

THE LEAFLET

The Monthly Magazine of the Vallarta Botanical Garden

February 2016



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Puerto Vallarta, Jalisco, México

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Glaucidium brasilianum

Publisher & Senior Editor:

Neil Gerlowski

Co-Editor:

Bob Price

Contributing Authors:

Michaela Flores, Lizbeth Hernández
Hernández, Greg R. Homel, Al Rouyer

Translator:

Alejandra Carmona

Style Editor (English):

Dee Daneri

Designer:

Alejandra Carmona

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Curator's Corner

Dear Friends of the Garden,

In the month that brings us Valentine's Day, love is certainly in the air! For those of us working in a botanical garden it warms our hearts at this time to see our labor of love enjoyed so thoroughly by our visitors. We also take the time to show our love to our members in February through a series of special member events. Not yet a member? Please just let us know if you'd like to join our family of supporters. For the general public, our Vallarta Flower and Garden Show provides nine days of floral delight. At this time we also offer our greatest selection of plants for your home garden through our nursery so you can take a little living piece of our Garden back to yours.

**In friendship,
Bob Price, Founder and Curator, VBG**



Anthurium sp.
Photo: Bruce Novak

Vallarta Botanical Garden Inspired Art on Exhibit

We at the Vallarta Botanical Garden are proud to serve as an inspiration for a talented community of artists from Puerto Vallarta locals to international visitors and transplants from across the planet. Along the way, many of these artists have amassed an impressive collection of works inspired by our Garden including sketches, watercolors, and oil paintings to photo-art for those who prefer the digital pallet. The management of Galerías Vallarta Shopping Mall has generously offered us a premium location to display a selection of these works from January 29th through February 14th. This exhibit is in the mall's exhibition hall immediately within the main entry and is available for public access during the mall's regular hours of 11:00 am – 9:00 pm.

A few examples of these works of art appear below and on the following page, but these can each only be appreciated in their full spectacular glory in a fine art gallery setting such as they now appear during this current exhibition at Galerías Vallarta, "Vallarta Botanical Garden – Where Mexican plants meet the imagination!"



In this photo: Zaidé Gómez
Carrillo & Mike Laking
Photo: Juan Espinoza



Mik Laking
www.mikelaking.mx

Mexican Orchid of the Month

Cattleya aurantiaca

By Lizbeth Hernández Hernández, Biologist & Co-author of "Las orquídeas del occidente de México, Volumen 1"

This small but beautiful plant has orange colored, very showy flowers, which bloom from March to early May. It is widely distributed, and can be found in the wild from the state of Veracruz on the east coast, to Nayarit and Jalisco in the west. It inhabits cloud forest and tropical deciduous and semi-deciduous forests as an epiphytic, and sometimes lithophytic, plant. It is prevalent in trees growing in ravines and the banks of streams at altitudes from 435 to 1800 meters, and is especially abundant in warm to hot places.

Cattleya aurantiaca is widely variable, principally in the size and colors of their flowers, but also in the width of floral parts and the height of the plant.

Cattleya aurantiaca thrives well in almost any tropical environment. Under suitable lighting, temperature and humidity conditions, it does not require substrate. It can even be attached to a concrete wall. Usually it is planted in pots like other epiphytes or fixed to hang in oak trunks. It will respond well to abundant watering during the development of new pseudobulbs, and likes a well-lit and warm place. If desired, foliar fertilizer can be applied once a week.



Cattleya Aurantiaca Photo: Lizbeth Hernández Hernández



Morococcyx erythropygus
© Greg R. Homel

Mexican Bird of the Month

*The Lesser Ground-Cuckoo,
"Ghost of the Tropical Dry Forest"*

By Greg R. Homel, Ornithologist & Founder, Natural Encounters Birding Tours & Birding In Puerto Vallarta

Of all Neotropical birds found within and surrounding the Vallarta Botanical Garden, the Lesser Ground-Cuckoo (*Morococcyx erythropygus*) is perhaps least often seen by birders. Most don't even realize it's there! That's why many pursuers consider it the "ghost of the tropical dry forest."

