

## From the President

Anita Kay  
Social & Life Sciences Librarian  
Iowa State University

Dear CBHL,

This has been an extremely challenging three or four months for everyone since I last wrote. I know some within our organization have been furloughed, laid-off, or had their hours reduced. Hopefully everything will come out okay in the end and we all return to work soon.

There was a good Zoom discussion the other day hosted by Stacy Stoldt. Everyone shared what is going on at their home institutions, how they are handling the situation, and how their libraries are adjusting to everything. It was wonderful to see people again, or for the first time, and to hear the experiences of our colleagues due to the recent events.

Personally, I have recently begun trying to focus more on my well-being to help me in dealing with everything. After a month straight of being a slug, a slave to the screens (desktop, laptop, phone, tv, ipad, all at once sometimes! Oh sheesh it is relentless!!!) I am less productive for sure, but I have learned to accept this for what it is. I think we all really need to check on our life balance during these times, and do whatever works for you, but in my opinion, I don't think people should have the same expectations of themselves or others in our current pandemic situation. Feel free to give yourself and others a break.



## What's Next?

The 21st Century Botanical & Horticultural Library

*The CBHL 52nd Annual Meeting moved fully online due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Stay tuned for a report of the minutes of the Business Meeting in next month's newsletter.*

I want to thank the CBHL board for putting up with me this last year as president: David Sleasman, Brandy Kuhl, Esther Jackson, Betsy Kruthoffer, and Mark Stewart. It has been a super difficult three or four months especially and I'm sure it wasn't easy for any of us. Also I'd like to thank Leora Siegel for all of her work on the board reorganization committee as the committee chair. She has sacrificed a lot of her time to improve this organization. She is so efficient, it really was impressive working under her as the chair of that committee. I have learned so much from the entire board as well as Leora over the last year as president. Thank you all so much.

The organizers for the 2020 meeting in D.C. have done a lot of work and planning, and they are willing to do it again for next year. Hopefully it isn't difficult to move everything one year later. Due to that meeting being pushed back one year, Mark Stewart in Toronto has asked to be removed as the host for 2021 (as he was scheduled to host originally), which results in the other meetings keeping on schedule so there will be no change in that beyond the 2021 meeting.

I look forward to seeing everyone in D.C. next year. CBHL is a wonderful organization and I thank all of you for making it so great, for being so flexible and understanding with everything that has been going on this past year. I am constantly in awe with the knowledge of my CBHL colleagues in all things botanical and librariany.

Sincerely,  
Anita

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# Coping with COVID Zoom Roundtable

Gillian Hayward

Library Manager, Longwood Gardens

On May 1, Stacy Stoldt from Chicago Botanic Garden did a wonderful job hosting a group Zoom chat - *Coping with COVID Roundtable... on a Square Screen: How CBHL Members and Libraries are Faring During the Pandemic*. It was a great chance for everyone to check in with each other in this unusual and anxiety-causing time. There were just under 30 attendees, and we each had a few minutes to say how we are coping and what's happening with our libraries. There were even a few laughs, and it was clear we were all happy to see each other and know that many of us are in the same boat. Susan Eubank provided some questions that were used as food for thought:

**1. How are YOU doing during the pandemic? Health-wise, work reduction, isolation? And what your institution is doing during the crisis to keep everyone safe?**

Long walks, gardening, and wine were all mentioned as helpful!

**2. What does your Library Re-Entry Strategy look like? Or have you even thought about it?**

Because of the limited time, further discussion is planned – especially to discuss re-entry strategies, and the issues that surround it. Many mentioned that their institutions are working on multi-phased strategies, and it is hoped that we can share and discuss some of these plans.

**3. What is your biggest triumph during the shelter-in-place? No matter how small or large. What are you most proud of?**

It's clear that we can all be proud of our flexibility, ability to adapt, and continuation of information services to our users and institutions.

Thank you to Stacy for bringing us all together!

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## Calendar of Upcoming Events

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

While many conferences and annual meetings have been cancelled or rescheduled, some organizations are formulating plans for virtual conferences. As plans are updated and finalized, announcements will be provided by some of these organizations:

[American Library Association](#)  
[American Public Garden Association](#)  
[Botanical Society of America](#)  
[Guild of Natural Science Illustrators](#)

August 3-8, 2020

Joint Meeting of the Council of State Archivists (CoSA) and the Society of American Archivists (SAA).

Online

<http://www.archivists.org>

August 10-13, 2020

GardenComm 2020 Annual Conference & Expo  
Williamsburg, Virginia

<https://gardencomm.org>

October 15-18, 2020

Special Library Association 2020 Annual Conference

Charlotte, North Carolina

<http://www.sla.org>

# Cherokee Garden Library Programs

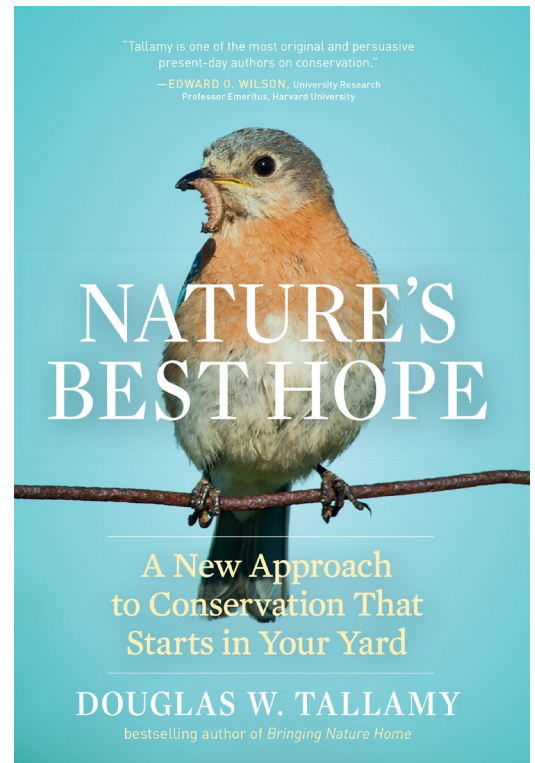
## Kenan Research Center, Atlanta History Center

Staci L. Catron  
Cherokee Garden Library Director  
Atlanta History Center

While socially isolated at home as a safety measure during the COVID-19 crisis, many have found themselves going out into their yards, gardens, parks and neighborhoods, seeking solace from nature.

This act of reconnection that we and our neighbors are making with the plants, insects and wildlife that grace our daily life makes two recently secured programs for Cherokee Garden Library timely and exciting.

We are pleased to be planning to present two programs in September of this year. First up, author and “bug man” Doug Tallamy will discuss his new book, *Nature’s Best Hope: A New Approach to Conservation that Starts in Your Yard*, on September 2, 2020. A native plant guru and renowned entomologist, Doug will be making something of an encore at Atlanta History Center. His first book, *Bringing Nature Home: How You Can Sustain Wildlife with Native Plants*, awakened countless readers, including a sold-out AHC audience in 2016, to an urgent situation. Doug detailed how wildlife populations are in decline because the native plants they depend on are fast disappearing. His solution? Plant more natives. In this



new book, Doug takes the next step, outlining his vision for a grassroots approach to conservation. *Nature’s Best Hope* shows how homeowners everywhere can turn their yards into conservation corridors that provide wildlife habitats. Through his talk, audience members will walk away with specific suggestions they can incorporate into their own yards. By acting now, we can all help preserve our precious wildlife—and the planet—for future generations. Doug’s talk will be followed by an author’s book signing and reception.

