew your Membership'. As you renew, please fill in the information as completely as you can. Go ahead and brag about your institution and expertise to the CBHL community!

The Membership Committee also wants to know what makes CBHL special to you. Send your answers to Stacy at sbbrody90@gmail.com. Please include a photo of yourself, your favorite houseplant, or your library. We'd love to share your feedback in our upcoming drive!

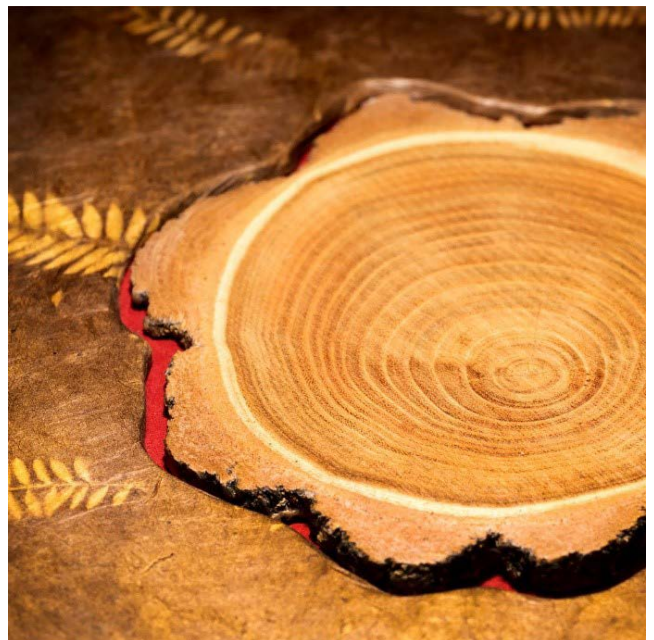
And again, if you have any questions, please contact us:
Stacy Brody, Membership Committee Chair, sbbrody90@gmail.com
Janis Shearer, Membership Manager, janisjshearer@gmail.com
Suzi Tegtmeyer, Recruitment Coordinator, suzirt@gmail.com

Bartram's Garden: In Words and Wood

*Special collection exhibition at the
Chicago Botanic Garden's Lenhardt Library
September 20, 2019 through January 12, 2020*

Leora Siegel
Senior Director, Lenhardt Library
Chicago Botanic Garden

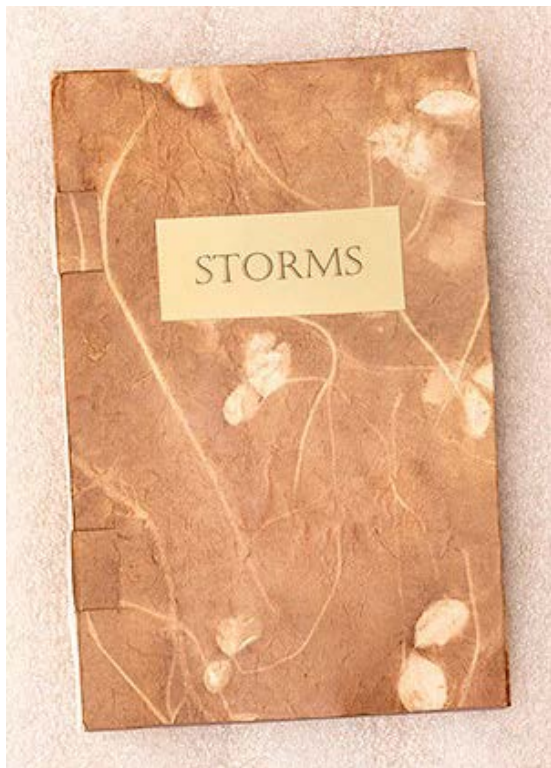
Featuring three handcrafted artist boxes and objects, made from the wood of fallen trees at Bartram's Garden, in combination with original poetry. A free talk and special event occurred on Sunday, October 6, at 2 p.m. with artist Claire Owen and poet Beth Feldman Brandt, presenting their inspiring works.



