THE MONTHLY MAGAZINE OF THE VAILANT A BOTANICAL GARDEN

May 2016



THE LEAFLET

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Cover: Petr Myska Ursulaea tuitensis

www.vbgardens.org

Curator's Corner

Dear Friends of the Garden,

Working to conserve, understand, interpret, and display the wonders of our natural world is an extreme source of satisfaction for the staff and volunteers at the Vallarta Botanical Garden. The impact that each of us is able to make is profound and when multiplied by the efforts of many hands and hearts it is a tremendous force.

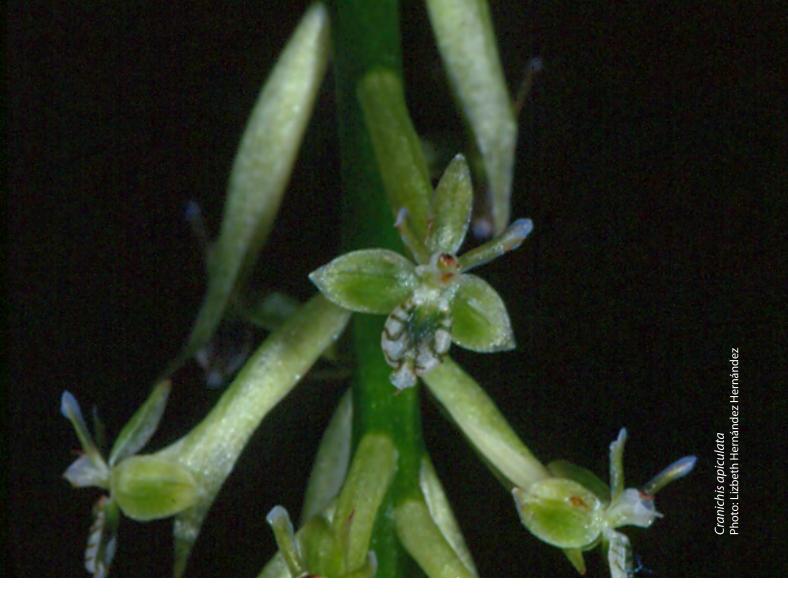
Even those who don't have the time to share their talents with us at the present moment can help through their contributions. And the potential of personal giving is enormous. Contrary to popular opinion, gifts by individuals are by far the greatest component of all philanthropic giving. At 80% of the annual total, they leave corporate far behind at now only about 5% of the total puzzle.

Also of note, giving to causes focused on the Environment and Animals is up in recent years, but still only accounts for about 3% of total giving trailing far behind the top causes of Religion, Education, and Human Services. Yet a public benefit non-profit as diverse as a major public garden offers an assortment of programs encompassing research, conservation, education, cultural programing, and much more. Donors may give either to our general fund for the Garden's administrators to allocate resources to the greatest need at any time or may select the programs that mean the most to them.

The most important philanthropy statistic though is that about half of all who give do so because they were asked. So if you're already a garden supporter, thanks! If you have not yet joined our community of supporters though, or your contributions don't yet reflect the importance of this organization to you, please show your love with a donation to the Garden today!

Warmest regards from the Gardens, Bob Price, Founder and Curator, VBG





Mexican Orchid of the Month

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

Cranichis apiculata is a beautiful, delicate plant that lives in forests with permanent humidity and soil rich in organic matter. It's especially known to occur in mountain cloud forests between 1,400 to 2,000 meters in elevation. Its natural distribution is from Mexico to Guatemala and El Salvador; in Mexico it's encountered along the southern Sierra Madre mountains, the Trans-Mexican Volcanic Belt, and is frequently found along the Pacific slope. Its foliage remains intact as long as there is sufficient moisture in the air and in the soil—usually until late in the winter. It blooms from mid-September to mid-October.

Cranichis plants grow well in the latitudes of Puerto Vallarta and Guadalajara in shaded areas potted with soil rich in organic material and good drainage. They should be watered just frequently enough to keep the soil moist during their "rest" period (winter) and at least once a week during the summer period of growth and development. Their foliage is quite beautiful so they remain a notably attractive ornamental plants even when not in flower. Also, because they spread by stolons (runners), within two to three years pots will become full of plants. If placed in hanging pots, buds may emerge through the holes in the base increasing their allure.