Like a ghost, you can't really look for this species, and it seems invisible... more legend than real.... Though you can hear it. When least expected, one may suddenly appear, as if to materialize out of thin air. And when you tell your story of the encounter, even your friends may not believe you.

Inhabitants of the Pacific slope dry forest ecosystem ranging from southern Sonora to parts of Costa Rica, they skulk through a labyrinth of spiny branches and tangled vines, pursuing prey ranging from scorpions to baby Mexican Beaded-Lizards.

If you are lucky enough to sight one of these birds, look for the long tail, yellowish bill and colorful bare skin around its eyes. But don't look away, even for a moment, or it will be gone!

For those who wish to learn more about tropical bird ID, just read on to the next article about the upcoming Vallarta Bird Festival...

Vallarta Bird Festival

March 5th and 6th

At the Vallarta Botanical Garden

Puerto Vallarta is incredibly rich in bird diversity including stunningly spectacular species ranging from the glittery, minuscule Golden-crowned Emerald Hummingbird to the raucous and flamboyant Military Macaw. Over 300 species of birds can be observed in and around the Puerto Vallarta region. One of our favorite times to go bird watching is March when the weather is idyllic yet many of our deciduous trees are denuded of vegetation giving us clear views through the forest.

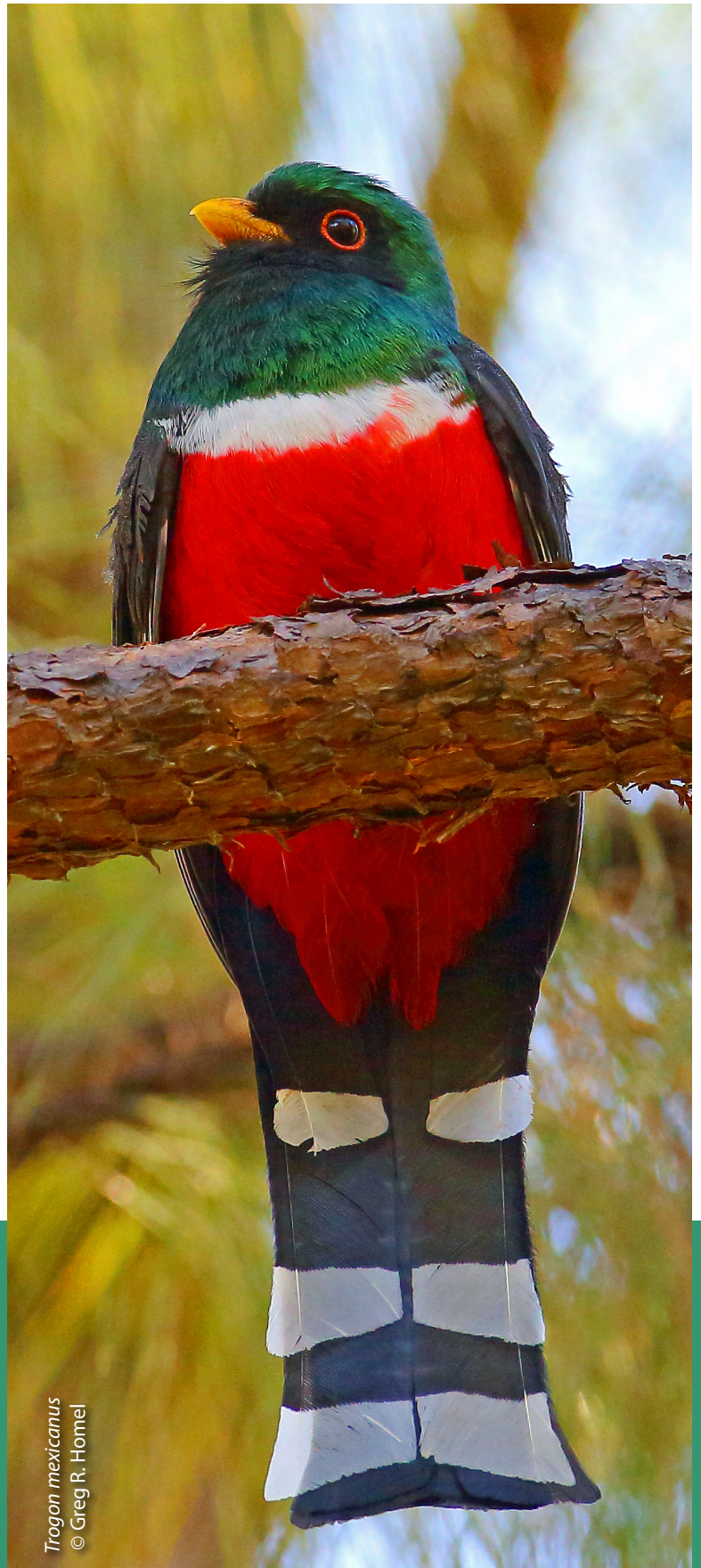
The Vallarta Botanical Garden will host the fourth annual Vallarta Bird Festival this coming March 5th and 6th and will include guided birding hikes along with workshops and presentations by expert birders. We especially thank our friends Greg R. Homel of Natural Encounters Birding Tours and Birding In Puerto Vallarta and his close associate Alex Martínez of Birding in Mexico for planning, promoting, and participating with us in what we're sure will be yet another incredible experience for bird aficionados from all over the world.