The handmade boxes hint at the spirit of America's first
December 2019

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botanist and the oldest surviving botanic garden in the country. Nestled inside each box are thought-provoking items, including pieces of a tulip poplar and honey locust trees from the beloved garden of eighteenth-century explorer and botanist John Bartram (1699-1777).

Artist Claire Owen and poet Beth Feldman Brandt, who collaborated on the boxes, traveled from Philadelphia to give a free talk on October 6 at the Chicago Botanic Garden. An exhibition featuring the boxes and other materials related to Bartram runs through January 12, 2020, at the Lenhardt Library. Bartram's Garden, once visited by notables such as George Washington and Thomas Jefferson, is now a 45-acre National Historic Landmark in Philadelphia. "It's an amazing place," said Owen. "It's just beautiful. There are still hundreds of gorgeous [original] trees."

In 2010, after a fierce storm felled several trees on the grounds, Bartram's Garden devised a collaborative project with The Center for Art in Wood, also in Philadelphia. The project, Bartram's Boxes Remix, features the work of artists who created works that included wood from the felled trees. Each piece is meant to celebrate Bartram's desire to share his passion for trees and other plants.

An anonymous friend of the Chicago Botanic Garden purchased the three boxes by Owen and Brandt and donated them to the Lenhardt Library. Each one opens up like a book and tells a story about Bartram and his family, through poetry written by Brandt and other artistic means. Owen, a book artist, designed the boxes as an homage to Bartram's influence. Bartram traveled throughout the Eastern Seaboard to collect seeds and plant specimens. He packed wooden boxes with his finds and shipped them to British merchants, helping to seed the gardens of Europe with magnolias, azaleas, and other new plants from the New World.

The three boxes honoring Bartram link all of us to a shared heritage. "They're a continuation of a fascination we have with the natural world and in collecting and documenting the human species," said Owen. "Nature is a vast source of that fascination."

https://www.chicagobotanic.org/blog/news/ties_americas_first_botanist

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Submissions are welcome according to the following schedule: March issue (copy due 1/15), June issue (copy due 4/15), September issue (copy due 7/15), and December issue (copy due 10/15). Articles may be submitted to Newsletter Editor Judy Stevenson, jstevenson@longwoodgardens.org. Newsletter team: Publications Committee Chair Amy Kasameyer, akasameyer@berkeley.edu, Editor Judy Stevenson, Proofreaders: Staci Catron, SCatron@atlantahistorycenter.com, Jennie Oldfield, JOldfield@atlantahistorycenter.com, and Kathy Allen, kallen@umn.edu.

Book Reviews

Gillian Hayward, Book Review Editor
Library and Research Manager
Library & Archives, Longwood Gardens

Engage, Connect, Protect: Empowering Diverse Youth as Environmental Leaders by Angelou Ezeilo with Nick Chiles. British Columbia: New Society Publishers, November 2019. 240 pages. Paperback, \$19.99. ISBN: 9780865719187.

Cultivating the next generation of leaders is something we should all be thinking about, which is why *Engage, Connect, Protect: Empowering Diverse Youth as Environmental Leaders* caught my eye. An article by The Brookings Institution states that census projections “confirm the importance of racial minorities as the primary demographic engine of the nation’s future growth, countering an aging, slow-growing and soon to be declining white population. The new statistics project that the nation will become ‘minority white’ in 2045.”¹ The environmental mission of the Greening Youth Foundation (GYF), the non-profit at the heart of this book, is “to engage under-represented youth and young adults, while connecting them to the outdoors and careers in conservation.”²