Give Every Month – Become a Garden "GEM"

Dividing your contributions to the Vallarta Botanical Garden into monthly payments can help you better budget your annual giving and allows us a dependable monthly income to carry the Garden through the slower times of the year. A new Give Every Month "GEM" page is now up on the Garden's website <u>www.vbgardens.org</u> for you to begin this kind of contribution today.

"The act of giving is the soul of living." - Loreen Arbus



Commemorative Cantera Benches

Would you like to honor or memorialize someone with a permanent cantera bench at the Vallarta Botanical Garden? Benches are finished with beautiful hand-painted ceramic tiles. We can help you create a custom design with text and images of your choice. Prices are at \$7,000 USD for a *Banca Real* (Regal Bench) and \$5,000 USD for a *Banca Distintiva* (Distinctive Bench). Dividing this up into payments over the course of three years is a commitment of only \$194 or \$139 USD per month. These gifts qualify for tax deductible contributions in Mexico, the US, and Canada. Interested? Great! Please visit our website or call 322 223 6182 and ask to speak to the Garden's Executive Director, Neil Gerlowski or Membership Coordinator, Michaela Flores.

Your Legacy Lives on at the VBG

Including the Vallarta Botanical Garden in your wills, trusts, and estate planning is an investment in the long-term viability of this important natural sanctuary for Puerto Vallarta and the exquisite flora of Mexico and world tropics. A member of the Garden's Legacy Committee would be happy to talk to you about the best options for optimizing your philanthropic potential and further blessing a community. Please write to info@vbgardens.org.



Mexican Bird of the Month

Heliomaster constantii By Greg R. Homel www.birdinginpuertovallarta.com/birdingadventures@mac.com

Hummingbirds are the world's smallest birds and one of the most recently evolved avian groups, with beaks and wings specialized to probe flowers. They are seemingly among the most "colorful" birds, but few have any colored pigments at all, instead they have prismatic feathering that refracts light, creating the effect of colored pigments. Most exhibit graphic sexual dimorphism, where the male is much more colorful than the female, with a bold panel of feathering on his throat and or forehead, known as a gorget.

In many ways, hummingbirds are the helicopters of the bird world. They can fly upside down, hover in space, and are the only birds capable of flying backward in powered flight... an adaptation to feeding on flowers. But they have trouble taking even a single step. Only the female builds the nest and raises the young. Males are promiscuous and mate with multiple females in their territories, taking no part in nesting duties.

The Plain-capped Starthroat throws most of those stereotypes out the window. For instance, at around 5" (12.7cm), they are nearly 20% larger than most regional hummingbird species; they are not particularly colorful (nor markedly sexually dimorphic); their gorgets are hard to see; and they don't only rely on flowers for the majority of their dietary needs... instead hawking small insects from the air while hovering in space.

Inhabitants of the Pacific dry forest ecosystem stretching from Sonora to northwestern Costa Rica, Plain-capped Starthroats may be seen seasonally at The Vallarta Botanical Garden, even sipping from its feeders from time to time, much to the delight of visiting birders.

Keep a sharp eye out and you may be treated to the sight of this wonderful but atypically large hummingbird! **May and June is the best time to observe an abundance** of hummingbirds at the Vallarta Botanical Garden.



og Rules



- *A \$50 entry fee per dog will be collected at the front gate for nonmembers.
- *Aggressive or unruly dogs will be removed from the Garden immediately.
- *Handlers and their dogs enter the Garden at their own risk.
- *Dogs must be attended on a leash at all the times.
- *Handlers must immediatly clean up after their dogs, be prepared.
- *Dogs in heat are prohibited.
- *Puppies must be at least four months old.
- *Handlers are responsible for damage caused by their dogs.
- *Dogs must be in general good health.
- *Dogs must not chase wildlife or domestic animals (especially our little chickens).
- *Dogs are welcome in the restaurant to accompany their handlers, however they are limited to a special section (ask your waiter).
- *Control your dog (do not let it approach any of our other guests).

Share your photos! We love photos of your dogs! Please tag us on Instagram and Facebook.

Dog Days of Summer

We're dog lovers. For this, we gladly welcome you to bring your favorite canine to the Garden with you upon your next visit. Last year, the Garden received a record number of visitors with dogs so we've added some new rules. Also, their owners/handlers are now charged a fee (\$50 pesos per dog per day for non-members) to bring their pooches into the Garden. We ask dog owners to always respect common etiquette to allow us to continue welcoming dogs on the property.