## FIVE SEASONS THE GARDENS OF PIET OUDOLF

A FILM BY THOMAS PIPER



The month of September will provide another great offering on the 21st with a documentary film by Thomas Piper: *Five Seasons: The Gardens of Piet Oudolf*. This film, presented in conjunction with the Georgia Perennial Plant Association, will immerse viewers in Oudolf’s work and transport us inside his creative process. The film will take us through all four seasons in Piet’s own gardens at Hummelo and visit his signature public works in New York, Chicago, the Netherlands and elsewhere. One wonders....what is the fifth season? We are looking forward to finding out! To complete the festive movie going experience, popcorn and other accoutrements will be served. 🌿



# CBHL Members' East News


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

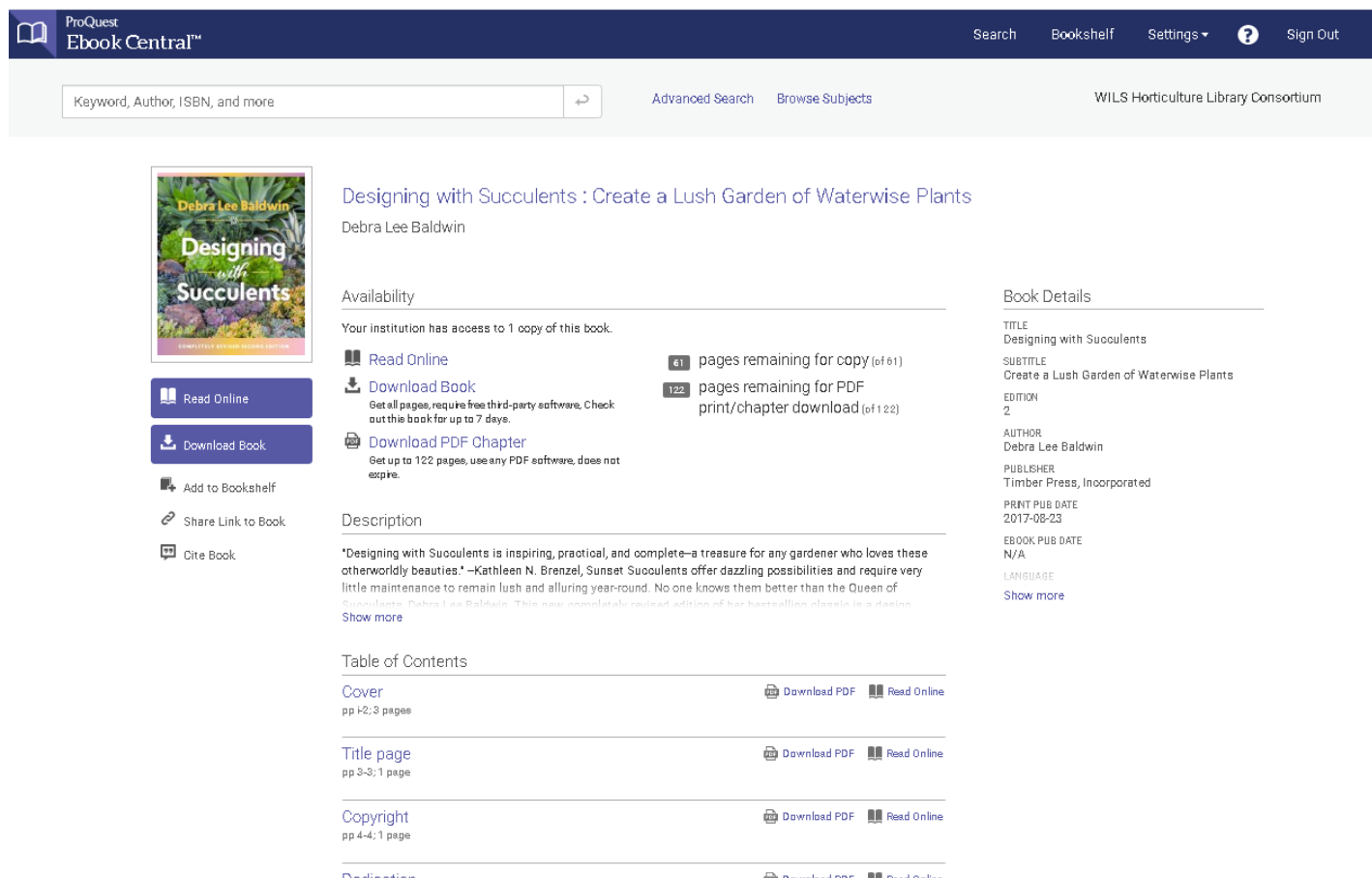
## eBooks to the Rescue!

Gillian Hayward  
Library Manager  
Longwood Gardens

Back in 2013, when the librarians from Longwood Gardens, Mount Cuba Center, and Pennsylvania Horticultural Society started thinking about forming an eBook consortium, little did we know how important this resource would become in 2020! We started with a small collection in Proquest's ebrary platform and grew the collection a little bit every year using the demand-driven acquisition model. We also added members along the way – Los Angeles County Arboretum and Botanic Garden, Morton Arboretum, Denver Botanic Gardens, and most recently, Atlanta Botanical Garden. The collection was migrated to

the eBook Central platform a couple of years ago, and we now provide access to over 7100 titles in the subject areas of horticulture, botany, gardening, botanical illustration, garden and landscape design, natural history, wildlife and more.

We've all felt that this great resource was underused at our organizations, despite our best efforts. When the COVID-19 crisis hit in March, all of our organizations were scrambling for online content to serve up to patrons. We were all happy to have this resource collection to push to the forefront. Since so many families are home, we've also made a point of adding children's titles to the collection – which had previously been almost solely adult-focused. Our overall collection usage has seen a large increase, and we are thrilled to be able to keep our staff and members connected to garden literature and information. If you have any questions about the consortium, please feel free to contact eBook consortium manager David Sleasman, [dsleasman@longwoodgardens.org](mailto:dsleasman@longwoodgardens.org). 



The screenshot displays the ProQuest Ebook Central interface. At the top, there's a navigation bar with 'ProQuest Ebook Central™', 'Search', 'Bookshelf', 'Settings', and 'Sign Out'. Below this is a search bar with the placeholder text 'Keyword, Author, ISBN, and more'. The main content area shows the book 'Designing with Succulents : Create a Lush Garden of Waterwise Plants' by Debra Lee Baldwin. The book cover is visible on the left. To the right of the cover, there are buttons for 'Read Online', 'Download Book', and 'Download PDF Chapter'. Below these buttons are links for 'Add to Bookshelf', 'Share Link to Book', and 'Cite Book'. The 'Availability' section states 'Your institution has access to 1 copy of this book.' and shows '61 pages remaining for copy (of 61)' and '122 pages remaining for PDF print/chapter download (of 122)'. The 'Book Details' section lists the title, subtitle, edition (2), author (Debra Lee Baldwin), publisher (Timber Press, Incorporated), print publication date (2017-08-23), and eBook publication date (N/A). The 'Description' section provides a brief overview of the book. The 'Table of Contents' section lists the cover, title page, and copyright page, each with a 'Download PDF' and 'Read Online' option.

