Dedicated to
Nina Porter Ford

top left: “Granny” Porter with Nina at Christening, 1936

top right: Nina Porter working in front yard (Scottie in wheelbarrow), NW corner of property, 1947

center: Nina Porter Ford family reunion at TBG 2014.

bottom left: Nina Porter in swimming pool, 1955

bottom right: L to R: Nina Porter Ford, Haggis the Scottie, Danny Ford, Becky Ford. NW corner of living room. Portrait painting: Nina in wedding dress by Doris Loney

All photos courtesy of Porter/Ford families, TBG permanent collection
On a typical day walking around the Gardens, you may see a class of children hunting for butterflies or a group of people eyeing hawks and owls through binoculars. It’s easy to forget that the grounds of the Gardens were once home to a family of five - six including Edna, the family’s nanny and cook. Flashback to the period between 1929 and the 1960s, and you would have seen the Porter children chasing chickens, picking vegetables, flowers, and herbs. You would have been delighted at the sight of teenagers sunning themselves on the top ledge of the cattle tank pool.

On May 4th, 2021, Cornelia (Nina) Porter Ford, the youngest and only remaining daughter of Bernice and Rutger Porter, passed away quietly at her home in Connecticut. Nina inherited her lifelong passion for horticulture, botany, and conservationism from her parents, Rutger and Bernice Porter. In 1957, she and her husband Thomas moved to West Hartford, CT, where she raised four children, cultivated verdant gardens filled with flowers, herbs, vegetables, and shrubs, pursued her master’s degree in biology, published an educational teaching unit on, “A Year in the Life of the Little Brown Bat” and was a life-long spiritual seeker. According to her family, she was also “a quiet feminist.”

While most of her life was spent on the east coast, she continued to play an essential role at Tucson Botanical Gardens. She was a fervent believer in supporting operations and gifted TBG their first endowment gift. She believed in and understood that the Gardens would change and evolve. When I called to ask permission to move the historical herb shed to a new location, she said, “My mother never had a problem ripping out a tree or a plant – if it’s not working – get rid of it!”

As noted in her recent obituary, Nina sought a personal connection with everyone, always asking their name and taking a genuine interest in their lives. That was proven many times as she and I would talk on the phone, and the conversation would always begin with, “First, tell me, how is your husband, David? And Max – is he still playing music?”

In 2014 we were privileged to host a Porter/Ford Family reunion at the Gardens. Walking through her former home, she remarked, “I remember cuddling up with a book in that window,” “It was so much fun to sleep on this back porch on hot nights.” “I remember when Edna planted that tree – look how tall it’s grown!” “Mother would never have imagined our home becoming all of this. She’d be astounded and so proud.” I wish I could take all of you back to that moment when Bernice’s great-grandchildren were skipping through “Granny’s garden.”

All families have beliefs and values passed down from generation to generation, which helps guide their legacy. What an honor and privilege it’s been to be a part of this family’s story. With that, it only seems fitting that we dedicate this issue to Nina Porter Ford.

Michelle
Executive Director
“Were there not springs before that spring,
Was there not whist and whispering of wind in willow until then?
And shall there not be springs again?”

- Bernice Porter
The 2150 Club is a social and philanthropic club for young professionals with an interest in environmental sustainability, gardening, community stewardship, and supporting the mission of TBG.

Designed for adults ages 21 to 50, Club membership comes with Family level benefits, special amenities, and opportunities to mix with colleagues and industry leaders in a variety of community projects and social events.

Things are ramping up for the 2150 Club in these next few months. Check out what we’ve got going below.

#### Upcoming 2150 Club Events

**2150 Wanderland Clubhouse**

**December 6th, 2021 from 4:30 to 9:00 pm**  
**Tucson Botanical Gardens**

Enjoy our famous holiday lights displays and, this night only, a special look at the University of Arizona College of Fine Arts and Digital Design’s new Virtual Reality experiences!

Be sure to bring your 2150 Club cards for entry into our cozy 2150 Club House where you can grab a hot cup of mulled wine and mingle with other members!

