# Mission Statement

The Tucson Botanical Gardens connects people with plants and nature through art, science, history and culture.

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Cover photo: Oenothera pallida (White Evening Primrose)

This newsletter is published quarterly by Tucson Botanical Gardens and mailed as a benefit to members. All photos by Gardens staff and volunteers unless otherwise noted. Designer, Theresa Reindl Bingham. Edited by Matt Adamson and Addison Graham.

Duplicate Mailings?  
If so, please contact Membership at (520) 326-9686, ext. *13.
Let Nature be our Teacher

Observing a plant sitting on my living room window ledge following the sun as it moves throughout the day demonstrates that no one has to convince, or cajole, a plant to survive or do the right thing. Unlike people, plants don’t need Fitbit reminders, TV ads, or food tracking apps to stay healthy. Roots of trees will probe hundreds of feet deep searching for water, tiny young saguaros grow under the protection of mesquite or palo verde trees, and then there’s the animal kingdom – their acts of courage and determination to thrive and survive are astonishing.

As the Tucson Botanical Gardens maneuvers through 2021, survival comes from creativity, the ability to look and plan forward, and a determination not just to survive but thrive. Here’s a glimpse of the coming year.

Edna’s Eatery by Westward Look Resort opened this winter in the former Gardens’ Café. Providing breakfast and lunch, both tableside and take-away, Chef Todd Sicolo exemplifies creativity through his menu inspired by nature.

The Garden staff took a crazy idea (“Let’s buy an old VW bug and trailer ...”) and created the Cactus Car and the Red Trailer Farm. Rob and Adam transformed those beat-up vehicles into something useful, unique, and downright extraordinary!

How grateful are we that nature understands that energy must be stored in rhizomes and bulbs to produce a blanket of color in the Iris Garden? We were treated to an early bloom of daffodils in pots, but we’re just now seeing flowers along the Ironwood Path.

Indoor and outdoor galleries are featuring Vicky Stromee, Catherine Harold, Kyle Johnston, and Beth Surdut.

We continue our classes online and welcome our neighbors and those from around the country who have participated.

NEW! The contracts have been finalized, and I’m excited to share that TBG has been selected to be one of 10 gardens worldwide to host “Seeing the Invisible,” an augmented reality exhibit curated and organized by the Jerusalem Botanical Gardens. Twenty well-known and emerging contemporary artists are being chosen to create this exhibit, which will open in September 2021. More on this and other opportunities later!

This leads me to one of the most meaningful lessons I’ve learned from nature this year – and it comes from trees. It has been said that a tree is only as strong as the forest that surrounds it, and like the roots of a tree, we’ve reached out farther than ever to you, our community, and our public garden colleagues. Like a forest of trees, the combined effort of a community provides the strength and support needed to ensure that the Tucson Botanical Gardens continues to thrive.

Thank you for being a member, and enjoy spring at the Gardens!

Michelle Conklin
Executive Director

Michelle Conklin
Executive Director
Lessons Learned

Adam Farrell-Wortman  
Horticulture Manager  
Tucson Botanical Gardens

Guests always tell me how lucky I am to have this job, and I couldn’t agree more – I love my work! However, it’s not the day-to-day gardening tasks that guests see us performing that make this job so rewarding (though I do like the everyday garden work). I love working with my creative team of gardeners who are always considering how to improve our many pocket gardens to advance our mission of connecting people to plants and nature.

When planting species that aren’t native to our desert, it is extremely important to consider the micro-climate of the space as well as any soil alterations and irrigation changes that might be needed. Though we risk failure, that risk is calculated and mitigated by best horticulture practices. This year, with the help of the Stanley Smith Horticultural Trust grant, we will be trying many new plant species and varieties while addressing soil salt build-up, soil compaction, and other issues that hinder nutrient uptake in our ramada planting beds.

We have been experimenting with plants that have never been grown at TBG or anywhere in-ground in Tucson (other than perhaps in some private collections). In our Woodland Ramada we have planted native species of the southwest sky islands that naturally grow at elevations between 5,000 and 7,000 feet. These include pines and junipers, vines, and perennial flowers. After one full year of growing, one third of the species in the original planting failed, such as Pinus oocarpa (Mexican Yellow Pine). However, those plants that survived, like Juniperus osteosperma (Utah Juniper) or Vitus arizonica (Wild Arizona Grape), have thrived, and we will invest in more of them and try some additional species, such as native ferns.