# Mertz Library Staff Remains Active During Shutdown

Stephen Sinon, Esther Jackson and Susan Fraser

LuEsther T. Merz Library, New York Botanical Garden

The staff of the LuEsther T. Mertz Library had to spring into action on March 15th with the announcement that The New York Botanical Garden was closing its buildings and grounds to the public and all staff were requested to remain at home as the Covid-19 virus situation grew ever more ominous in the New York metropolitan area. While we had long ago devised and revised emergency plans to protect the collections in case of sudden disaster, we had not created a plan for carrying out remote operations in light of the sudden shutdown. Our great challenge, and one that is shared with most if not all other CBHL and EBHL member libraries, is continuing to provide the highest quality service to our institutional staff and patrons without being able to access our collections onsite.


We are relieved to report that the staff of the Mertz Library are all physically unaffected by the virus as of the writing of this article. There are many projects and functions we have been able to work on remotely and we are currently looking forward to a soft reopening of the Garden's offices in the coming summer time. It is unfortunate that we have had to close our grounds to the public during one of the most popular and colorful times to visit, peak of spring bloom. As a part of our NYBG at Home resources, we have been able to provide a curatorial walk through of our popular Orchid Show which was debuted on the Garden's website and available for viewing online.

Our Plant Information team is busy responding to inquiries as part of the Plant Doctor program as well as writing new Plant Information guides for home gardeners. An additional LibGuide was developed to inform patrons and staff as to the services which are continuing to be made available to them at the Mertz Library during the COVID-19 shutdown, found at [http://libguides.nybg.org/library\\_services?ga=2.10269042.651514227.1586796540-1945060660.158498082](http://libguides.nybg.org/library_services?ga=2.10269042.651514227.1586796540-1945060660.158498082). Library staff also recently published a guide to our memorial library bookplates for our patrons and researchers to access remotely.

Staff are working diligently from home to do cleanup on records in our online catalog. In particular, the catalogers are doing authority work by adding new subject headings using APG IV (Angiosperm Phylogeny Group) guidelines – a more modern and molecular based system for plant taxonomy. Thanks to our many ongoing digital projects, there are hundreds of items from the collections available for viewing off-site. At home, staff and volunteers are also adding data to digital copies of our books and archival collections in the Biodiversity Heritage Library (BHL), by doing pagination work, defining articles and tagging images in Flickr. We are in the final stages of our 3-year NEH-funded Torrey Transcription project which was recently featured in *Discover Magazine*, "The Dawn of American Plant Science Was Lost in a Botanist's Prolific Notes. You Can Help Digitize Them." This project, wraps up in June of 2020.

A recent exhibit in the Mertz Library celebrating Black History Month has been very well received by staff and visitors. *Black Botany: the Nature of Black Experience* featured five plants and the stories connecting them to enslaved Black people and their plant knowledge. The exhibit was developed by Rashad Bell, MLIS, Collection Maintenance Associate at the Mertz Library, and Nuala Caomhánach, Humanities Institute Andrew W. Mellon Fellow and PhD candidate at New York University. A LibGuide, found at <http://libguides.nybg.org/c.php?g=1003078>, has been created offering more information on each plant than could be featured within the exhibit labels and recommended readings.

We are saddened to announce that Esther Jackson, our Public Services Librarian, will be leaving the Mertz Library staff on April 25th following her participation in the virtual events marking the celebration of

the 50th anniversary of Earth Day. The event specifically highlighted the work that the NYBG Library has done with Wikipedia, Wikidata, and Wikimedia Commons, including the *Plants and People* project and the #HerNaturalHistory campaign with the Biodiversity Heritage Library (BHL). Esther has accepted the position of Scholarly Communication Technologies Librarian at Columbia University Libraries and we hope she will remain in close contact as she pursues her career interests. Her term as CBHL Secretary continues through the 2021 meeting, and she looks forward to remaining a member of CBHL and continuing to support the organization. 

<b>CBHL Board of Directors, 2019-2020</b>	<b>Second Vice-President</b>	<b>Treasurer</b>
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## Join us!

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

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### Questions?

Contact CBHL Membership Manager  
Janis Shearer, [janisjshearer@gmail.com](mailto:janisjshearer@gmail.com)

Student.....\$50  
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Betsy Kruthoffer, CBHL Treasurer  
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917 Plum St.  
Cincinnati, OH 45202  
[betsy@lloydlibrary.org](mailto:betsy@lloydlibrary.org)

# Michalena's Gates?

Kathy Crosby

Head Librarian, Brooklyn Botanic Garden

Last year a staff member at Brooklyn Botanic Garden discovered an illustration in bad shape, a design for an earlier set of entrance gates from the archives, not even knowing how it had come to be damaged. My guess is, it was in a pile of work that had been swept aside. Perhaps the pile fell over, and that was what caused the folds and cracks, tears, the loss of a piece, and the ends on one side to stick up. Not that it was in great shape to begin with. The person luckily found the document while going through his or her office. I say luckily because given the illustration's condition, it could have easily been thrown away as scrap with other material.



The illustration is not exquisite or monetarily valuable; I would not invest a lot of resources in its preservation and restoration. We have the actual hand wrought iron gates themselves, but in order to store them we had to take them apart. At present, to my knowledge, apart from this illustration, possibly original drawings of the relief maps on the panels, and a few photos, we do not have any other images. I've been looking into the kinds of drawings a blacksmith or forge would need, so that I might have a better idea of what those images might look like. And occasionally, records related to vendors are given over to the archives from facilities. I'm on the lookout for the files from Hygrade Iron Works, the construction firm, and its then president, Mr. Lester Hirschhorn or those of John M. Kokkins, the architect with the New York City Department of Parks involved in the project.

Perhaps I'll find additional images, but for the moment, if we want to reassemble the gates, this illustration is our best hope. The gates are quite beautiful though perhaps dated in their political resonance and



expression of their themes--the first theme, the vast changes in the plant kingdom before man appeared on the globe; the second theme, the significance of the three cereal grains for mankind. From time to time, we float the idea that we could install the gates somewhere else on the grounds.

Kokkins, who emigrated from Greece, and after waiting tables at the Hotel Astor, pursued his education at Columbia University, and went on to complete a second degree in architecture. He joined the Department of Parks in 1936.<sup>1</sup> Aside from the overall concept for the gates, incorporating the designs of two artists on staff at the garden and playing a role in other projects at Brooklyn Botanic, his work involved the building of the East River Drive, the Cross-Bronx Expressway, and the refurbishing of Gracie Mansion.<sup>2</sup> Down in the left hand corner of the document, I can barely make out John M. Kokkins, Architect, NYC, 1945. Kokkins, in a 1946 garden publication, is said to have been formerly with the New York City Parks Department at this time.