**Tour World-Class Greenhouse**

**Friday, January 14th, 2022 (75 minutes, Virtual)**

Right here in southern Arizona, Bayer Marana, one of the largest companies in the world, is growing corn for seed production for farmers around the globe using robotics and automation.

But what does that mean and why corn? Take an in-depth virtual tour of the 7-acre Bayer Marana Greenhouse, learn about modern agriculture, sustainability in our operations and the positive impact the team has on the local community.

Get a head start on your tour here: https://www.bayer.com/en/us/marana

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**Early History of American Women in Ecology**

**Judith Bronstein, Ph.D.**  
Distinguished University of Arizona professor of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology

**February 11th, 2022 time TBD**  
**Tucson Botanical Gardens**

Dr. Judith Bronstein will join us to discuss the little-appreciated role of women in the budding field of ecology (focus 1867-1917). Lunch will be included.

Don’t miss your opportunity to hear from this highly acclaimed ecologist!
Garden Candy

Adam Farrell-Wortman
TBG Horticulture Manager

I am a firm believer that there is a native plant, water-wise plant, and/or hardscape solution for every landscaping need. However, gardening is not just about necessity and there are some niches that native plants won’t fill. The most obvious is edible gardening. While there are lots of edible native plants, if you want to grow a large portion of your own diet you will be planting non-natives and many water intensive plants.

At the Tucson Botanical Gardens we want to encourage water-wise and native planting, but our mission is to connect people to plants and nature which requires an eclectic plant pallet. We are also committed to preserving the Porter Family’s legacy which includes the plants they loved and would have planted, which are not all native or water-wise.

Fortunately, like life, gardening isn’t an all or nothing endeavor. While the majority of our cultivated world needs to be native and water conscious, it is ok to grow some plants that aren’t. There is nothing wrong with a little “garden candy.” If the smell of a rose reminds you of a beloved auntie or you adore the unmatched flavor of a sun-kissed, off-the-vine tomato you should grow it without the slightest tinge of guilt.

Horticulture as an industry has also begun to take into account the need for water conservation and the propagation of native plants. Many breeders are endeavoring to make the candy plants more water-wise and breed natives so that they can replace those non-native garden standards without the loss of those sought-after attributes like large bloom size and continual blooming.

Over the past few years TBG has been trialing these new hybrids and cultivars to improve on our own water conservation efforts and so that we can recommend them to Tucsonans who have a sweet tooth. We have also been trialing new heat resistant garden standards for those who have moved to Tucson and miss their favorite flowers from childhood.

This year we were a grant recipient from the Stanley Smith Horticulture Trust. This support allowed us to trial many new cultivars in our ramadas. The grant also provided support for soil and irrigation mitigation.

As for the planting trials, we had a mix of success, failure, and “let’s give it another year or two.” When choosing plants we looked for varieties with drought tolerance and heat tolerance within (or very close to) our USDA hardiness zone, which is 9a. We did make exceptions to the drought tolerance if the plant has a long underground dormancy period (many bulbs only use water 4 months of the year) or if it was being placed in an area that already had extra moisture (like near a fountain).

The biggest successes were the hardy hibiscus. *Hibiscus x moscheutos* performed well but has issues with the soil pH. *Hibiscus acetosella ‘Mahogany Splendor’ was a no-fuss vigorous bloomer and grower as was the wild *Hibiscus lasiocarpos*. We knew *Hibiscus syriacus* (considered tropical but hardy enough for Tucson) performs well, but we were really happy with the cultivar ‘Gossip Queen.’ We had mixed results with the other tropical hibiscus we trialed. The species hibiscus grew well but didn’t bloom much (so we’ll see what they do next year) and the hybrids continually struggled.
I had high hopes for the *Hydrangea macrophylla* ‘Pühm-ii’ but it continually had pH issues. However, it did bloom well and managed the summer heat just fine so we decided to dig it out and pot it up where we can more effectively manage the pH.

I can highly recommend Dahlia ‘Honey’ which is one of the anemone dahlias (smaller flower) and Dahlia ‘Kidd’s Climax’ which is a dinner-plate dahlia (huge blooms). Both performed really well even in the heat. The other anemone and dinner-plate dahlias in our trial suffered in the heat though they seem to be bouncing back this fall.