In the Floral Ramada we have been seeking perennials that have large inflorescences. We have had a fair amount of success with species that store their energies underground in tubers or bulbs, like lilies, dahlias, and daffodils. Dahlia ‘Toto Anemone’ and other new varieties seem to be able to handle the worst of our summers. One of our most successful trials last year was a new hybrid of Echinacea and Rudbeckia called Echibeckia. The breeder provided us with a few plugs to test and they put on a fantastic late spring show that lasted into the summer. This year we will be trying new heat and drought tolerant day lilies, begonias, clematis, and hibiscus. We will also be experimenting with cold-hardy kiwi and avocado in the Kitchen Ramada.

In gardening, as in life, failure is a learning opportunity. I’m not a stubborn gardener and will rarely try the same plant in the same space if it wasn’t successful the first time. If a new plant fails, the problem solving begins. We search for the reasons why, and apply what we’ve learned when choosing new plants. I know some of our new plantings will fail and those failures will present new opportunities.
“Lovely Day. Citrus trimming continues. Time for snipping frosted tips and branches from kumquat, tangerine and lemon.”

– Bernice Porter’s Spring Garden Journal
IN PORTER GALLERY*

India: A Visual Journey
January 9 – May 9, 2021

*Photography by Vicky Stromee and Catherine Harold*

Enjoy a taste of a visual journey through less often seen parts of India, a land of contrasts, an amalgam of ancient and modern, sacred and secular, a confluence of cultural and religious traditions.

It is a mélange of colors, sounds, smells, and tastes; a chaotic and yet surprisingly fluid society that welcomes visitors and pilgrims alike. In 2019, well-known national photographers Vicky Stromee and Catherine Harold set off to India to fulfill a dream. They immersed themselves in India’s culture and captured the art, love, and intensity of this most beautiful country and its people.

Their experience of India, that life is hard and life is beautiful, is well reflected in the exhibition’s large-scale imagery that allows the viewer to be mesmerized by the many scenes. Vicky and Catherine are thrilled to bring this experience to the Gardens with its emphasis on connecting people with plants and nature through art and culture.

Catalogue on sale in the Gardens gift shop.

*Note: Due to physical distancing protocols, a maximum of six guests at one time will be allowed in the indoor galleries. Mask wearing is mandatory.
**THE BACK PORCH GALLERY**

Beth Surdut, The Art of Paying Attention to Nature  
January 30 – June 6, 2021

“If you practice the art of paying attention, you will find that grand adventures await you right outside your door. Once you start looking, it is hard to stop.”  
- Beth Surdut

Explore our local wildlife and our integrated place in nature with the wildlife illustrations of award-winning artist, writer, and radio commentator Beth Surdut. Beth is a certified Environmental Educator who combines storytelling, visual art, and science to observe and understand the creatures with whom we share our lives.

This exhibit is sure to invite you to observe, with unbounded curiosity, the beings that fly, crawl, and skitter along with us in our changing environment. These include the fierce Harris’s hawk she met outside her kitchen, the zebra-tailed lizard that hitched a ride in her pants, talkative ravens, great horned owls, and others.

You can view virtual tours of these exhibits on the Tucson Botanical Gardens YouTube channel.

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**IN THE EDUCATION CLASSROOM**

Kyle Johnston, Expression of Color and Shape  
March – May 2021

Kyle Johnston is a self-taught artist who has lived and worked in Tucson, Arizona since 1989. He has been active in the local art community for over 25 years. Kyle works in multiple media, which include collage, assemblage, and acrylic painting on canvas.

“My works on canvas are derived from the abstract expressionist approach to painting and reflect that influence which has led me to this current body of work.”  
- Kyle Johnston

Kyle is the founding member of Heart of Tucson Art, an honorary member of the Contemporary Artists of Southern Arizona, and a former member of the Tucson Pima County Review Board for Public Art.

Editor’s note: Kyle’s work has hung in the Education Classroom throughout the COVID-19 closure. We are happy that this space is now open for viewing and thank him for his patience during this time.

*Note: Due to physical distancing protocols, a maximum of six guests at one time will be allowed in the indoor galleries. Mask wearing is mandatory.*
All TBG Community Classes are virtual until further notice. Online class participants will receive a Zoom link via email for each live class two hours before the class begins.