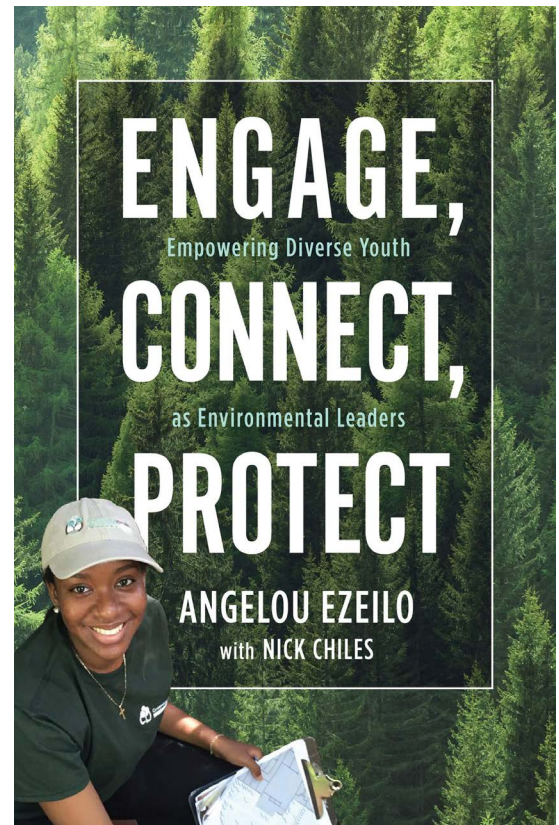


Image courtesy of New Society Publishers.

This book was a quick and interesting read. Its scope is a bit of a mash-up, described by the publisher as “part eye-opening critique of the cultural divide in environmentalism, part biography of a leading social entrepreneur, and part practical toolkit for engaging diverse youth.”³ The author, a former environmental lawyer, started the GYF at her sons’ school, creating curricula to connect youth to the environment and teach them how to protect it. She found that there was a large divide in the way predominantly African American student classes reacted to the material vs. largely white student classes. The white students were more used to learning about environmental issues and hearing about them at home. The African American students were not very engaged when the same curriculum was taught, but when the materials were tailored to be more culturally relevant to their needs, the instructors found much more engagement and enthusiasm.

Ezeilo soon realized that she needed to do more with her organization than teach children about how to become environmentalists – she wanted to encourage and teach them how to find and thrive in careers in the environment. She knew that not only are there not enough young people going into environmental and nature-based careers, but there also are especially not enough from diverse cultures going into these fields. She and her team, which includes her husband (also a lawyer), have made great strides in estab-

1 Frey, William H. “The US Will Become ‘Minority White’ in 2045, Census Projects.” Brookings. Brookings, September 10, 2018. <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/the-avenue/2018/03/14/the-us-will-become-minority-white-in-2045-census-projects/>.

2 Awadu, Keidi. “Greening Youth Foundation.” Facebook. Accessed October 1, 2019. <https://www.facebook.com/GreeningYouth/>.

3 “Engage, Connect, Protect.” New Society Publishers. Accessed October 1, 2019. <https://www.newsociety.com/Books/E/Engage-Connect-Protect>.

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lishing a diverse internship program for the National Park Service, the Forest Service, and many large environmental corporations. She believes that a major reason for their success “is that every one of these agencies is staring at a catastrophe looming on the horizon – the aging of their workforce, which some are calling the Silver Tsunami” (p. 73). There have simply just not been enough people going into the fields to replenish them. The same can be said for the horticulture workforce. The mission of the organization Seed Your Future is “to promote horticulture and inspire people to pursue careers working with plants,”⁴ especially young people. Seed Your Future has found that we need to “tell the stories of how the work we do is important to the planet, to the beauty of our world, to nourishing our bodies and soul,” and do so in language that appeals to young people.⁵

Ezeilo gets to the nitty-gritty of why African Americans may not historically have been as drawn to environmental careers. She mentions the 2014 book *Black Faces, White Spaces: Reimagining the Relationship of African Americans to the Great Outdoors*, in which author Carolyn Finney presents that the American “legacies of slavery, Jim Crow, and racial violence have shaped our cultural understanding of the outdoors and our view of who should and can have access to natural spaces” (p. 12). The sections that tackle tough racial issues, the ones that make people uncomfortable to talk about, are the strength of *Engage, Connect, Protect*. Ezeilo handles these challenging issues with honesty and describes them with first-person knowledge.