Over the years of my paging through the garden's publications, I have often noted the illustrations of Michalena Le Frere Carroll and Margaret F. Piper. Both were artists and elementary instructors who served in other capacities. Le Frere Carroll was also a New York City artist who seems to have exhibited at least once at the Whitney and in other galleries. In addition, she was an art historian, publishing at least three books with Frances Cavanah--one on French painting before the Revolution, one on Italian painting, and one on the world's masterpieces. I haven't read these, but will be ordering them; I think in some cases, they are very short. One of the books, "Italian Painting," perhaps part of a masterpiece series, was, in part, the inspiration for Zadie Smith's essay "Man vs. Corpse."<sup>3</sup> Le Frere Carroll was also an assistant editor of *Plants & Gardens*, the BBG publication intended to make available to a wider audience the horticultural experience gained in the garden. She wrote to an upstate New Paltz friend about being asked to design the evolution and grain images for the gates something like the day before they were needed. I don't have the actual letter, I only have a partial image in my e-mail folder, but I talked to the daughter of Le Frere Carroll's friend. Piper executed the design for the relief maps, and in the 1945-1946 annual report there is a picture of Carroll working on the designs and Piper working on the maps.

Although Kokkins' signature is on the illustration in graphite, I'm not sure whether or not he is referring to the whole design image or just the architectural annotations. The former looks to be done in some kind indelible ink; the latter in graphite. It's possible that a garden artist, Maud Purdy, Michalena Le Frere Carroll, or Margaret F. Piper were responsible for this drawing. The title page of the fourth issue of the 1945 Winter *Plants & Gardens* might be said to indicate any of the three. Perhaps more research in the archives will resolve this question; my guess would be Piper or Carroll. I would think, possibly incorrectly, that if Kokkins was the author of the illustration, he would have signed it in ink. In general, the three women artists also signed their work, but not always, particularly in *Plants & Gardens*. Heads up, Le Frere Carroll's name appears in different forms, so I used the Library of Congress as my authority.

The design is done on something like illustration or poster board, basically paper adhered to board to create a stronger backing; I don't know if the architect, or artist, used a commercial version or created his

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1 For more on Kokkins fascinating career : [https://www.college.columbia.edu/cct\\_archive/jan03/obituaries1.html](https://www.college.columbia.edu/cct_archive/jan03/obituaries1.html)

2 Ibid.

3 For the Zadie Smith / Le Frere Carroll connection : <https://www.nybooks.com/articles/2013/12/05/zadie-smith-man-vs-corpse/>

or her own.<sup>4</sup> In any case, the “board” is brittle, not at all archival, and cracks easily. We have some other pieces like this in the collection--lots of them posters. In addition, a second layer of the same board was added to the face of the drawing on the right side; I wonder what’s underneath. If I can move it easily, I may detach and re-attach this section. Between the medium, glue, and use, it’s inevitable that there would be cracks. Someone also covered over some of Kokkins’ writing with “Wite-Out”<sup>5</sup>--perhaps wanting to scan or photograph the image. Also, the surface of the illustration needed to be cleaned.



*Writing originally under “Wite-Out.”*

I’ve been spending time cleaning the illustration for months. I tested different areas with dry sponges, different kinds of erasers, diverse kinds of eraser crumbs made with a microplane--not the one I use for parmesan or pecorino--and a dampened, inclined tip of a Q-tip after removing the fuzz. With a circular motion of two of my fingers, I massaged small areas of the document. It’s possible to press too hard, and perhaps abrade the surface, but quite a nice method. I marked the microplane I used to make the crumbs

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4 For an interesting Chicago Tribune article on the history of illustration board: <https://www.chicagotribune.com/news/ct-xpm-1995-03-26-9503260021-story.html> There are others, I am sure. I think all of my wonderful books on paper are still in the office.

5 I should research this a little more thoroughly, but it used to be “White Out,” but changed because of other developers and trademark legalities?

“Not for food!” For dampening, I tried both denatured alcohol or a bit of water on positive and negative sections of the illustration; nothing ran except the grime.

In one area, where I accidentally created a tiny pool of water, the dirt on the document created a slight tide line. In fact, there were indications that the illustration had already sustained a little water damage. Getting rid of the “Wite-Out” with denatured alcohol was easy--and revealing--kind of like those black magic eight balls we played with as kids. I could now see Kokkins’ labeling of the cereal grains, in graphite, on the ink design.



*Darker areas represent backing to be removed.*

Since my original plan was to eventually either float the document--or apply wheat paste to the back of it--to remove some of the adhesive and backing, the tide line was a good reminder to initially concentrate on the cleaning. I have started test applications of wheat paste and am so far having good luck; I’ll probably be at this for some time. Since I started writing this piece a few weeks ago, I’ve been wishing I started with the wheat paste from the very beginning; apply it, let it sit for a time, and then use the edge of a spatula to remove the backing. Eventually I want to repair the torn areas and cracks, soften the folds, and adhere the document to a Japanese tissue--probably with wheat paste. I haven’t quite thought my way through to the end yet.

I borrowed almost all of these techniques from bookbinding--dry cleaning, semi-wet cleaning the adhesives and old gunk off the spine with wheat paste, floating endpapers off the old boards, etc. Anyone could try some of these techniques on damaged paper or a discarded book of little importance. (Did I just write that?) It’s been fun to work on this little by little, and I look forward to the time I will spend completing my project. Doing the research connected me to Kokkins, Le Frere Carroll, Piper, Hygrade Iron Works, NYC Department of Parks, and the Michael Tuch family who so generously donated the money needed for the gates and so many other projects at the garden.

And then there’s the weird Le Frere Carroll-Zadie Smith essay connection. That brings me back to the gates and the story they tell about evolution, and more to the point today, about food security. The gates provided a sense of threshold; you could look in to somewhere you might get to. I hope the gates find another home at the garden; my idea has always been as the entrance to ... Ask Zadie? 🍋



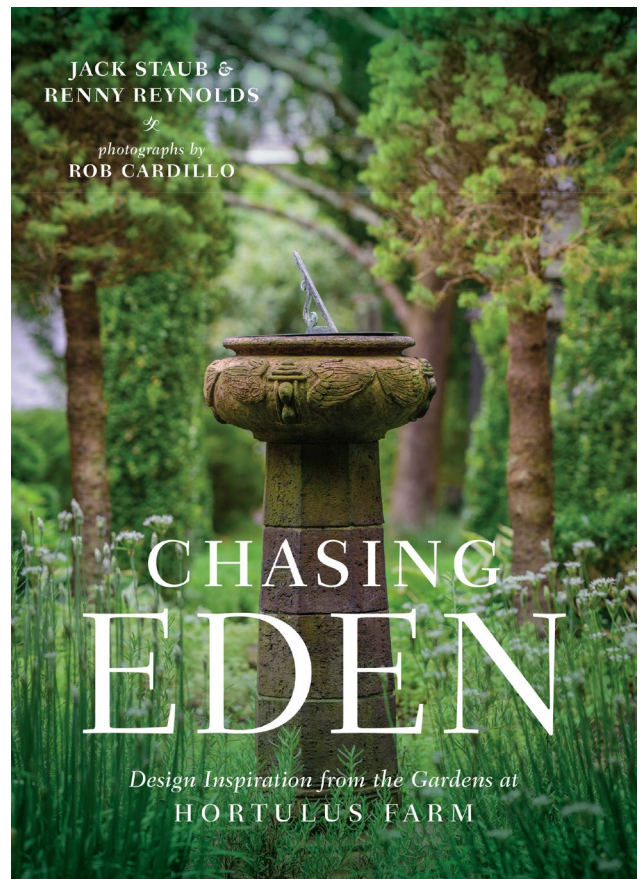
# Book Reviews

Compiled by Gillian Hayward  
Library Manager  
Library and Information Services  
Longwood Gardens