Early tours will meet at the Garden on both March 5th and 6th at 7:30 am and activities will go on right up to Garden closure at 6 pm. Through the generosity of volunteer guides and facilitators, participation in this year's Vallarta Bird Festival is at no additional cost beyond garden admission of only \$100 pesos per person. Preregistration is not required, but a quick email to let us know how many guests to expect would be highly appreciated! eventos@vbgardens.org.

**To inquire about
associated multi-day birding
post-extensions,
please contact :**

Greg R. Homel
birdingadventures@mac.com

Alex Martínez
birdinginmexico@gmail.com



Trogon mexicanus
© Greg R. Homel



In this photo: Drew Schuyler and Steve Young
Photo: Bruce Novak

Hats off to our Horticulturalists

While we can thank God for the glory of nature, a garden by definition is a place where the hand of man shapes the land and cultivates plants as living works of art imparting intentional beauty. Our horticultural staff and volunteers are the heroes in this constant quest for captivating botanical displays and horticultural excellence. Those who have fought back weeds during our summer rainy season know that gardening is not for the faint of heart. Anyone who has battled plant pests and pathogens or persevered to propagate a challenging plant knows the patience and cleverness necessary to do this kind of work and do it well.

Bob Price, the VBG's Curator and lead horticulturalist has been guiding this work since the Garden's founding days over ten years ago. He has shepherded along a crew under his instruction now supervised by Daniel "Dani" de Jesús Ibarra Macedo. Additionally, several Garden volunteers have recently joined the ranks of horticulturalists here including Bruce Novak, Drew Schuyler, and Steve Young.

Drew is a recent graduate of Longwood Garden's Professional Gardener Program and is nearly half way through his 10 week internship with us. When asked what he likes best about the Vallarta Botanical Garden, Drew responded, "the diversity of plants available to learn how to grow."



In this photo: Heriberto, Adrián y Max
Photo: Bob Price

"A Salute to Vallarta!" Membership Appreciation Day

Saturday, February 6th

One of our goals at the Garden is to constantly demonstrate our thanks and appreciation to our members. This February 6th is a special time for us to welcome and honor our members in a day of festivities and fun. Please come out and celebrate with us! If you're not yet a Garden member, this is a great day to join us. If you're already a member, perhaps you may choose to renew or upgrade your membership on this festive occasion.

Member Appreciation Day Itinerary:

9:00 am	Garden Opening
11:30 am – 1:30 pm	Welcome Margaritas provided to members in the Hall of Flowers Ballroom (2 complimentary servings per member, additional beverages available for purchase)

1:00pm - 3:00 pm

Buffet Lunch
(Complimentary for members; Non-member price \$350 pesos per person, entry fee separate)

1:00 pm – 3:00 pm

Live Music by MORUNO (Mediterranean Style Gypsy Jazz)

2:00 pm

Performance by the Tuito Folkloric Dance Troupe

3:00 pm

Group photo – Please meet at the Vallarta Conservatory of Orchids and Native Plants

6 pm

Garden Closure

For more information, please contact Michaela Flores, memberships@vbgardens.org.