Online classes are recorded and participants receive a video replay that is available to enjoy at your convenience for two weeks after the date of the class.

TBG Members receive a 20% discount!

**FAMILY FRIENDLY FUN**

**Keeping a Desert Journal:**
Writing, Drawing, and Painting out in Nature
Appropriate for Kids of All Ages
Wednesday, March 17, 3:00-4:00 p.m.
$16 Member/$20 Non-Member

**ART**

**Watercolor Butterflies:** Drawing and Painting
Wednesday, March 10, 2:00-3:30 p.m.
$24 Member/$30 Non-Member

**Botanical Art in Pen and Ink: Succulents**
Wednesday, March 24, 5:30-7:00 p.m.
$24 Member/$30 Non-Member

**Modern Calligraphy**
Wednesday, April 14, 2:00-3:30 p.m.
$24 Member/$30 Non-Member

**Botanical Art in Watercolor: Succulents**
Wednesday, April 21, 5:30-7:00 p.m.
$24 Member/$30 Non-Member

**Watercolor Flowers:** Drawing and Painting
Wednesday, May 12, 2:00-3:30 p.m.
$24 Member/$30 Non-Member

**Botanical Art in Pen and Ink: Agave**
Wednesday, May 26, 5:30-7:00 p.m.
$24 Member/$30 Non-Member

**GARDENING**

**How to Get A Strong Start with your Container Garden**
Thursday, March 4, 11:00 a.m.-12:30 p.m.
$24 Member/$30 Non-Member

**Tree Pruning 101**
Wednesday, March 17, 10:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.
$24 Member/$30 Non-Member

**Butterfly Gardening in the Desert Garden**
Friday, March 19, 10:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.
$24 Member/$30 Non-Member

**The Easy-Care Desert Container Garden**
Saturday, March 27, 11:00 a.m.-12:30 p.m.
$24 Member/$30 Non-Member

**Edible Landscapes**
Wednesday, March 31, 10:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.
$24 Member/$30 Non-Member

**Landscape Design for Reduced Maintenance**
Friday, April 16, 10:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.
$24 Member/$30 Non-Member

**Just Add Water:** Keeping Your Summer Plantings Alive in Desert Pots
Saturday, April 24, 11:00 a.m.-12:30 p.m
$24 Member/$30 Non-Member

**Color Gardens**
Friday, May 7, 10:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.
$24 Member/$30 Non-Member

**Overcoming Desert Death:** Don’t Let Your Pots Go Empty All Summer
Saturday, May 29, 11:00 a.m.-12:30 p.m.
$24 Member/$30 Non-Member

**NATURE & ECOLOGY**

**Mimicry in Nature**
Friday, March 12, 10:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.
$24 Member/$30 Non-Member

**Feathers**
Friday, April 9, 10:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.
$24 Member/$30 Non-Member

**Venomous Snakes of North America: Biology and Diversity**
Friday, May 14, 10:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.
$24 Member/$30 Non-Member

**CULINARY ARTS**

**Recipe Writing Workshop**
Thursday, March 11, 3:00-4:30 p.m.
$24 Member/$30 Non-Member

**Sonoran Capirotada for Easter**
Sunday, March 28, 3:00-4:30 p.m.
$24 Member/$30 Non-Member

**Calabacitas Con Queso y Tortillas Caseras**
Sunday, April 11, 3:00-4:30 p.m.
$24 Member/$30 Non-Member

**Enchiladas Sonorenses**
Sunday, May 16, 3:00-4:30 p.m.
$24 Member/$30 Non-Member
Hungry visitors to the Gardens will have an exciting new option with the opening of Edna’s Eatery by Westward Look Resort in March. Occupying the café building adjacent to the Friends House, the new eating spot will be managed in partnership with the iconic local resort. The Gardens and the resort share similarities that reflect the unique southwestern flavors of Arizona and the Sonoran Desert, and under the leadership of world-renowned Executive Chef Todd Sicolo, Edna’s will offer tasty dishes that represent locally grown & sourced products providing an organic and healthy dining experience.

The café name, “Edna’s Eatery” was inspired by Edna Johnson – housekeeper, friend, nanny, and gardener to the Gardens’ founders, the Porter family. Mrs. Porter frequently noted in her Garden journal that Edna’s quest for harvesting lemons, figs, and oranges would result in the most “scrumptious cookies and pies.”