*Zantedeschia aethiopica*, Giant White Calla Lily, and *Zantedeschia* ‘Purple Sensation,’ Flower Power Calla, Lily receive some splash out from the nearby fountain and performed exceedingly well. *Lilium asiatic* ‘Classic Joy’ & ‘Pippa’s Joy’ were also solid performers, but the *Lilium oriental*, various Double Oriental Lily Mix, failed in the heat. *Lilium regale*, The Royal Lily, has been growing well, but it will take a few years to see if it can reach its potential. *Gloriosa superba* is still establishing but it did manage a small bloom this year. Peruvian Daffodil (*Hymenocallis* ‘Sulphur Queen’) had one lovely bloom, but I need to see it perform better before I can recommend it.

Other plants that did well and that we are looking forward to their maturity are *Magnolia figo* (banana shrub), *Fatsia japonica* (Japanese aralia) and the Caladiums ‘Postman Joyner’ and ‘Red Flash.’ We have also had great success naturalizing Narcissus ‘Jet Fire’ and ‘Jenny.’ If you love tulips I can also recommend the Darwin hybrids. Our biggest failures were all of the Japanese Iris, tropical begonias, Hostas, and toad lilies.

I hope these trials help folks choose how they satiate their plant sweet-tooths. We have many other trial cultivars that we will share our experience with in the future. Remember to base your landscapes and gardens on native and water-wise plants, but feel no guilt in a little garden candy. Also remember, we grow it here so you don’t have to!
The Delight of Winter Vegetables

Juliet Niehaus, Ph.D.
TBG Horticultural Therapy Director, Emerita

For many Tucsonans, the months of October through April are the most pleasant time for gardening. With a varied palette of healthy edibles to plant and less stressful conditions for both vegetables and gardeners alike, this is the time of year to get outside and enjoy growing things you can eat.

Winter favorites include selections from many plant families.

Members of the Carrot Family (Apiaceae), also called *umbellifers* because of their umbel-shaped blooms, include not only carrots, but other cool-weather plants like celery, fennel, parsley, cilantro, and dill.

Edibles in the Cabbage Family (Brassicaceae) are sometimes referred to as *cruciferous* vegetables because their four-petaled flowers call to mind the shape of a cross. These include broccoli, cabbage, kale, collards, radishes, arugula, and Asian vegetables like Chinese cabbage and bok choy.

The lettuces, members of the Sunflower Family (Asteraceae), are a staple of winter gardening. Because they come in a variety of shapes and colors and have relatively small root systems, lettuces are particularly nice container plants and can provide a striking accent to an edible patio garden.

Onions and other members of the genus Allium, such as leeks, garlic, and chives, are part of the Amaryllis Family (Amaryllidaceae). So, yes, they are related to that showy holiday bulb and to the bright orange Clivia you’ll find under the magnolia tree near the TBG Administration Building. A tasty Tohono O’odham variety of green bunching onion called *I’itoi* is particularly adapted to the desert winters.

Finally, Swiss chard, beets, and spinach are cool weather vegetables in the Amaranth Family (Amaranthaceae). Beets and Swiss chard are closely related—subspecies of the species *Beta vulgaris*. It’s not surprising that their colorful tall leaves often look similar and can be used interchangeably in the kitchen as greens.

**Planting and Caring for Winter Vegetables**

Winter vegetables like lettuce and radish can easily be grown from seed you plant directly in the soil. However, as the soil cools, seed germination may slow, so in the depths of winter, seeding indoors using a heat mat or purchasing nursery sets may give you the best outcome. Broccoli and cabbage have a long maturation period and are best planted from sets you get at your nursery.

The cooler temperatures result in less water loss by both plants and soil. Thus, your winter vegetables will require less water than summer plantings. You will need to adapt your watering routine to warm spells and rainy periods.
Lettuces and radishes can be harvested and replanted two to three times during the winter. However, broccoli, cabbage and carrots, to name just a few, have longer growing periods and as the temperatures cool and the daylight declines, these often seem to linger through the very dark days of December and January. However, there is action beneath the soil’s surface where roots are slowly spreading. As the earth warms and the days lengthen, the increasingly favorable conditions spur the growth of these veggies and a flush of rapid growth arrives in March and April. Don’t give up on them!