Because there are not many African Americans already in environmental careers, African American young people entering the workforce may not feel as comfortable in those organizations if their culture is not represented. The author has included several helpful appendices, including a list of environmental organizations led by people of color. Also included are sample school curricula from GYF and lists of Historically Black Colleges and Universities, Hispanic-serving institutions, and Tribal colleges with environmental degree programs.

The author has a unique perspective on a challenging topic and reading about her organization’s success is inspiring. GYF seems to be on the right track, and this book and others like it are important reading to help us realistically prepare for our future – not just to protect the environment, but to help us understand why all populations need to be involved.

4 Yoder, Susan E. “Horticulture Is Weird - Plantology Is Cool!” Greenhouse Product News. Accessed October 1, 2019. <https://gpnmag.com/article/horticulture-is-weird-plantology-is-cool/>.

5 Ibid.

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Dan Dourson and Judy Dourson. *Wild Yet Tasty: A Guide to Edible Plants of Eastern Kentucky*. Second edition. Lexington: South Limestone, 2019. [i], 36 pages, illustrations. ISBN 978-1-94-966903-9. \$14.95.

This second edition of the Doursons’ book (first published in 1984) on edible wild plants of eastern Kentucky is a basic yet engaging guide to 22 common and easily identified plants found in a wide range of microclimates and environments. Eastern Kentucky has some of the most diverse ecosystems in the world, and the many plant species found there include a number of edible plants not found elsewhere in the region.

Illustrated by Dan Dourson, each entry contains common and scientific names and sections on

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identification and habitat, edible parts, and best time to harvest. The authors have managed to include a lot of information in a compact and easy-to-use format.

Dan Dourson is a biologist, naturalist, illustrator, and author who spent nearly 20 years as a wildlife biologist with the U.S. Forest Service in the Red River Gorge of Kentucky, and more than a decade studying land snails in the eastern U.S. and parts of Central and South America. Judy Dourson is an educator, researcher, field technician, and editor and has co-authored several books with him.

The Doursons have a lot of experience with finding and eating wild plants and finding interesting ways to prepare them. Dandelions are useful in so many ways that the Doursons planted them in their yard. (Think about that.) Chestnuts can be husked using your feet. Native Americans used shagbark hickory bark to make sugar, and now we can use it to make a “delicious unique ice cream” (recipe online, link provided). Grapeseed or canola oil can be infused with dried pine needles to make an aromatic base for a salad dressing. Those are just a few samples of the information in *Wild Yet Tasty*.

The text includes helpful notes on avoiding similar-looking plants, and gives brief nutritional comments on vitamins and antioxidants for some of the plants covered, along with some advice on responsible gathering.

Two pages of additional images illustrate basic terms, and the main text is followed by a few pages on preparing wild foods, a glossary, and a list of references.

Wild Yet Tasty is a slim volume that is easy to take with you on a hike or a stroll through the woods of eastern Kentucky. The plants covered include many that, while not found elsewhere in Kentucky, are also found in other areas of the eastern U.S., so the book has some broader applicability. There is a prominent and well-worded note of caution on the title page verso regarding the identification and consumption of wild edible plants, as well as a disclaimer indicating that the use of the book is at the reader's own risk. This little book makes me want to go out into the woods here in western Pennsylvania to look for a few of these plants that also grow here. A useful and enjoyable guide.