For more information about Edna’s Eatery by Westward Look Resort, please visit TucsonBotanical.org.
Red Trailer Farm & The Cactus Car  
(Anything Can Be a Pot)

Who would have thought that a World War II ammunition trailer could be converted into a portable farm which can grow vegetables, herbs, and edible flowers? The Red Trailer Farm utilizes straw bale gardening which maximizes growing space by growing vertically as well as horizontally. Check out the What’s Ready for Pickin’ list on the side of the trailer, and enjoy!

The Cactus Car: a classic Volkswagen Bug has been brought back to life and reclaimed by cacti and succulents from around the world. While taking advantage of the versatility and variety of these magnificent plants that are so common to Tucsonans, we can forget how truly amazing they are in form and structure. Check out the “engine” and nature-inspired “wheels!”

Like all of our exhibits, this homespun art installation is made possible by the creativity and hard work of our team here at TBG, and our sponsoring community partners.

Special Thanks
Ponderosa Cactus, Plant Sponsor
Michael Lex, loan of 1955 Willys Jeep Truck
Real Estate and Privacy in Your Estate Plan

Presented by Angela C. Moore, Attorney at Law

Tuesday, March 23, 2021 at 4:00 p.m.
Register at www.tucsonbotanical.org/class/estate-planning

The Gardens’ free 30-minute online session presents options for including real estate assets in your estate plan, and the levels of privacy you can achieve. It is open to anyone interested in how to plan to secure your future legacy, benefit your loved ones, and make a lasting difference in our community.

This session will be of particular interest to residents and snowbirds who own property in Arizona as well as in other states.

Since the Gardens’ beginnings 40 years ago, bequests and other estate gifts have provided vital support for Tucson Botanical Gardens’ mission. These gifts touch every department and program, including horticultural therapy, Butterfly Magic, youth education, exhibitions, expansion, and so much more.

Donors who have notified us of their intent to include the Tucson Botanical Gardens in their wills or estate plans are recognized with membership in the Penstemon Society.

3 Ways to Support the Gardens

Cash
Gifts by check or credit card are the most popular giving methods. Cash gifts may be made by mail, in person at the Gift Shop, telephone, or online at www.tucsonbotanical.org/donate/

Gift of Stock
Gifts of appreciated securities may provide you with significant tax benefits. For information on how to transfer stock to the Tucson Botanical Gardens, please contact the Development office at development2@tucsonbotanical.org or (520) 326-9686 ext. *25

Retirement Funds
The IRA Charitable Rollover allows taxpayers age 70½ or older to transfer up to $100,000 annually from their IRA accounts directly to charities, like the Tucson Botanical Gardens, without first having to recognize the distribution as income. Please consult with your advisors to see if this form of giving suits your tax and financial circumstances. Account administrators should mail a check directly to the Tucson Botanical Gardens, 2150 N. Alvernon Way, Tucson, AZ 85712. Tucson Botanical Gardens is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization; Tax ID# 23-7037310.

Angela C. Moore is an attorney and partner at Moore, Masunas & Moore, P.L.L.C. in Tucson. She focuses on estate planning, probate, trust administration, and guardianship/conservatorship matters in Arizona. She is a member of the Wealth Counsel, NAELA, and other professional organizations.

Angela has an advanced law degree in taxation and has served on the Probate & Trust Executive Council. She generously provides volunteer legal services to the community and is a frequent speaker on estate planning issues.
MEMORIALS & TRIBUTES

The following donors, who made contributions between November 1, 2020 and January 31, 2021, wished for their friends and loved ones to be remembered amid the Gardens’ natural beauty. We are inspired by your generosity and honored that you chose the Gardens.

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Paul Bryant Smith Foundation

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The following donors designated their generous contributions to the Gardens’ signature programs. We are grateful for their investments which were received between November 1, 2020 and January 31, 2021.

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Bayer Fund

SENSORY GARDEN

Stanley Smith Horticultural Trust

*Amoreuxia gonzalezii (Santa Rita Mountain Yellowshow)*
Thank You to our new and renewing Agave and Cholla members from August 1 to October 31, 2020.

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We are so grateful for the outpouring of support from our community. Because we had so many wonderful donors this quarter, we are only able to list the donor names above the $100 donation level. Thank you for your understanding.

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