Many winter vegetables will endure infrequent frosts without being covered. Your lettuces and more tender greens will appreciate a frost cloth when the temperatures dip. Pests are generally not a big problem until the warmth of spring arrives. Then look out for cabbage loopers and aphids. Preferably, remove affected leaves or jet spray with a hose.

Grow Swiss chard this winter!

One of the most striking and hardy of the winter greens is Swiss chard. Chard originated in the Mediterranean as a wild green and its dry region origin makes it particularly hardy compared to other greens.

Chard will grow from seed or nursery starts. Germination can happen within a week if the soil is warm. Since the “seed” itself is actually a dried fruit capsule containing multiple seeds, be prepared to thin the cluster by cutting at soil line with small scissors. Pulling out the seedlings can disturb the roots of the remaining plantlet.

Swiss chard has been widely hybridized so that there are many wonderful varieties. One is easily mistaken for beets because of the red vein in its broad green leaf. Some look more like spinach. And others, like “Five Color” and “Bright Lights” have veins of yellow, red and orange for a very festive look.

Swiss chard loves a rich garden soil. As with other winter vegetables, it will want less water during its more dormant times and more when it’s actively growing in the early spring. An occasional dose of organic fertilizer rich in nitrogen will keep the leaves strong and green. Depending on the variety, your Swiss chard plant can grow leaves over a foot in length.

While early spring’s onslaught of aphids take over your broccoli, collards and kale, Swiss chard is relatively impervious to pests. Small birds may take a bite from a leaf as they swoop by. And you might find an occasional aphid, but by and large, they seem less tasty to the bugs of spring than other greens.

Swiss chard has many culinary uses. Unlike collards and kale, chards don’t have tough center ribs so they can be easily diced and added to soups and stews, or simply sautéed with garlic and olive oil as a side dish. The young tender leaves can be used in salads. For those of adventurous cooking spirit, the ribs can be removed, then cooked and eaten like asparagus. They can also be pickled or used as a component of the Korean kimchi. Who knew?
IN THE GARDENS

Glass in Flight
Glass and Steel Sculptures by Alex Heveri
January 7 – May 29, 2022

According to artist Alex Heveri, insects matter. They are Earth’s pollinators, garbage collectors, undertakers, and for millions of animals, they are breakfast, lunch, and dinner.

A bronze, clay, dalle de verre glass, and steel sculptor, Alex is a Tucson artist who has been working in these media for over 25 years. Her works are found in public and private collections throughout the country and can be seen at the JCC outdoor Sculpture Garden.

Glass in Flight focuses on four types of winged insects. The exhibition features breathtaking sculptures of towering dragonflies, several types of butterflies, honeybees in their hive, and enormous stalking beetles. These insects, brought to life throughout the Gardens, will dazzle with their natural colors as the sun illuminates their iridescent wings.

IN THE LEGACY GALLERY

American Society of Botanical Artists presents:
Abundant Future: Cultivating Diversity in Garden, Farm, and Field
The Fourth New York Botanical Garden Triennial Exhibition sponsored by Southwestern Foundation for Education and Historical Preservation
January 15 – May 8, 2022

For the second time, TBG is honored to host the American Society of Botanical Artists Triennial exhibition. Abundant Future: Cultivating Diversity in Garden, Farm, and Field is comprised of forty original contemporary botanical artworks, juried from submissions from around the world.

Throughout history, humans have generated a nearly endless diversity in plants through selective breeding. This constant change has provided us with the wide range of food and other utilitarian plants that surround us. However, in our recent past, agriculture has focused on a narrower range of important crops, leading to greatly reduced variety in the most important crops.

Heirloom varieties play a role in increasing genetic diversity, as do wild relatives and ancient versions of useful plants. This exhibit seeks to highlight the biological wealth in our cultivated plants and wild relatives.