*Chasing Eden: Design Inspiration from the Gardens at Hortulus Farm* by Jack Staub and Renny Reynolds. Photographs by Rob Cardillo. Portland: Timber Press, 2020. 272 pages. Hardcover, \$35.00. ISBN 978-1-60469-873-2

*Paradise on the Hudson: The Creation, Loss, and Revival of a Great American Garden* by Caroline Seebohm. Portland: Timber Press, 2020. 224 pages. Hardcover, \$27.95. ISBN 978-1-60469-857-2

Reviewed by Patricia Jonas  
New York, New York



Twenty five years ago, Page Dickey and Pepe Maynard, two remarkable women who thought this country's notable private gardens should be open for visits in the way England's are, enlisted friends and acquaintances to participate in the inaugural year of Open Days. One hundred and ten gardens in New York and Connecticut signed on and the scheme was organized with the help of the then fledgling Garden Conservancy.

In a dark mood—wondering when any of us will be able to visit gardens again—and gooey with nostalgia, I thumbed through the 1995 Open Days Directory and marveled at the gardens I saw that first season. At the top of my list as I planned my days out were the gardens of two authors whose work had influenced me profoundly: Sarah Stein, whose *Noah's Garden* (Houghton Mifflin, 1993) had been published two years earlier and Michael Pollan (pre-celebrity), whose *Second Nature* (Atlantic Monthly Press, 1991) had been published four years earlier. But, New York and Connecticut were thick with writers who garden and gardeners who write: like Sydney Eddison (two books by 1995, *A Patchwork Garden* [Harper & Row, 1990] and *A Passion for Daylilies* [Henry Holt, 1993]), Roxana Robinson (novelist and Georgia O'Keeffe biographer), and Page Dickey (one book then, *Duck Hill Journal: A Year in a Country Garden* [Houghton Mifflin, 1991]). In Litchfield County, there were gardens I had read about, like George Schoellkopf's, and others by well-known designers, like Lynden Miller; in Westchester, there were plantsman Harold Epstein's one-and-a-half-acre collections of rare rhododendrons and epimediums, and the gardens of the unforgettable doyennes Netta Lockwood and Henriette Suhr.

There is little that so reliably can lift a gardener's spirits and set her dreaming as visiting gardens, but for now, armchair visits have to do. If you have never visited Hortulus Farm (now an Affiliate Garden of The Garden Conservancy) or Untermyer Garden—but perhaps especially if you have and can't return this spring—in addition to photographs and videos on their websites, there are two recently-published books that will give you a deeper appreciation: *Chasing Eden* and *Paradise on the Hudson*, whose titles sum up



their garden makers' ambitions and imagination.

*Chasing Eden* is as close to a full-out garden tour from the founders as one can get from a couch. It is beautifully illustrated by celebrated photographer Rob Cardillo. And as with any good garden tour, there's a map. There are nine sections, each of which ends with a highly personal view of familiar chapters in landscape history, followed by one page each of dos and don'ts that will appeal most to novice gardeners. The section "Water Features" is typical. It considers Hortulus Farm's features ("The Creek and Lake," "The Milk Pond," "The Pool Garden," "The Village Fountain," and "The Koi Pond"); follows with 250-or-so words on "The Picturesque School"; and ends with practical advice under the headings "Do" ("Have one, i.e., a water feature. It doesn't matter how small or simple.") and "Don't" ("Put something too small in too large a space. Scale is all. . ."). Getting that right in gardens the size and number of Hortulus Farm's has been no easy matter.

The tour begins with a history of the landskip ("Lay of the Land") from a 1,000-acre grant in 1683 by William Penn to two brothers. After selling, bequeathing, and dividing, there was a 300-acre farmstead in 1748, which remained in one family until the early part of the 20th century. It then became a sawmill, a bootleg operation during Prohibition, and finally, after several more owners, Renny Reynolds, a Manhattan event planner and uber-florist responsible for Studio 54's extravagant celebrations, fell in love with the then-derelict fifteen-acre site on a creek in rural Bucks County, Pennsylvania. It had an historic 1793 stone farmhouse, dairy barns (it had been a flourishing dairy farm in the 19th century), milk shed, carriage house, corncrib, but no garden. Renny, who was trained as a landscape architect, saw gardens. With his partner, Jack Staub (garden writer and author of the charming series *75 Exciting Vegetables for Your Garden*, *75 Remarkable Fruits*, and *75 Exceptional Herbs*, among other Gibbs Smith titles), they transformed "its unruly topography into our vision of an earthly paradise."

Jack is the writer and gives Renny all of the credit for the design ("It is his eye and talent alone that saw possibility where I, at least in the beginning, saw only what was baldly staring back at me, and it is his vision that has made our gardens what they are today."), but the "Edible Gardens" are clearly Jack's labor of love. What distinguishes this tour from unguided desultory wandering (or just looking at photographs and not reading text) is the detail in which the guides describe how they got from fifteen acres of undistinguished farmland with "the substantial ballast of the buildings at the heart of the farm" ("honestly, this is where all gardens need to start") to 100 acres with twenty-four distinct gardens containing urns, fountains, sundial, sculpture, statues, and more structures—rustic bridge, lake pavilion, aviary, Japanese teahouse (although it has no resemblance to that Japanese architecture), Temple Canum ("We have always loved the idea of the canine burial plots one so often sees in English gardens"), and most astonishingly, at the center of the French Garden, a "miniature" replica of the Eiffel Tower ("miniature" but as I remember it, it is at least sixteen feet tall). It had been bought in the Cotswolds and used for



*Hortulus Farm's faux Eiffel Tower*



*The Pool Garden at Hortulus Farm*

some years for chic Manhattan events until retired to the farm. There are stories around much of the hardscape Jack and Renny have acquired over the years in their travels, and adapted for use in their gardens. It testifies to how much fun they have had both when they travel and when they garden.