Photo: Bob Price



Beaumontia grandiflora
Photo: Bob Price

Vallarta Flower & Garden Show

February 19-27

During the months of February and March some of the most popular flowers of the Garden are found in their peak bloom. This year the Garden is rolling out a host of new plants from our propagation areas for special displays as well as sales to the public in the Garden's nursery.



Nymphaea sp.
Photo: Bob Price

Vallarta BEER Garden

March 19

For those who appreciate the authentic natural flavors of fine craft brewed beers, hardly anything can top an event in a beautiful setting with great live music and tasty local brews. Good beer starts with good basic ingredients and in our minds there's no better place to experience this than in a garden setting.

This March 19th the Vallarta Botanical Garden will host local microbrewers as they pair some of their distinctive beverages with the plants and landscapes of our Garden. Microbrews will be served from 1 - 5 pm and live gypsy jazz music by MORUNO will be featured from 1 - 3 pm. Further event details will be announced on March 1st. For more information, please contact eventos@vbgardens.org.



Photo: Bruce Novak

Palm Sunday Palm Walk

March 20

Palm Sunday is a perfect occasion for us to focus on the fascinating palm collection at the Vallarta Botanical Garden. From the stately Cuban Royal Palm to the dwarfed and spiny local endemic *Cryosophila nana*, this diverse plant family is full of surprises and makes for some great stories. Whether you're a Puerto Vallarta resident considering what to plant in your home garden, or a visitor looking to learn about local botanical curiosities, this is a special tour not to be missed. The Palm Sunday Palm Walk is scheduled to begin from at 1:00 pm and to go for approximately 45 minutes. Please meet at the aquatic plants pond.



Cyrtostachys renda
Photo: Bruce Novak



Dypsis Lastelliana
Photo: Bruce Novak



Photo: Bruce Novak

Opening the Chapel “Our Lady of the Garden”

March 20

The Garden’s new chapel, Nuestra Señora del Jardín (Our Lady of the Garden) will be opened to the public on March 20th with a special ceremony to bless and dedicate this sanctuary within a natural paradise. All are invited to join us for this special occasion. The mission of the Nuestra Señora del Jardín is to rejuvenate and inspire the human spirit to live in harmony with the natural world while promoting peace and understanding among diverse cultures and faiths.

Almost 500 years ago, the first Christian church in the Municipio de Cabo Corrientes was blessed by Catholic missionaries on a Palm Sunday. The ceremony of blessing and dedication for the Nuestra Señora del Jardín chapel has been planned to coincide with this auspicious historic event. An itinerary for this event will be announced March 1st. Chapel patrons and Garden board members will be available afterwards to speak with garden guests about this project and uses for this new facility.

Announcing the Formation of a New Science Advisory Board

The work of the Vallarta Botanical Garden has garnered the respect and interest of a large and diverse group of admirers. This includes many botanic garden professionals from throughout Mexico and abroad. Recently, several of them have encouraged us to form a Science Advisory Board to further our work in plant research, conservation, and collections. Many of them have volunteered to serve as part of this new board to help realize the incredible potential we have; especially in thanks to the incredible natural biodiversity of the Puerto Vallarta region.

While many admirers of the Garden are impressed with the beauty of our flowering plants and creative botanical displays, many of the plants in our collections also represent excellent research opportunities while others are representatives of rare and threatened groups of plants worthy of conservation to protect them into the future. Collecting and caring for plants that are both beautiful and important is the basic goal.

This February 25th we look forward to holding the founding meeting of the Garden's new Science Advisory Board and receiving the formal acceptance of our new Advisors for service to the Vallarta Botanical Garden, but we want to receive input from you too! As we further define the future for our Garden's collections and scientific endeavors, we'd love to hear the thoughts of garden visitors, members, and local residents. If you'd like to share ideas and observations or otherwise join in this process with us, please write to educadorambiental@vbgardens.org.



Photo: Bruce Novak



Watch for the AMAPA to Bloom in February

Article and photos by Al Rouyer

The Amapa tree *Tabebuia rosea*, also called the Pink Trumpet Tree in English, is native to tropical America from the central Mexican coasts to Venezuela and is common in Puerto Vallarta and along the Bay of Banderas.