A Tucson Presence:
Tucson artist Joan McGann’s pen and ink on illustration board is of a Mission Garden’s San Rafael Quince. Another Tucson resident, Susan T. Fisher, Tucson Botanical Artist and Educator was chosen to be one of three jurors for the exhibition.
**All Things Nature**

David W. Conklin, Artist

January 27 – May 29, 2022

David began drawing birds and animals as a boy in Michigan. He sold his first painting when he was 16 and has been a full-time working professional artist ever since. While David studied art at the Center for Creative Studies, his primary teachers were the works of great western artists, and nature itself.

Throughout his career, David has had extraordinary opportunities to paint a variety of subjects ranging from wildlife, marine, portraits, and historical landscapes. His series of paintings, “Wreck of the Edmund Fitzgerald,” commissioned by the Great Lakes Shipwreck and Historical Museum, brought him international attention when National Geographic magazine published the series to illustrate a feature story.

With a lifelong love of painting animals, David has received many top honors including being named a four-time winner of the Michigan Wildlife Artist of the Year competition and the Michigan Ducks Unlimited Artist of the Year. He has been invited to exhibit his works throughout the United States and Canada including, most recently, the Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum and the Coeur d’Alene Galleries in Coeur de ’Alene, Idaho.

This exhibition explores all things nature: from Sonoran desert landscapes, to the intricate world of moths, to big cats and birds.

**Glory in the Garden**

The Watercolors of Donna Helms

January 12 – May 29, 2022

Donna Helms has been obsessed with making art all throughout her life. From coloring within the lines in her coloring books and designing outfits for her paper dolls as a young girl to creating bulletin boards as a beginning classroom teacher, she loved it all!

As she moved through her career, Donna took classes in art and sought formal training. Changing her focus, she was offered a job as an elementary art teacher and stayed with this until the day came, when she could fulfill her dream as a full-time artist.

Setting up a home studio, she went to work on still lifes in pastel and caran d’ache. She became a member of Desert Artisans’ Gallery, and was also asked to join several other local galleries.

It was around that time that she discovered the Tucson Botanical Gardens. Walking through the beautiful grounds took her all the way back to her childhood in Iowa. She was absolutely smitten! Her art then became all things botanical and she began to work only in watercolor.

Donna has since had many shows over the years at the Gardens, showing mainly in Porter Hall. She now returns to the Back Porch Gallery for her latest show “Glory in the Garden.”
All TBG Community Classes are moving to a hybrid format, with a few in-person classes here at the Gardens, and many virtual classes offered via Zoom. Virtual class participants will receive a Zoom link via email for each live class two hours before the class begins. Virtual 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.

We hope to offer more in-person classes in Spring 2022, please stay tuned!

TBG Members receive a 20% discount.

CULINARY ARTS 🍲

- **Holiday Tamales – Sonoran Beef Tamales in Red Chile**
  In-person at TBG Education Classroom
  Tuesday, December 14
  Morning class: 9:00 a.m.—12:00 p.m.
  Afternoon class: 1:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.
  Each class – $75 Non-Member/Members 20% discount

- **Nixtamal – Homemade Tortillas de Maíz**
  In-person at TBG Education Classroom
  Thursday, February 3, 1:00 p.m. — 4:00 p.m.
  $75 Non-Member/Members 20% discount

ART 🌸

- **Poinsettias in Watercolor**
  Wednesday, December 8, 2:00 p.m.—3:30 p.m.
  $30 Non-Member/Members 20% discount

- **Succulent Wreath Watercolor Postcard**
  Wednesday, December 15, 5:30 p.m.—7:00 p.m.
  $30 Non-Member/Members 20% discount

- **Drawing Desert Native Edibles**
  Wednesday, January 12, 2:00 p.m.—3:30 p.m.
  $30 Non-Member/Members 20% discount

- **Botanical Art in Watercolor: Desert Lupine**
  Wednesday, January 26, 5:30 p.m.—7:00 p.m.
  $30 Non-Member/Members 20% discount

- **Watercolor Desert Wildflowers**
  Wednesday, February 9, 2:00 p.m.—3:30 p.m.
  $30 Non-Member/Members 20% discount