All of this suggests the pull between “classical conceits” and “farm vernacular,” phrases that are repeated often in *Chasing Eden*. So, for example, they decide against terracing: “In the classical lexicon, steep slopes like these would generally be solved by the application of terracing, but formal terracing seemed to us totally inappropriate to our American farm vernacular.” But they build a Pool Garden with an imposing central fountain—“a classically inspired affair 6 feet tall with a shallow basin held aloft by a trio of putti. . . A feature appropriate to an American farm vernacular? We’re pleading the Fifth.” And the faux Eiffel Tower? “We have managed to integrate such formal-verging-on-unconventional ideas into our rural landscape by siting them and surrounding them with sufficient informality.” Of their many references to great gardens and gardeners, the authors do not name one that for me has the most resonance with Hortulus Farm: Le Désert de Retz, the private pleasure garden and pastoral experiment of François Racine de Monville,

a fashionable aristocrat of the ancien régime. He retreated from his sybaritic life in Paris with a vision, just as Jack and Renny retreated from New York. Nearly two hundred years before they began transforming their rural property, Monville—also on one hundred acres—created a completely unconventional jardin anglo-chinois with naturalistic plantings and paths and with twenty follies that made a circuit of his garden a theatrical event. It is arguably the greatest folly garden of the 18th century and in it the most famous and daringly innovative folly is the Broken Column.

Jack expresses their doubts in a final reflective section: “Our intentions were to create a garden that respected our historic architecture and vernacular, followed the lay of our land, was inclusive of our many wooded and pastured areas, and allowed formal-esque statements to occur where both feasible and desirable. Our hope was that they would be like little pops of horticultural surprise. . . Had we managed to achieve a sympathetically woven fabric, catching up the many colored strands we had chosen to employ, or some tasteless, supersized miniature golf course, lacking only a waterwheel and lighthouse to really put the icing on the cake?” Ironically, during the restoration of Désert, a portion of the estate was leased to a golf club. The line is permeable.

The tour is a success, but *Chasing Eden* does have flaws. The index has no topics, people or places (not even their garden’s picturesque place names); there are only plant names, mostly vernacular (as through-

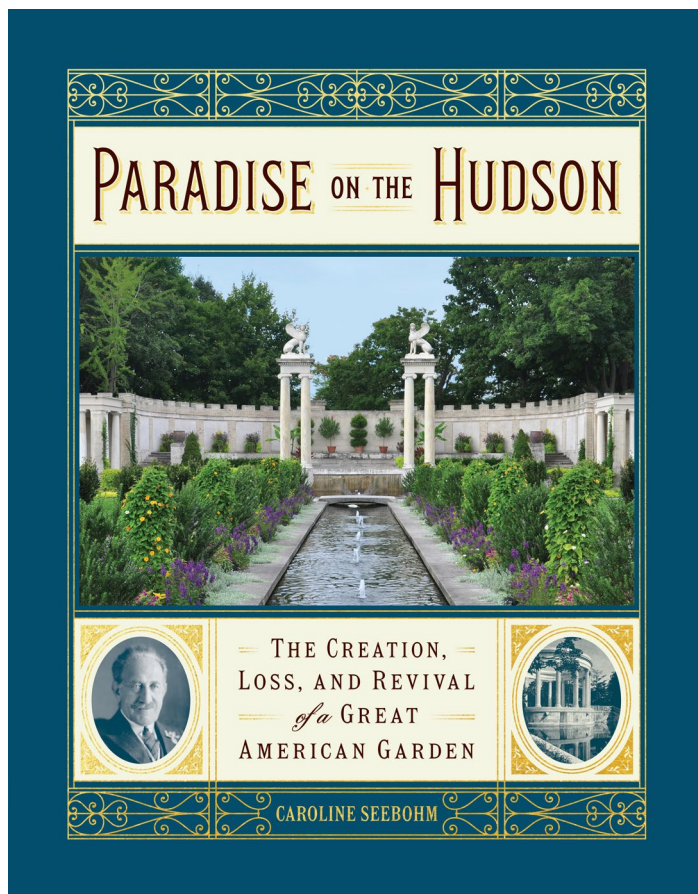


out the book) leading inevitably to confusion. Why, for example, is *Myosotis* in the index as both “forget-me-not” and “true-blue forget-me-not” when it is mentioned in the text only twice in passing? And are these different plants? Is it the weedy *Myosotis scorpioides* or the Northwest native *Myosotis asiatica*? It is impossible to know. I value a good index and this is not one. There is the typical passel of minor copy-editing errors, and some jarringly out-of-date usage (“An oriental affair that features a bamboo pipe on a hinge” to describe the Japanese shishi odoshi or deer-scarer). An editor should have queried “Scandinavian influence” and “dreamy, drift-y Nordic vision.” If the reference is to the Dutch Wave, Piet Oudolf, Henk Gerritsen, et al., then it is the Netherlands—not a Nordic or Scandinavian country. And how does one miss “The Specimen Aboretum” [sic] in a section header?

But the book is a rich and thought-provoking exploration of the why and how of garden making that will interest anyone whose spirits soar with a good garden visit. And did I mention there are irresistible animals?

*Paradise on the Hudson* is less the garden tour I was anticipating than a fascinating biography of a nearly forgotten 20th century public figure. Almost every page astonished me: How did I not know about this remarkable man and these chapters in our history? Samuel Untermyer was born in the mid-19th century and died in 1940—“Hitler’s bitterest foe” after years of fighting antisemitism here and the rise of Nazism in Germany. He was a celebrity who entertained Albert Einstein, a fabulously successful attorney who advocated for Progressive reforms, and a wildly ambitious gardener who sought to create “the finest garden in the world.” “Untermyer had always intended that the gardens be enjoyed . . . by the American people. And the people came.” On one day in September 1939, it was reported that 30,000 people showed up. There were also special events for the wealthy and powerful when private cars on special trains brought partygoers from New York to Greystone (the name of the estate in Yonkers). They would have seen a mansion decorated to the hilt with flowers from the gardens and the greenhouses (there were sixty) and perhaps Isadora Duncan dancing on the great grass parterres. “The attractions were on a scale not seen in other estates opened to the public at that time, and most of the other wealthy landowners with great gardens in the area did not have Untermyer’s flair for publicity. . . . Every detail was carefully calibrated.” Renny Reynolds would have cheered.

The grand estate stretched along the Hudson with spectacular views across the river to the Palisades. By the 1970s, the mansion and greenhouses were gone; where the vast vegetable gardens once stood, there was now a section of hospital grounds; where there had been 150 acres of romantic gardens influenced by the classic gardens of Persia, Greece, and Italy, there were now sixteen acres of not entirely romantic ruins and poorly maintained park. It was then called Untermyer Park and it was on the edge of extinction. A series of fortuitous bankruptcies put land that had been part of the estate in the hands of bankers and



in 1996, assisted by the Open Space Institute and the Trust for Public Land, Yonkers bought the land and returned it to the park, which expanded from 16 acres to its current 43. Then in 2010, the brilliant and indefatigable Stephen Byrns got involved and the restoration began. He had been on Wave Hill's board and enlisted Marco Polo Stufano to consult and hired Timothy Tilghman, a former Wave Hill gardener, to become his first gardener. The last decade of Untermyer's history is the subject of the final chapter, "The Rescue," but it is too short to adequately tell the story of all that has been accomplished. And "rescue" doesn't begin to describe the miracle that has been worked there. There are particularly good photographs of the restoration work in progress and of all the pieces that are being put together again.

Throughout the book, enlivening nearly every page are fine contemporary photographs (many by Jessica Norman, formerly one of Untermyer's gardeners and now Outreach and Education Coordinator) and fascinating historical photographs from numerous archives. There are maps, a select bibliography, and an index. There is enough about the history, architecture, horticulture, and restoration of this important American garden to recommend it for CBHL collections.