With its breathtaking pink floral display in late winter and early spring, the Amapa is the perfect tree for February, the month of Valentine's Day and its testament to love and friendship. At other times of the year this virtually evergreen tree provides a wonderful source of shade, which makes it popular as a garden ornamental and for lining streets and boulevards in tropical cities. The Amapa is also grown for its hardwood used in furniture making and construction.



Identification – The Amapa can reach to about 90 feet (27 meters) tall with a massive straight trunk and oval-shaped crown. Its compound, bright green leaves are up to 12 inches (30 centimeters) across with 3 to 5 elliptic-shaped leaflets of varying size. The bark is gray and furrowed in mature trees. Flowers are pale to dark pink, trumpet-shaped (hence one of its names) with crinkled petals, and are as large as 2 inches (2.5 centimeter s) across. The fruit is bean-shaped and green in color.



Don't Purchase Mexico's Natural Heritage!

One of Mexico's riches is its tremendous natural heritage. Mexico is listed as one of this planet's "megadiverse" countries for its great numbers of different species and endemics. While the diversity of this flora and fauna is staggering, much of it is now at risk and many incredible species have already gone extinct. The Vallarta Botanical Garden works hard to cultivate and nurture the love and appreciation of our natural world among our visitors and local community.

We ask you to please not purchase protected native plants and animals in illegal trade. We'd especially like to remind you that it is illegal to buy or sell any of the twenty-two species of Mexico's native parrots. Native orchids may only be purchased from growers who are certified to propagate these plants within their facilities. Native orchids that are sold on the street or in most local nurseries are almost exclusively illegally harvested from our forests, the cumulative impact of which is a major threat to their future in the wild.

<p>Mexican parrots are critically endangered! Do not buy parrots as PETS!... IT'S ILLEGAL!!</p> <p>Help me!!</p>  <p>A conservation message brought to you by the Vallarta Botanical Gardens</p>	<p>Las orquídeas mexicanas están en peligro. ¡Nunca compren de los vendedores ambulantes! ES ILEGAL y es contribuir a la extinción de su hábitat natural.</p>  <p>Un mensaje de conservación del Jardín Botánico de Vallarta</p>
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Please help us get the word out...

**Don't Purchase
Mexico's Natural Heritage!**

Vallarta Botanical Garden's Calendar

DATE		EVENT	COST
6	FEB	"A Salute to Vallarta!" – Membership Appreciation Day — More info pg. 7	See pg. 7
14	FEB	Romance in the Garden — Celebrate Valentine's Day in Nature	Included with entry
18	FEB	Curator's Candlelight Dinner — (Copa de Oro Members and higher)	Contact: memberships@vbgardens.org
9-27	FEB	Vallarta Flower & Garden Show — More info pg. 8	Included with entry
25	FEB	Garden Blossom Luncheon — (Trustee Level Members and higher)	Contact: memberships@vbgardens.org
3	MAR	Curator's Sunset Cocktail Social — (Copa de Oro Members and higher)	Contact: memberships@vbgardens.org
5&6	MAR	Vallarta Bird Festival — More info pg. 5	Included with entry
19	MAR	Vallarta BEER Garden — More info pg. 9	TBA
20	MAR	Palm Sunday Palm Walk — More info pg. 10	Included with entry
20	MAR	Opening the Chapel "Our Lady of the Garden" — More info pg. 11	Included with entry

* Some activities subject to change. The most current calendar, often with links to further event information, can be viewed at www.vbgardens.org/calendar.



Garden Hours

Open 7 days/wk

Open 6 days/wk

Early "Bird" Opening

Daily Guided Tour

9 am – 6 pm

for the months of Dec., Jan., Feb., & March (except Christmas & New Year's Day)
(Closed Mondays) April, May, June, July, Aug., Sept., Oct., & Nov.

8 am every Thursday

1 pm (Offered for the months of Dec., Jan., Feb., & March)



Photo: Bob Price



Michaela Flores, Membership Coordinator, VBG
memberships@vbgardens.org

From the Membership Desk

We hope to see you at the Garden soon for one of our member events this February. As far as I'm concerned though, every day is member day! Please stop by my desk the next time you visit to say hi, join us as a member, or renew or upgrade your membership. This is the best way to demonstrate your love and support of the Garden.

