

THE LEAFLET

The Monthly Magazine of the Vallarta Botanical Garden

October 2015



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The Monthly Magazine of the Vallarta Botanical Garden

Puerto Vallarta, Jalisco, México

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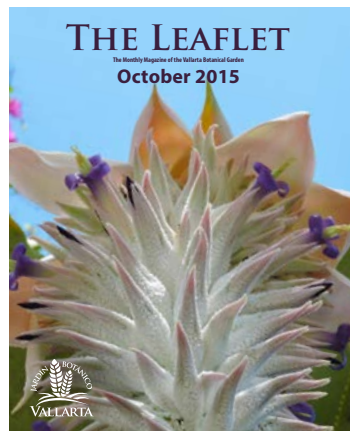
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Cover photo: Neil Gerlowski
Ursulaea macvaughii



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www.vbgardens.org

Curator's Corner

Dear Friends of the Garden,

While the summer heat and humidity may still linger with us for another week or two, cooler autumn temperatures and drier air will surely return to Puerto Vallarta very soon. The abundance of this season's rainfalls have bestowed our forests with rich green foliage which will remain far beyond our tropical autumn.

The seasons here in the lower latitudes may not be as pronounced as those of our northern neighbors, but we who keep in tune with natural cycles will have no shortage of signs to look for. For example, quite soon wild marigolds will dot the roadsides and pastures and will continue blooming until about early November when they become decorations for Day of the Dead festivities.

You may also note a change in the avian visitors to the Garden and our local forests at this time. Migratory birds are on their way to winter residences and many will be commonly encountered here in our natural reserve until spring. We'll celebrate this phenomenon of mass migration and bold flight at the Garden on October 10th as an organization proudly participating in International Migratory Bird Day.

Whether you've hung low in the tropics this summer or have flown off to other places, we wish you a prompt return to the Garden, a place we hope you join us in calling home.

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

Do you enjoy receiving The Leaflet??

Please tell us what you like reading!

Post your thoughts:

<https://es-es.facebook.com/vbgardensac>

Photo: Mansur Kiadeh

Mexican Orchid Of the Month

***Laelia eyermaniana* Rchb. f.**

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

Almost all members of the genus *Laelia* are epiphytes (living upon trees) and produce fragrant flowers, are attractive and beautifully colored, long living, and have excellent textures and geometric perfection.

This endemic Mexican species inhabits oak forests around 2000 m. Until now it has not been subject to over-collection, but is threatened, at least in Jalisco, by the disturbance of its environment principally from logging to clear fields for temporary crops.

It is grown successfully in containers filled with small pieces of bark and charcoal (not briquettes) which provide sufficient drainage. They should not receive excessive irrigation and need good lighting, best provided by hanging on north-facing walls or hung on the branches of trees with diffuse light through the upper branches.



Laelia eyermaniana, Photo: Alan Jouy

Laelia eyermaniana is characterized by ovoid pseudobulbs; round flowers, pink and thickening at the tip, green on the outside; the petals are rhombic and wide. It blooms in late summer and early autumn.

Mexican Bird Of the Month

Western Tanager (*Piranga ludoviciana*)

This medium-sized songbird is on its way back to Mexico from summer breeding grounds as far north as Alaska. While some make this trip as a solo flight, others opt for company and may travel in groups of up to 30 birds. Soon birders visiting the Garden will add these beautiful creatures to their checklists.

Adult males, such as the one pictured here, have bright red faces and brilliant napes, shoulders, and rumps with mostly black upper backs, wings, and tail. Females have yellow heads, olive backs and dark wings and tails. Both sexes have stout bills, yellow underparts and light wing bars. For those who wish to learn more about tropical bird ID, just read on to the next article about our International Migratory Bird Day Event...



Piranga ludoviciana, Photo: Petr Myska



© Amelia Hansen for
Environment for the Americas
International Migratory Bird Day

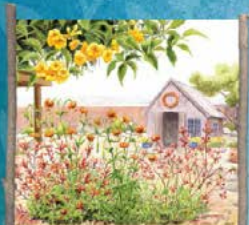
International Migratory Bird Day

October 10th at the Vallarta Botanical Garden

The natural paradise of our region is a legendary destination for human "snowbirds" that flock to Puerto Vallarta each year to escape harsh northern winters. Our feathered friends have a similar migratory pattern and October marks the return of many migratory species. Join us for a day of early morning guided birding hikes starting at 8:00 am followed by a presentation from 11:00 am to 12:00 pm about many of the wonderful migratory and resident birds of our region.