The Vallarta Botanical Garden receives rare and important native plants

By Neil Gerlowski, Executive Director, VBG

This past April 21st, a group of about seventy students from the University of Guadalajara's local coastal campus witnessed the donation of two rare and important native plant known as *teosintes*.

Zea perennis (Hitch.) Reeves & Mangelsd. and Zea diploperennis Iltis, Doebley and Guzmán are teosintes, ancestors of cultivated corn, the third most important crop in the world for human consumption after rice and wheat. Dr. Rafael Guzmán Mejía re-discovered Zea perennis in 1977, near Ciudad Guzmán, Jalisco and published an article of this finding in 1978 (Phitología 38: 17-27). Long before then, it had been considered extinct.

Afterwards, Dr. Guzmán discovered another perennial *teosinte* in the Sierra Manantlán of Jalisco (north of Manzanillo, Colima) that differs from the tetratloid *Z. perennis* because it is diploid (different numbers of chromosomes). The authors, Hugh H. Iltis, John F. Doebley and R. Guzmán named the new species *Zea diploperennis*. The potential importance of these plants for domestic corn, *Zea mays* L., is enormous. For the



Vallarta Botanical Garden, this donation represents a great privilege, and our thanks also go to Dr. Jorge Alberto Perez de la Rosa, a researcher at the University of Guadalajara's Botanical Institute who cultivated these plants that we've now received through Dr. Rafael Guzmán Mejia. According to Dr. Guzmán, no other botanical garden in Mexico has yet received these plants; however, other large and famous botanical gardens such as the Kew in England, the *Conservatoire botanique national de Brest* in France and the New York Botanical Garden in the United States, already have both species.

Dr. Guzman is especially excited because at the Vallarta Botanical Garden these plants are now in a publicly accessible place within the state of Jalisco, where *Zea perennis* and *Zea diploperennis* are native and endemic.

We hope that through better public understanding of the diversity and importance of plants, they will be inspired to protect them; first, *in-situ*, in their wild and natural habitat; then *ex-situ* such as they are within this botanical garden that today makes them available to all.



Above: The author receiving the donation of the plants *Zea perennis* and *Z. diploperennis* from Dr. Rafael Guzmán Mejia, discoverer of both species and Communication Officer of the VBG's Science Advisory Board.



Magnolia Mania

As a teenager, Andrew Bunting was enamored by the brilliant pink spring blossoms of a spectacular saucer magnolia (Magnolia x soulangeana) growing in the backyard of his Manhattan, Illinois home. Now an internationally respected authority on Magnolias and other woody plants with over 30 years of experience in the field of professional gardening, Andrew's current post is as the Assistant Director and Director of Plant Collections at the Chicago Botanic Garden. The fact that Mexico has recently surpassed Colombia in the number of described Magnolia species to become the newly acknowledged leader of Magnolia diversity has not escaped Andrew's attention. His interest in these plants has led him to multiple visits to the Vallarta Botanical Garden where he has since joined in voluntary service of the VBG's Science Advisory Board for which he is Vice Chair.

Andrew is the author of multiple books, including the brand new title, The Plant Lover's Guide to Magnolias, released this month and available through Timber Press. It features 146 top choices for cold hardy magnolias appropriate for gardens in locations such as the US, southern Canada, and much of Europe. When asked for his perspective about the developing Mexican Magnolia collection at the VBG, Andrew replied, "There is a great opportunity for the Vallarta Botanical Garden to showcase Mexican magnolias. This is a group of plants under-represented in ex-situ collections and this group offers great potential for scientific study, as well as potential for ornamental use throughout Mexico and other tropical and subtropical regions of the world." Considering Andrew's interest in Mexican Magnolias, both from a scientific perspective and as a horticulturalist with a keen eye for ornamental potential, perhaps we can appeal to him to contribute to a new Magnolia book appropriate for us south of the border!