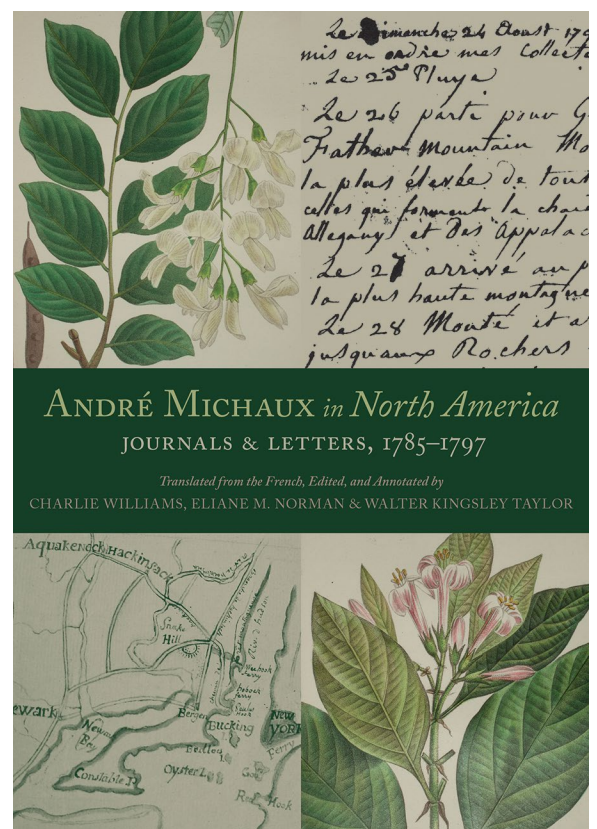
While the book will enrich a visit to Untermyer, it is essential to experience this garden. One will not forget entering the walled garden for the first time or standing at the top of the dramatic Villa d'Este-like staircase that descends toward the Hudson River and to the two thirty-foot-tall ancient Roman marble columns at the bottom. "Scale is all."

*André Michaux in North America: Journals & Letters, 1785-1797*. Translated from the French, edited, and annotated by Charlie Williams, Eliane M. Norman, and Walter Kingsley Taylor. Tuscaloosa: The University of Alabama Press, 2020. 608 pages, illustrations, maps, portraits (16 maps, 124 color figures, 18 black-and-white figures). \$54.95. ISBN 978-0-8173-9244-0 (hardcover); 978-0-8173-9244-4 (ebook).

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There was already a substantial amount written in Europe about the New World before André Michaux arrived in 1785 with a royal commission to explore and collect plants and seeds for France, especially trees to replenish the French forests depleted by shipbuilding. Spain, England, and France had all laid imperialist claims to parts of North America.

*André Michaux in North America* presents much of Michaux's journals from his 11-year exploration of eastern North America, west to the Mississippi River, north to Canada at the latitude of the Hudson Bay, and including a trip to the Bahamas. He collected thousands of plants and seeds as well as some birds and other animals, kept two holding gardens, made a herbarium, sent numerous shipments to the French government, and upon return to France wrote two books that





became important illustrated botanical reference works: *Histoire des Chênes de l'Amérique* (1801), the first book published on the oaks of North America, and *Flora Boreali-Americana* (1803), a North American flora. His journals not only record plants and animals that he saw and collected, but also his observations and notes of people met, routes taken, and the sheer exertion of exploring the North American wilderness.

Trained as a farmer on a farm owned by Louis XVI and managed by his family, Michaux had four years of formal schooling, showing aptitude for languages and curiosity about the natural world and faraway lands. After the birth of his son François-André and the death of his wife soon afterward, Michaux was taken under the wing of botanist Louis-Guillaume Lemonnier who became his patron, mentor, and life-long friend. Michaux left the farm and began training as an apprentice botanist, dreaming of exploring faraway lands to discover new plants and bring them back for France. He made a few short trips, one to England, another to collect in the Auvergne region of France, and another to the Pyrenees and into Spain. Eager for exploration, he asked Lemonnier to recommend him for an overseas botanical mission.

First he was sent to the Middle East, where in 1782-1785 he collected plants and other objects in what are now Syria, Iran, and Iraq. Back in Paris, he was chosen for an economic mission to North America to explore for plants useful for France, especially trees for forests and ships. He was appointed Royal Botanist by Louis XVI, and left on a ship to New York with his 15-year-old son, a servant, and a trained gardener. With the help of a diplomatic contact at the French embassy in New York, he bought a 30-acre property across the Hudson River in New Jersey for a holding garden, got it set up, and began to learn English and study maps. He made several collecting trips in the area and sent off some plant shipments to France. The diplomatic contact wrote to France to say that two gardens would be required, the second in the southeastern U.S., where there were plants that would grow in the climate of southern France. Bearing letters of introduction from French officials, Michaux made a short trip through Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Virginia and visited Benjamin Franklin, John Bartram, Jr. and William Bartram, and George Washington at Mount Vernon. Then he left the garden in his gardener's hands with instructions, and headed south with his son and servant.

Thus begins the story of Michaux's travels in North America, nine long journeys covering thousands of miles, traced in the book on a color-coded map. Upon reaching South Carolina he found and purchased a 111-acre property near Charleston and hired helpers to build a house, make some fences and cold frames, and get the garden area set up. Then he headed out to explore, returning to Charleston after each trip to process what he had collected: planting the live plants, pressing and mounting plant specimens, skinning animal specimens, identifying and documenting what was collected, and then packaging seeds, live plants and other specimens to ship to France. Observations were noted in his journals day to day, ranging from plant notes and sometimes directions for finding them again, to notes of persons, places, landscapes, and thoughts about various aspects of life in the U.S. His life became a rhythm of being on the move, searching the great wilderness, mostly on foot or on horseback, often with one or several Cherokee guides and an interpreter. Several times the horses were lost or stolen, sometimes recovered. He and his companions followed Native American hunting trails, climbed mountains, forded creeks and rivers, waded through mud, looking for oaks and other trees and plants to send to France, some to record as new botanical discoveries. He took advantage of opportunities to learn how various plants and animals were being used by natives and settlers. He also had a considerable understanding of minerals and soil types and he noted the mineral composition of various landscapes he passed through, knowing that such information would be crucial for naturalizing some of these plants in France. Being broadly interested in natural history and in observing wildlife, he collected birds and other animals, a few shipped alive in cages to France, others killed and preserved as specimens.