Members: please always wear your membership card when visiting the Garden. This helps our staff and volunteers recognize you as members and offer discounts on your Garden purchases.

Can you find your name on our WALL OF BENEFACTORS?

If you're not yet "on the wall" we invite you to join the family that preserves the Garden forever!

Becoming a member is easy & provides great benefits:
www.vbgardens.org/memberships

A high resolution image of this photograph is available at www.vbgardens.org/benefactors



We would like to acknowledge and thank the following supporters:

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Photo: Bob Price

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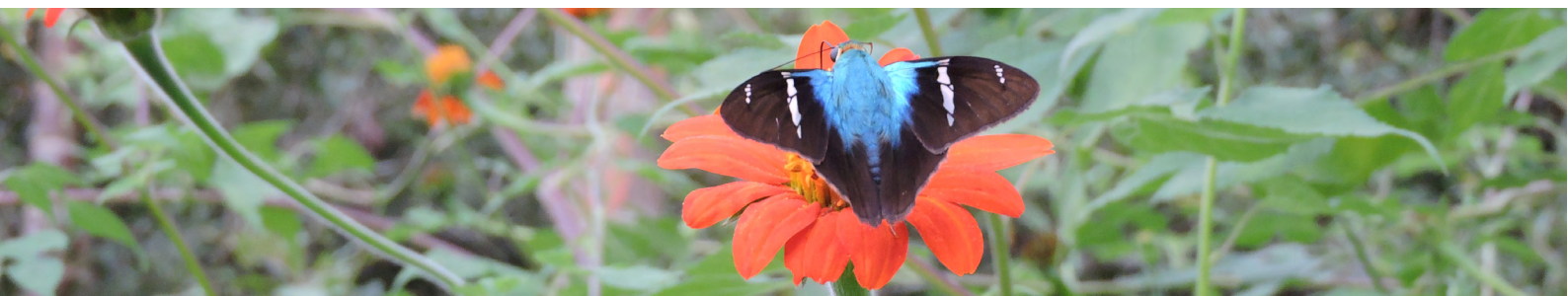
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(S) = student (I) = individual ☼ = deceased

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Your Donations to the Vallarta Botanical Garden are Greatly Appreciated

México



- **Tax-deduction receipts** are available for donations to the Vallarta Botanical Garden made through the *Fundación Punta de Mita* (FPM).
- **Please send an email earmarking your gift for the Vallarta Botanical Garden to donaciones@fundacionpuntademita.org with a copy to info@vbgardens.org**
- In this email please include your name, the date your gift was sent, and the amount of your gift.

Checks may be mailed to:

Fundación Punta de Mita, A.C.
Carretera Federal Libre 200 Km 18.05
Punta Mita, Nayarit, C.P. 63734 México.

- Please provide FPM with your email and information to be included in the tax-deductible receipt (which will be sent by email).
- Please provide FPM with confirmation (copy of check) for tracking.

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Paypal: www.fundacionpuntademita.org/en/how-to-help

Canada



- Our educational programs qualify for **tax-deduction receipts** provided by The Canadian Children's Shelter of Hope Foundation (CCSHF)

Cheques may be mailed to:

Canadian Children's Shelter of Hope Foundation
87 Lavinia Ave
Toronto, ON,
M6S 3H9
Canada

Please write "VBG" for "Vallarta Botanical Gardens" on your cheques.

Alternatively, you may donate using a credit card through CanadaHelps.org (whose donation page is linked to the CCSHF website www.ccs hf.ca) selecting the "Vallarta Botanical Gardens Fund."

USA



- Our direct support 501(c)3, "Friends of Vallarta Botanical Gardens, A.C." issues **tax-deduction receipts**:

Checks may be mailed to:

Friends of Vallarta Botanical Gardens, A.C.
759 North Campus Way
Davis, CA 95616

Wire transfers / direct deposits are accepted:

Please write to treasurer@vbgardens.org for routing and account numbers.

Credit Card Payments:

Call us w/ your card info: +52 322 223 6182

PayPal: www.vbgardens.org/fvbg

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