Enjoy pizza at the Garden! Photo: Bob Price

Magnolia pugana fruit Photo: Dr. Miguel Ángel Muñiz Castro

Introducing the VBG's New Plant Science Coordinator

After an international search resulting in dozens of inquiries, receipt of over 20 applications, and several interviews of highly gualified candidates, the Vallarta Botanical Garden is extremely pleased to announce its new Plant Science Coordinator, Alejandra Flores Argüelles. Alejandra holds a biology degree from the Biological Science Campus of the Universidad de Guadalajara and has extensive coursework in botany. Her thesis project was an illustrated guide of the monocots of the Natural Protected Area, Sierra de Quila, Jalisco. Her other past projects include extensive research throughout Mexico, especially the coastal regions of Jalisco where she has collaborated in the descriptions of several new species. Her profile with combined strengths in research, conservation, and horticulture as well as bilingual language skills and project management make her an excellent match for both her initial duties and assignments as well as the long-term projects we would like to accomplish so long as her position is extended.

To date, funds for this position are only secured for the months of May and June, but the mountain of incredible potential projects that we've identified for much-needed plant research, conservation, and collections could keep an army of botanists busy for the rest of their lives. This means we have an immediate imperative to raise awareness for our work and encourage nature lovers of all walks of life to get involved in some of our exciting projects with us. The power of plants to feed, heal, and sustain us can only be fully unlocked with disciplined study and the conservation of our vital resources.

Want to learn more? Great! Write to Alejandra Flores at: <u>conservacion@vbgardens.org</u>.





Introducing the VBG's New Philanthropy and Events Manager

The Vallarta Botanical Garden welcomes a new Philanthropy and Events Manager to its team. Hillary Abrams hails from New York City where she earned her master's degree from NYU's Heyman Center for Nonprofit Fundraising. She has extensive experience organizing fabulous fiestas in and around the city known as the Big Apple. Hillary will be expanding VBG's private and public event offerings and will especially focus on weddings, commitment ceremonies, birthdays, quinceañeras, holiday gatherings, memorials and celebration of life services on our grounds. Along with other popular garden landmarks such as the Hacienda de Oro Visitor Center and Restaurant, the Vallarta Conservatory of Orchids and Native Plants, the Holstein Tropical Plants House, and the Daneri Vireya Rhododendron House, the newly opened interfaith chapel, *Nuestra Señora del Jardín* especially merits someone dedicated to the coordination of well-run events in a world class garden setting. What kind of occasion might you like to celebrate at the Garden. Share your ideas with Hillary today, <u>hillary@vbgardens.org</u>, or just send her an email to welcome her to the team!

Call to Artists — Exhibit with us!

By Neil Gerlowski, Executive Director, VBG Zaidé Gómez Carillo, Marketing Manager, Plaza Galerías & Buri Gray, President of the Board, Museo de Arte Peter Gray

Plaza Galerías, our region's largest shopping mall, has invited the Vallarta Botanical Garden to organize another naturebased art exhibition, this time with the specific theme of "Birds and Their Habitats." The exhibit is scheduled to be featured in the mall's main events hall (in front of the Liverpool Department Store) from September 17th to October 13, 2016. Afterwards, the exhibit will travel to the University of Guadalajara's local coastal campus until mid November and finally to the Vallarta Botanical Garden until the end of December.

This exhibition will especially focus on native and endemic birds and the fascinating flora of the habitats that support them. We hope to inspire a conservation-oriented public through engaging imaginations with stunning and creative human constructs interpreting our natural world.

Local and visiting artists are encouraged to submit pieces for consideration in this exhibition which will be selected by a committee of representatives from the Garden, the Mall, and the University. Pieces may include paintings, photos, and sculptures. For more information on the exhibition or how to send submissions, please write to <u>eventos@vbgardens.org</u>.



The False Orchid

Photos and article by Al Rouyer

Bauhinia divaricata

The Orchid tree (genus *Bauhinia*) is a beautiful flowering tree commonly encountered as an ornamental across the Bay of Banderas region and the non-native species *B. monandra* is especially popular for adorning hotel gardens and public parks. The native Mexican species, B. divaricata, while not as flashy as many of the others, has delightfully graceful delicate blossoms for those who appreciate subtle beauty. A cosmopolitan genus, different species are native to diverse localities including Madagascar, India, southern China and Southeast Asia. The flowers, which have a superficial similarity to orchids, bloom from late-winter into the summer. Different varieties of the Bauhinias produce flowers in a wide array of colors— magenta, rose, lavender, pink and purple among others. In the tropics the Orchid tree is evergreen.

Other Names – Camel's Foot tree, Mountainebony (English); Orquídea Falsa, Pata de Vaca, or Pata de Cabra (Spanish).