Up through late 1789 he ranged through the Carolinas, Georgia, Florida, the Bahamas, Virginia, Maryland, Pennsylvania, New York, and also west into Kentucky, sometimes visiting the same areas in different seasons, noticing that some trees seen in the north were also in the south. News of the political disturbance in France led him to realize that his time here could be cut short. Returning to Charleston, he stayed there for nearly a year and a half before resuming exploration. During that time his son François-André went back to France, and although Michaux did not keep a journal during most of 1790, he did keep lists of what he planted from seed in his garden—published here for the first time—and they show that he was receiving seeds from a number of correspondents from around the world. So his garden also included exotics being naturalized, and he would go on to share many of these plants with local gardeners and plant enthusiasts. He was also sharing seeds with the Bartrams and with Joseph Banks, among others. He rearranged the young trees in his garden, moving many to the nursery and grouping them by genus. At this time he was coming under pressure to reduce or stop his travels and expenses, and to concentrate on making shipments to France. The shifting political situation was affecting support for his mission, his own situation complicated by conflicting messages and problems with the mails to and from France. He received instructions to sell the property in Charleston, and then learned that there was disagreement about this in France. In the face of so much uncertainty Michaux decided on a way to preserve the garden that contained so much of his work: he sold the property at public auction where his friend John J. Himey bought it and then leased it back to him. He then arranged with local friends to have his garden cared for in his absence in exchange for their receiving prized ornamental plants, and in turn they made him a member of the Agricultural Society of Charleston. Then he headed north.

The second half of Michaux's time in North America involved more wide-ranging exploration but in a different context. He was losing support from France as it was shifting from a royalist regime to a republic. Mail service was deteriorating. He spent some time in Philadelphia, forging a strong connection with the American Philosophical Society (APS). He joined a pro-Republic group, remaining true to France, but to a new France. In 1792 he seized opportunity by taking out a loan and mounting his own journey to Canada, in part to observe distribution limits of various plants. I get the impression that he felt most fully alive when he was exploring, and that the time spent back at the gardens and visiting with people along the way were interludes, times for rest and making contacts and processing collections, managing gardens and finances and correspondence, and planning the next route and preparing to get back out there. To give a flavor of the intensity of his experience, part of the Canada trip was a 44-day journey deep into the wilderness by birchbark canoe, accompanied by three indigenous people and an interpreter – he was aiming for James Bay, an area not yet visited by trained botanists. In his journal for August 12-13 he described the two canoes filled with hundreds of pounds of provisions and baggage navigating whitewater rapids on the Chicoutimi River, sometimes getting submerged or overturned, and the five portages (with six native men and seven women hired to carry the provisions and luggage) needed to reach and then summit a cascade. He added: "There is rarely the danger of dying if one knows how to swim, because if you let go in the water current, you are carried immediately to an area where the water is calm and often less than two feet deep; then one must save whatever one can, canoes, baggage, and provisions." (p. 182-183)

Back in Philadelphia, Michaux proposed to the APS a cross-country journey continuing westward beyond the Mississippi River to the Pacific, to explore the vast territory held by Spain. Negotiations and plans for this trip consumed several months and brought him into personal contact with major U.S. scientific and political figures. Eventually the plans fell through, but would be later resurrected and altered for Lewis and Clark. Michaux received new support and instructions from Edmund Charles Genêt, the new minister representing the French Republic, and was tapped for a political mission in Kentucky as a secret couri-


er regarding a planned campaign to attack Spanish outposts to open navigation of the Mississippi. He traveled through Pittsburgh on this trip, and made it to Kentucky and back. Convolved political developments canceled the planned attacks and Michaux was free to resume botanical exploration, carrying letters of safe passage. He made a more thorough three-month trip into the North Carolina mountains, and then in spring 1795 began a year-long journey to the western frontier, going through Kentucky, Indiana and Illinois to the Mississippi River before returning to Charleston, where he began the process of wrapping things up so that he could make shipments and return to France. Before leaving, he endured a betrayal by another French botanist in the U.S. who misrepresented Michaux's work and gardens to the French and tried to take over the gardens for his own. En route back to France, Michaux lost more than half of his baggage when his ship wrecked at the North Sea shore of the Netherlands.

When he finally reached France, he found a much-changed country. He received strong recognition for his work, but little financial compensation. He wanted to return to the United States, but eventually decided to stay put long enough to get the manuscripts for his two books largely finished, leaving them to his son to finalize and publish. Then he signed on for a voyage to Australia, abandoning it at Mauritius and connecting with fellow botanists there instead. He made a garden there and went over to Madagascar to explore and collect plants, dying of a tropical fever in 1802. Thus ended the extraordinary career of this extraordinary man.

Michaux kept ten journal notebooks in North America. The first volume was lost at sea, but the other nine have been translated, edited and annotated with extensive notes by Williams, Norman, and Taylor. The result is an enthralling account in Michaux's own [translated] words of his working life in North America, containing notes on where he was, what he was doing, what he saw, who he met, what he collected, how he processed what was collected, the role of his gardens, and more. Over half the book is his own journal entries, organized into chapters by journeys, each chapter beginning with an editors' summary and ending with one or more letters, most of them to or from colleagues or government officials in France. Those letters are intense snapshots of moments in Michaux's professional life and the shifting political realities of France heading toward Revolution. They lend expanded context to the boots-on-the-ground focus of plant exploration and collecting and the management of growing plants, preparing shipments, and grappling with finances as the financiers at the other end faced their own changing realities.

The remaining pages of the book contain the truly remarkable notes (108 pages) by the editors that expand, explain, and situate Michaux's journal entries, identifying (when possible) plants and animals that he observed and collected, as well as the people that he interacted with (some of whom helped him in various ways), the routes he took, the places he visited and sometimes stayed at, and explanations of historical details regarding issues such as finances and politics. Some errors by previous botanists or authors are also corrected, along with occasional untangling of thickets of past names, such as for oaks. These extensive annotations bring Michaux's own notes into even more vivid focus, including the work that was done to retrace/document his routes as much as possible. In addition, there is an appendix with 99 color photos of plants that Michaux would have seen, and two tables listing plants (45 pages) and animals (3 pages) that he described in his North American journals and letters, giving his names for them, modern binomials, common names, and page numbers for this volume. The publisher's web page for the book provides downloadable, searchable copies of these tables. An extensive bibliography and an index are also included. This more-than-ten-year-long historical research project was a phenomenal endeavor, and the results neatly presented in this book give us a greater appreciation of who Michaux was, what he was doing here, and how his work contributed to an understanding of the flora and fauna of eastern North America, as well as how plants came into gardens here and abroad through his dedication, hard

work, and appetite for exploration and discovery.

Highly recommended for those interested in botany, gardens, forestry, U.S. history, the South, 18th-century exploration in the U.S., or just a fascinating read. Congratulations to Williams, Norman and Taylor on this great work, and I'd like to give a special shout-out to Charlie Williams, who for some years was a CBHL member before his work took him into public libraries. 

## 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 (formerly 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, ([contact email available through LibGuides](#))

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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](mailto:jstevenson@longwoodgardens.org). Newsletter team: Publications Committee Chair Amy Kasameyer, [akasameyer@berkeley.edu](mailto:akasameyer@berkeley.edu), Editor Judy Stevenson, Proofreaders: Staci Catron, [scatron@atlantahistorycenter.com](mailto:scatron@atlantahistorycenter.com), Jennie Oldfield, [joldfield@atlantahistorycenter.com](mailto:joldfield@atlantahistorycenter.com), Kathy Allen, [kallen@umn.edu](mailto:kallen@umn.edu), and Jodi Shippee, [jodi.shippee@gmail.com](mailto:jodi.shippee@gmail.com).