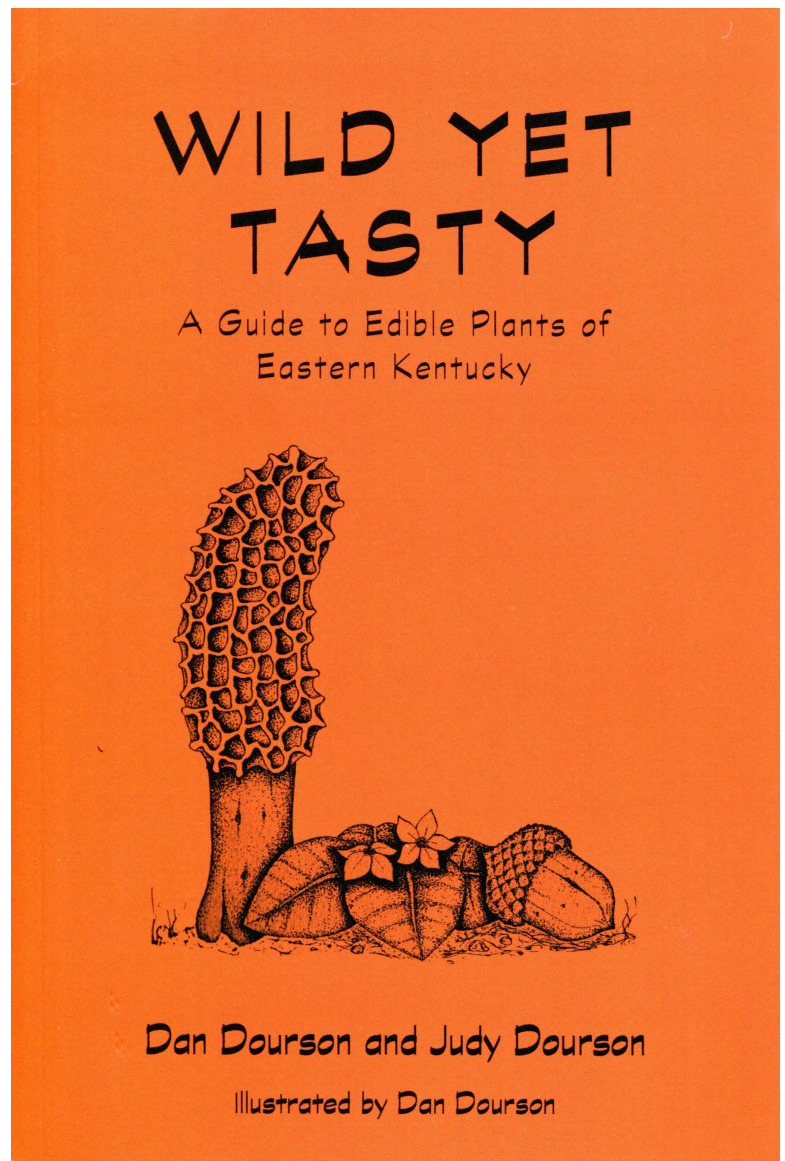
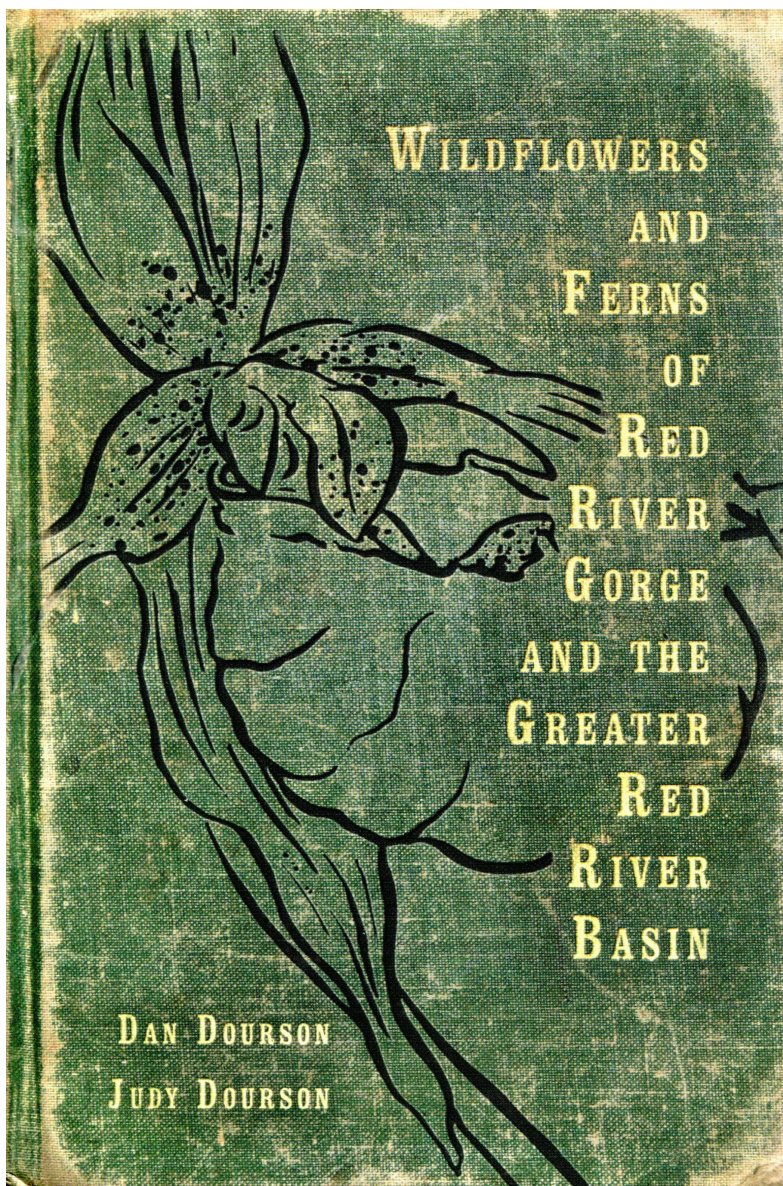