Event entry is included in regular garden admission (teens and adults 80 pesos, children 20 pesos). Registration is not *required*, but a quick email to let us know how many guests to expect would be highly appreciated! eventos@vbgardens.org

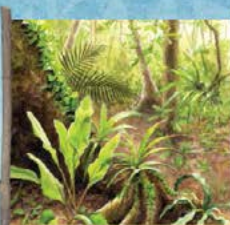
Restore Habitat,



YARDS



MANGROVES



TROPICAL FORESTS



WETLANDS



GRASSLANDS



Rufous
Hummingbird



Yellow
Warbler



Blue-crowned Motmot
Black-and-white Warbler



Northern Pintail
Northern Harrier



Eastern
Meadowlark

Restore Birds

**INTERNATIONAL
2015 MIGRATORY
BIRD DAY**

Vallarta Cacao & Chocolate Festival

October 17 & 18, 2015 at the Vallarta Botanical Garden

Engage your taste buds, minds and imaginations for a chocoholic's dream weekend. Money may not grow on trees, but who needs that if you can grow your own chocolate? Event entry is included in regular garden admission (teens and adults 80 pesos, children 20 pesos).

Event Itinerary

Sat., Oct. 17

Noon – 5:30 pm

Open House of the Special Exhibition:
Chocolate, Gift of the Gods

1 -2 pm

Guided tour of the VBG's Theobroma cacao groves

2 - 5 pm

Presentations from a series of dynamic guest speakers

Sun., Oct. 18

Noon – 5:30 pm

Open House of the Special Exhibition:
Chocolate, Gift of the Gods

1 -2 pm

Guided tour of the VBG's Theobroma cacao groves

2 - 4:30 pm

Presentations from a series of dynamic guest speakers

4:30 - 5:30 pm

Closing celebration with live music

Guest guides, lecturers, and exhibitors including:

Fernel Bobadilla

Director of Amo Cacao, a Guadalajara based network of organic cacao farmers

Ana Rita García Lascurain

Director of the museum MUCHO Mundo Chocolate in Mexico City

Leslie Korn, PhD, MPH

Author of *Chocolate, Chilies and Coconuts: The Culture and Cuisine of West Mexico*

Doreen Pendgracs

Author and owner/guide of the Canadian based company Chocolatour

...along with several area chefs and restaurateurs



Theobroma cacao, Fruit
Photo: Mansur Kiadeh

For more info: www.vbgardens.org/cacaofest

Registration is not required, but a quick email to let us know how many guests to expect would be highly appreciated! eventos@vbgardens.org.



Theobroma cacao, Flower; Photo: Mansur Kiadeh



10th
ANNIVERSARY
— ❁❁❁❁ —
VALLARTA
BOTANICAL
GARDEN



Celebrate with us!

Saturday & Sunday
Nov. 14 & 15th, 2015
9:00 am – 6:00 pm

400 guests maximum per day
Please purchase your tickets now.

For more information:
www.vbgardens.org
+ 52 322 223 6182



**Event
Tickets:**

PN Events

November 14

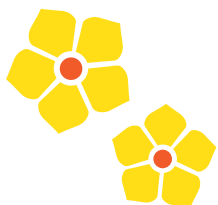


<https://goo.gl/62AMgE>

November 15



<https://goo.gl/9m1Njy>



Exciting environmental
education activities



Stimulating **lectures**
by dynamic guest speaker



Live music by
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**In Good Company:
Montreal Botanical Garden**

By Neil Gerlowski, Executive Director of the VBG

We at the Vallarta Botanical Garden are celebrating our inclusion in the 2015 list of the “TOP 10 North American Gardens Worth Travelling For,” in part, by a series of articles highlighting the prestigious gardens sharing this list with us. Back in 1931 during the height of the Great Depression, Montreal’s city government got behind a campaign to create its own public garden. This certainly proved to be a wise investment as the Montreal Botanical Garden now receives nearly a million visitors per year, greatly enriching the lives of its residents and providing a powerful resource to attract tourism to their beautiful city.