Identification - This is a small to medium tree reaching to about 40 feet tall (12 meters) with a spreading crown 20 to 30 feet across (6-9 meters). The leaves are alternate and shaped much like a cow's hoof, the source of some of the tree's common names. The bark is gray and rough becoming fissured with age. The fruit comes in cylindrical, green pods that split upon maturity to release seeds. But what we all love most about this tree are the gorgeous, orchidlike flowers that come in the colors described above in broad clusters on the branch tip. They have 5 wavy, slightly overlapping petals around curving stamen at the center. Note that orchids on the other hand each have three petals (including the modified lip or "labellum") and three sepals recessed behind them.

Orchid tree in the garden of the Velas Vallarta Hotel in the Marina Vallarta.



Happy Mother's Day!



The Vallarta Botanical Garden celebrates Mother's Day on both May 8th (Mother's Day in the US and Canada) and May 10th (Mother's Day in Mexico) by inviting mothers to visit on either or both of these special days to honor our favorite caregivers.

What better way to share our appreciation with those who nurture and love us than to enjoy a day with them in a lovely natural sanctuary filled with flowering plants? Other activities to share with your mother at the Garden include hiking the trails, swimming in the refreshing waters of the Horcones River, and lunch in the Hacienda de Oro Restaurant.

Mothers will receive complimentary entry to the Garden on either May 8th and/or 10th by mentioning this promotion upon arrival to the front gate.

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Consecration of the Garden's Chapel – June 8th at 12:00 pm

The Vallarta Botanical Garden's new chapel, *Nuestra Señora del Jardín* (Our Lady of the Garden) is scheduled for consecration to be officiated by Bishop Luis Artemio Flores Calzada of the Catholic Church's Diocese of Tepic on Wednesday, June 8th at 12:00 pm. The Garden is open to the public (normal Garden entry fees apply) from 9:00 am to 6:00 pm on this day.

The consecration, while a ceremony of the Catholic Church, in no way precludes the Chapel from serving its mission as an interfaith center accessible and welcoming to all. The Garden thanks Bishop Artemio Flores Calzada for this special distinction. Also much appreciated is the planning and preparation by Father Saúl Cortes Ibarra of the church *El Refugio* in Puerto Vallarta, Joaquín Humberto Famania Ortega, Operative President of The Latino Coalition, and Dr. Rafael Guzmán Mejia, VBG Science Advisor. The Garden also recognizes all of the chapel's patrons, especially lead project patrons Ruben Cota and Michael Schultz.

For inquiries about the upcoming consecration and other events in the Chapel or the Garden in general, please write to: <u>eventos@vbgardens.org</u>.



Vallarta Botanical Garden's Calendar

	DATE	EVENT	COST
		GARDENS ARE CLOSED ON MONDAYS FROM APRIL UNTIL DECEMBER	
1	MAY	Labor Day in Mexico	-
3	MAY	Teacher's Day (US)	-
8	MAY	Mother's Day (Canada & US) – Special promotion for moms. (See page 14 for more info.)	-
10	MAY	Mother's Day (Mexico) – Special promotion for moms. (See page 14 for more info.)	-
15	MAY	Teacher's Day (Mexico)	-
5	JUN	World Environment Day — Celebrate our amazing planet in a natural paradise.	Included with entry
8	JUN	Consecration of the Garden's new Chapel 12:00 noon – (See page 15 for more info.)	Included with entry

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



Garden Hours Open 7 days/wk Open 6 days/wk Early "Bird" Opening Daily Guided Tour

<u>9 am – 6 pm</u>

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)





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

From the Membership Desk

Members are essential to the success of the Vallarta Botanical Garden and make our mission possible. Your support allows us to offer outstanding horticultural displays, cultural events, education programs, and advance in plant science/ conservation. The Garden is enormously grateful to have your wonderful support for our most amazing year ever!

Thank you for upgrading, renewing or becoming a new member of the Vallarta Botanical Garden. To become a member of the Garden and support our great cause, please email me and I will be more than happy to welcome you to our community of Garden members.

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

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 <u>www.vbgardens.org/benefactors</u>



We would like to acknowledge and thank the following supporters:

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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 avaiable 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@vbgardems.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.

Wire transfers: Bank: Banamex Account in Mexican Pesos (MXN): Account in US Dollars (USD):

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



<u>Canada</u> - 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.ccshf.ca) selecting the "Vallarta Botanical Gardens Fund."

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- 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

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