Image courtesy of The University Press of Kentucky.



Charlotte Tancin
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 Documentation
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Dan Dourson and Judy Dourson. *Wildflowers and Ferns of Red River Gorge and the Greater Red River Basin*. Lexington: South Limestone, 2019. [ii], 477 pages, illustrations (chiefly color), maps. ISBN 978-1-94-966900-8. \$39.95.

After the 1962 Red River flood and its devastating effects, local communities advocated for construction of a dam that would turn Kentucky's Red River Gorge into a lake. There was fierce opposition to this proposal, and writer Wendell Berry was asked by the University of Kentucky to write *An Unforeseen Wilderness* to urge protection of this natural area. In 1993 a federal law was passed to protect the gorge and its ecosystems, and today it attracts over a half million visitors a year. This guide to wildflowers, ferns, and a number of other plants found in the Red River Gorge and the Greater Red River Basin is the first book devoted to the biodiversity of the famed and frequently visited gorge and its watershed.

The book begins with five short chapters about the area, covering its prehistoric and cultural history, geology, eco-regions, and habitats. The

Image courtesy of The University Press of Kentucky.

text includes important contributions from Halard Lescinsky on the geology of the area, Adam Rollins on myxomycetes and slime molds, Alan Cornette on the area's cultural history, Tara Littlefield on the plant life of the Red River watershed, and Julian Campbell who compiled a 31-page species list. The illustrations are by Elijah Hicks and the photographs by Dan Dourson, both unless otherwise noted.

The gorge and watershed are considered a botanical hotspot, and in her chapter on plant life in the area, Tara Littlefield discusses the way five eco-regions cross the watershed (maps included in the book), making a home for some 1,300 native or naturally occurring vascular plants and another 277 non-native and naturalized ones. The most diverse plant families here are asters, grasses, and sedges, and Littlefield observes that these demographics reinforce the understanding that "pollination and relationships with wildlife, as seen in the aster family, may be one of the greatest drivers of diversity" (p. 57). She also points out the glacial relict rare plants and communities that have lived there for thousands of years, and notes apparent remnant evidence of Native American plant use.