The Montreal Botanical Garden is a vast open space of 75 hectares with a variety of specialty gardens including the wildly popular Chinese and Japanese gardens which showcase not only the plants of these countries but also landscaping philosophies associated with their cultures. While the flora of faraway lands are one way to capture the imagination, the plants and people of North America are also celebrated in the MBG’s First Nations Garden through North American endemic plants and a focus on

2015 List of the, “TOP 10 North American Gardens Worth Travelling For” <i>As declared by the Canadian Garden Tourism Council (Listed in alphabetical order)</i>	
Butchart Gardens	Canada
Chanticleer	USA
Denver Botanical Gardens	USA
Desert Botanical Garden	USA
Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden	USA
Huntington Botanical Gardens	USA
Jardín Botánico Culiacán	Mexico
Jardín Botánico de Vallarta (Vallarta Botanical Garden)	Mexico
Longwood Gardens	USA
Montreal Botanical Garden	Canada



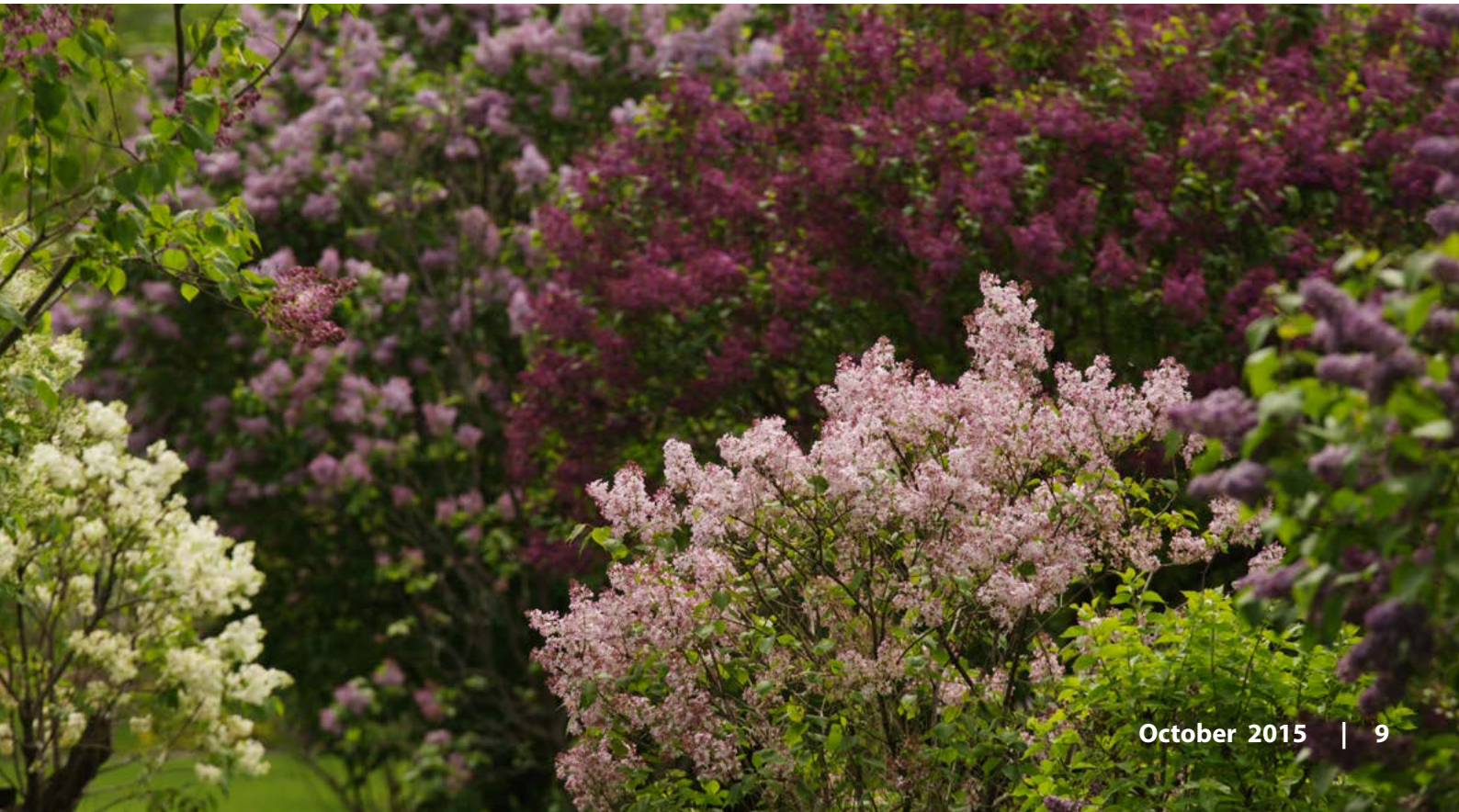
how native peoples have traditionally used these for food, medicine, and many other purposes.