- **Botanical Art in Pen and Ink: Desert Lupine**
  Wednesday, February 23, 5:30 p.m.—7:00 p.m.
  $30 Non-Member/Members 20% discount

SPOTLIGHT ON TBG INSTRUCTORS

**Chef Minerva Orduño Rincón**

Chef Minerva Orduño Rincón originally trained and worked as an architect, but has been in the culinary field now for more than 10 years. She writes about Sonoran cooking and history for the Phoenix New Times and the Arizona Republic. Minerva is a professional chef, culinary instructor and expert in Sonoran food history. Chef Minerva draws on her culinary heritage and deep research on the Sonoran desert for inspiration. In her spare time she gardens and rides horses. You can find more about Chef Minerva and read her blog, Cucumbers and Limes, at cucumbersandlimes.com

You’ll find Minerva’s classes listed in the Culinary Arts classes above.

Give the gift that keeps on giving! TBG Community Classes make a meaningful holiday gift for any life-long learner. Email education1@tucsonbotanical.org to purchase an upcoming class for your loved ones.
TBG Winter 2022 Lecture Series

presents:

SEEING
The INVISIBLE

CURATING THE INVISIBLE
Meet the Curators of Seeing the Invisible
Saturday, December 11th at 12:00 pm on Zoom. Free of charge.

Pre-registration required at www.tucsonbotanical.org/class-schedule/

Hosted by Tucson Botanical Gardens with generous support from the Weintraub Israel Center

Featuring the curators of Seeing the Invisible, Hadas Maor and Tal Michael Haring, and moderated by Michelle Conklin, Executive Director of Tucson Botanical Gardens.

Now on exhibition at TBG through August 2022, Seeing the Invisible, an augmented reality contemporary art exhibition, is an unprecedented new global exhibition bringing the digital experience into the physical world.

The exhibition, co-curated by Hadas Maor and Tal Michael Haring, celebrates the intersection of art, nature, and technology with an innovative presentation of 13 augmented reality (AR) artworks on view in 12 botanical gardens across 6 countries, opened in September 2021.

This international collaboration features new AR works by leading artists from across the globe, including:

- Ai Weiwei (China)
- El Anatsui (Ghana)
- Refik Anadol (Turkey)
- Ori Gersht (Israel/UK)
- Mohammed Kazem (UAE)
- Isaac Julien CBE RA (UK)
- Sigalit Landau (Israel)
- Daito Manabe (Japan)
- Sarah Meyohas (USA)
- Mel O’Callaghan (Australia)
- Pamela Rosenkranz (Switzerland)
- Timur Si-Qin (USA)
- Pamela Rosenkranz (Switzerland)
- Timur Si-Qin (USA)
- Jakob Kudsk Steensen (Denmark)

Led by the Jerusalem Botanical Gardens and Outset Contemporary Art Fund, Seeing the Invisible debuted simultaneously in the USA, UK, Australia, Canada, South Africa, and Israel.
Thank You

WITH GRATITUDE

MEMORIALS & TRIBUTES

The following donors, who made contributions between July 16 and October 15, 2021, wished for their friends and loved ones to be remembered amid the Gardens’ natural beauty. We are inspired by their generosity and honored that they chose the Gardens.

IN HONOR OF

Eric Braun’s 50th Birthday –
Happy birthday, Eric!..................................Kathy & Tim McDaid
Michelle Conklin’s Birthday –
Happy birthday, from Linda!..........................David Conklin
Linda Conklin
Lisa Conklin
Judy Nealon Hutch
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In Loving Memory of Nancy Jo Kimball ............Harry R. Kimball

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The following donors designated their generous contributions to the Gardens’ signature programs and projects. We are grateful for their investments which were received between July 16 and October 15, 2021.

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Thank You

...to our new and renewing Saguaro, Ocotillo, Agave, Cholla and 2150 Club members from July 16 to October 15, 2021.

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Tucson Botanical Gardens
ATTN: Development Office
2150 N. Alvernon Way
Tucson, AZ 85712

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