The format for the core plant text is this: good-quality photographs of plants with short, informative cap-
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tions and occasional line drawings showing additional detail. The photos really drive the text. The plant sections cover several groups of non-flowering organisms; ferns and mosses; grasses, sedges and rushes; wildflowers; vines, shrubs and trees; and unconfirmed sightings. Within the sections the plant families are alphabetical, each one introduced with a paragraph noting the number of species and genera found, general features, and some familiar species. The compact photo captions note type of habitat, general descriptions of flowers and leaves, interesting features, where found, when the plant blooms, how common or rare it is, and where the photo was taken (some of this conveyed with abbreviations). The photos were taken at close range and some give particularly good views of minute plants and plant parts. Some of my favorites show close-ups of bluegrass flowers, terrestrial green algae oozing from sandstone, a hummingbird moth sucking milkweed nectar, native sponge growing in riverweed.

The volume concludes with a glossary, bibliography, species list, indexes of common and scientific names, and safety tips for being in the woods, with photos and information on several toxic animals.

Finally, I have to mention the soft cover that feels like stiff, plasticized paper but that photographically mimics a well-loved and well-worn hardback volume, evoking that “oh, here’s one of my favorite books” feeling.

While this guide will definitely be useful for those intent on exploring this beautiful area of Kentucky, it also makes for great armchair exploring and could actually drive readers out of their chairs and into the Greater Red River Basin area, book in hand, to look for these plants. The photographs and captions are quite compelling. Hopefully, many people will find this book and enjoy using it.

Member Spotlight

Editor’s note: This new section is intended to help all of us in CBHL get to know our fellow members better. We hope to feature a different CBHL member in each issue. To suggest a member to feature, please contact newsletter editor Judy Stevenson at jstevenson@longwoodgardens.org.



Hend Elsantaricy

Librarian & Archivist
Mt. Cuba Center

1. *Where do you work and what do you do there?*

I’m the Librarian & Archivist at Mt. Cuba Center, a botanical garden in Delaware. I just started my position last June. As many solo librarians, I play a mix of roles managing library day-to-day duties: reference, circulation, cataloging, collection development. I also manage the digital collection and institutional archives as well as overseeing some volunteer projects and managing institutional memberships and subscriptions.

2. *What’s the career path that got you there?*

I received my MSIS from SUNY, Albany in 2014. Since then I was privileged to intern in two prominent libraries in Delaware: Winterthur Museum Library and Hagley Museum & Library. My last position was at DuPont Library providing

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reference and training to scientists and engineers as well as managing electronic resources, eBook collection, and the interlibrary loan service.

3. *What does a typical day at work look like?*

I start my day by checking library emails and trying to answer any pressing questions from staff or vendors. Since I am new to Mt. Cuba, I dedicate some time daily to understanding the resources we offer and read library documentation. This week was dedicated to collection development. I read the library policy, navigated publishers' websites, and talked with staff members about potential areas for development.

4. *What's your favorite part of your job?*

My favorite part of the job is driving up the main drive each morning. It's very much like stepping into a treasured garden of trees and plants leaving behind all the hassle of our busy lives. As a librarian, I enjoy that every day brings a new question or a mystery to solve. I also love learning from passionate plant experts around me.

5. *What's your earliest garden-related memory?*

I'm originally from Egypt. So, I experienced different plants growing up. My mother's guava tree is my earliest memory in the garden. I loved its fragrance and the very distinct taste of its fruits. In the very narrow strip around our house, my dad tended a few other trees (orange, pear). Both my parents treasured the few fruits we had each year.

6. *What's your favorite plant and/or book?*

Mt. Cuba opens the way for new favorites. Recently, I came across the beautyberry (*Callicarpa americana*) in Mt. Cuba Center. I just love how the fruit clings to the branch and the mix of green and purple.

Join us!

Receive the CBHL Newsletter, Membership Directory, email discussion list, members-only web pages, and annual meeting materials.

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