This exceptional site has an extensive collection of 22,000 plant species and cultivars, 10 exhibition greenhouses, Tree Pavilion and some 30 thematic gardens. The MBG, along with the Biodôme, Insectarium, and Rio Tinto Alcan Planetarium comprise the Montréal Space for Life, the largest natural sciences museum complex in Canada and a world-class destination of the highest order.



*As declared at the North American Garden Tourism Conference in Toronto, Canada March, 2015

Photos on these pages provided courtesy of Montreal Botanical Garden.



Rare plant blooms for the first time at the Vallarta Botanical Garden!

Ursulaea macvaughii is a rare plant. A member of the bromeliad, or pineapple family, with only one other species in its genus, it has a small range of native distribution from southern Jalisco through Colima to western Michoacán. The Vallarta Botanical Garden is one of only a few botanical gardens in the world with examples of this plant on public display. Currently eight healthy specimens of *U. macvaughii* grace the VBG's collections, but until, now none have yet bloomed.

The first few flowers began to open on September 29th and more will surely follow over the next several days with a peak bloom predicted by the end of the first week or two of October. Buds of this plant are encrusted in a frost-like white texture and the pinkish bracts from which the inflorescence emerges are elegant enough for a swan to envy. Plant enthusiasts are encouraged to visit this rare treat and photographers are invited to take advantage of an opportunity to capture images of this spectacular jewel of our natural world.

Even after the purple petals fall away, the large showy berries of this plant are still a sight to behold and will delight observant visitors for months to come. In addition to extensive and diverse displays of bromeliads, the VBG's other notable collections include orchids, palms, oaks, magnolias, cacti and much more. Plants at the Garden can be enjoyed in inspiring landscaped grounds, stunning plant conservatories, and adventurous trails through a magnificent native forest preserve... it's a place where Mexican plants meet the imagination!

Text & photos by: Neil Gerlowski





Entry Fee Increase

The Mexican peso has been taken for a wild ride this past year. Back on October 1st, 2014 (a year ago) one Mexican peso traded for 0.074 US dollars. Its plummet has taken it as low as a value of only 0.058 US dollars within the last few weeks. That's a decline of about 22% and it appears to be trending in such a way that it is likely to continue dropping further. The peso has not seen such devaluation since 1993 when the federal government remonetized with the "Nuevo peso" in response.

While this exchange rate is great news for tourists from north of the border whose dollar stretches ever further, it has led to inflation. The Garden must adjust it's entry fee in response. Our new entry fee will go into effect on November 17th.

Garden Entry Fee through Sunday, November 15th

Adults and teens (Age 13 and up):	80 pesos
Children (Age 4-12):	20 pesos (must be accompanied by parent or guardian)
Infants (Under age 4):	No charge (must be accompanied by parent or guardian)

Garden Entry Fee as of Tuesday, November 17th

Adults and teens (Age 13 and up):	100 pesos
Children (Age 4-12):	50 pesos (must be accompanied by parent or guardian)
Infants (Under age 4):	No charge (must be accompanied by parent or guardian)

While the admission fee for children has been adjusted, please note that the Garden continues to grant free entry to thousands of students in organized school visits with advanced reservations. Those interested in making such reservations should write to educadorambiental@vbgardens.org. Students age 13 and up who are not part of organized school visits still receive a 25% discount when they show their current student ID for any of the schools in Cabo Corrientes, Puerto Vallarta, and Bahia de Banderas Municipalities.



Epidendrum difforme, Photo: Gerardo Luna

Magnolias that Sparked Conservation Action

By Alan Heinze, Research Coordinator, VBG

“Ahuatoso”, “laurel”, “yoloxochitl” and “magnolia” are some of the local names given to the trees of *Magnolia iltisiana* (Magnoliaceae) found at high elevations in the Sierra de Manatlán and Cacoma in Jalisco, and further south along the Sierra Madre del Sur. These amazing trees can grow up to 40-45 meters (130 - 145 ft) tall and become local attractions each year when they are visited by vast numbers of squirrels that feast on their bountiful seeds. But what mostly caught the attention of botanical researchers was that they were being heavily logged for the excellent quality and durability of their wood, some of which was even being exported to Germany for veneer. In fact, in 1984 researchers Rafael Guzmán Mejía and Hugh Iltis from the University of Guadalajara and the University of Wisconsin-Madison respectively, came across 25 huge magnolia trees marked (illegally) for logging. This helped provide the final push needed to urge the State of Jalisco to buy Las Joyas Field Station for the University of Guadalajara, which eventually culminated in the creation of the Sierra de Manantlán Biosphere Reserve, a natural protected area of almost 140,000 ha (345,000 acres).

Today, *M. iltisiana* (in honor of Dr. Iltis) is listed as ‘Vulnerable’ in the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species and protected by Mexican law. Although these trees are sheltered in the Reserve, they also grow in other localities that haven’t enjoyed such protection. For that matter, botanical gardens can play an important role by including endangered species in their living plants collection, or what is known as ex situ conservation, a type of safeguard which also serves educational, research, and display purposes. It so happens that a few months ago, after applying for a special collection permit, one of our collaborating researchers in our Magnolia Project generously brought us some seeds of this valuable species from Cacoma, Jalisco. The seedlings are now growing in our nursery, and we sincerely hope that future generations visiting the Vallarta Botanical Garden will see them grow to be over 200 years old, just like those encountered in the sierras by the conservation-minded researchers many years ago.

Magnolia iltisiana seedlings, Photo: Leo Campos



Vallarta Botanical Garden's Calendar

DATE		EVENT	COST
		GARDENS ARE CLOSED ON MONDAYS FROM APRIL UNTIL DECEMBER	
10	OCT	International Migratory Bird Day — Learn about the birds returning to winter in Mexico (see page 3).	Included with entry
17-18	OCT	Vallarta Cacao & Chocolate Festival — Discover the joys of Mexico's gifts to your taste buds through food, beverages, and demos/presentations by guest chocolate experts (see pages 4-5).	Included with entry
24 OCT - 3 NOV		Día de los Muertos (Day of the Dead) — A cultural delight of flowers and other items in memory of the departed. Those who would like to contribute flowers, volunteerism, or funding for this colorful seasonal exhibition are encouraged to send an email to eventos@vbgardens.org .	Included with entry
14-15	NOV	VBG's 10th Anniversary Celebration — A full weekend of events including guided hikes, open house experiences, captivating talks by dynamic guest speakers, live music, and more (see pages 6-7).	Included with entry
26	NOV	Thanksgiving (US) — Celebrate an American tradition in a tropical paradise. The Garden's restaurant offers their annual Thanksgiving special including turkey, stuffing, mashed potatoes, gravy, and cranberry sauce in proportions fit for a hungry pilgrim. Served from 11 am until 6 pm. Reservations are recommended but not required.	Restaurant Special: \$299 MXN per person
5	DEC	Volunteer Training — Join the team! Pre-registration required. Send an email of your interest to eventos@vbgardens.org by Dec. 3.	Free w/ prior registration
12	DEC	Tropical Bird ID Crash Course — Need to study up for the big count on Dec. 15th? Join us for some early morning birding (8 am to 11 am) followed by a presentation by expert birders on how to maximize your efforts during "count week."	Included with entry
15	DEC	Christmas Bird Count (CBC) — The VBG is a regional leader in the world's longest running and most significant citizen science project. Public CBC participation in the Garden is welcome on the 15th from 8 am to 6 pm. A special overnight option at an extra cost is also available from the preceding evening to the following morning. For more info, please write to eventos@vbgardens.org .	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)



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

From the Membership Desk

I'd like to share my heartfelt thanks to our many members who have renewed and upgraded their memberships over the past month, especially those who've done so from afar—in some cases hundreds of miles away! This is incredibly encouraging for us at a time when tourism is a bit on the slow side and a critical help in keeping your Vallarta Botanical Garden a world-class attraction, asset to our community, and a leader in conservation of Mexican species. In short, you're contributions mean more than we can ever express!

Very soon the winter season will be upon us again and now that we've climbed so high on the list of TripAdvisor attractions we're sure to receive a record number of visitors this coming year. By the way, if you haven't yet written a TripAdvisor review of the Garden, please do so today—it's the number one way people find out about us and make their first visit here.

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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Sedum, Photo: Neil Gerlowski

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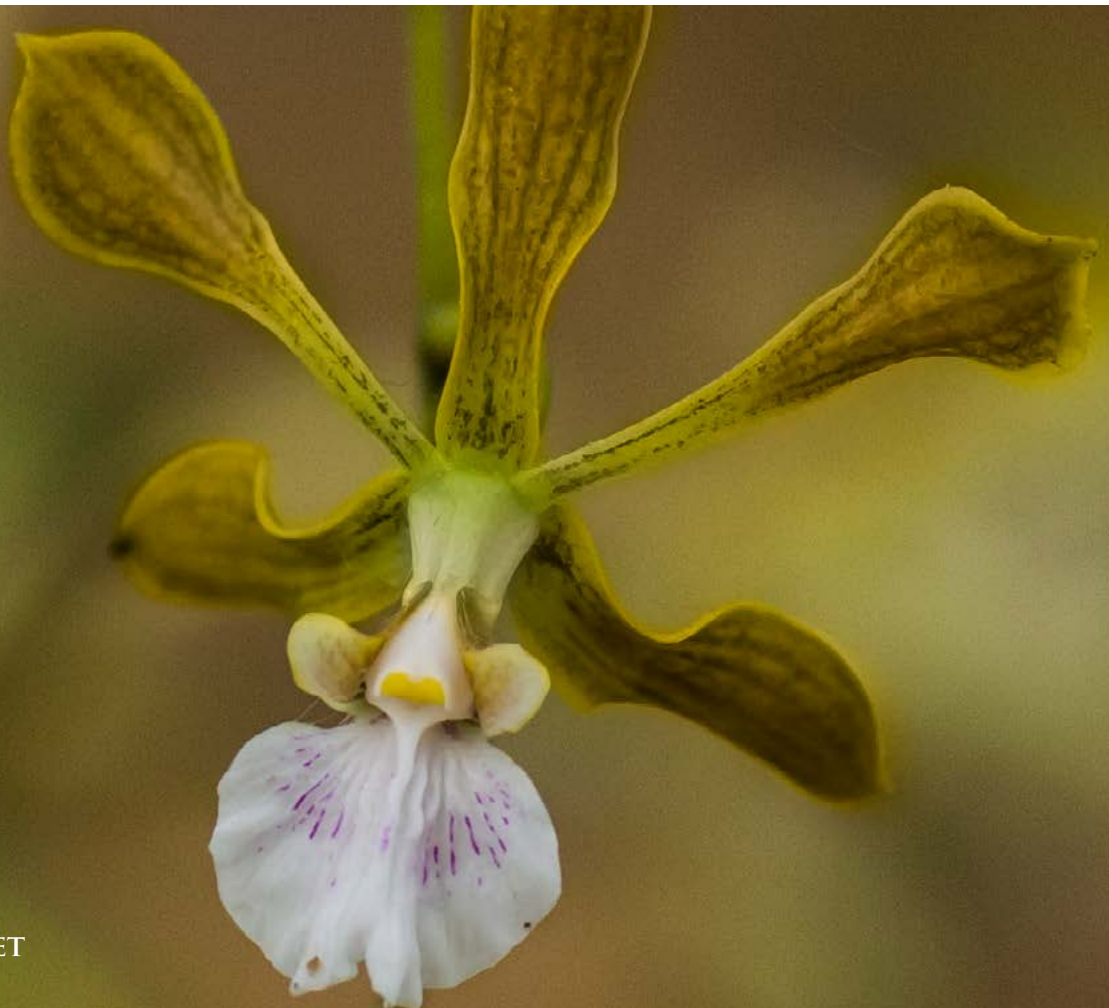


Photo: Gerardo Luna

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 Michaela Flores: memberships@vbgardens.org Thank you.**

(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@fundacionpuntademitamex.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.
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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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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

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