

THE LEAFLET

The Monthly Magazine of the Vallarta Botanical Garden

March 2018



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Puerto Vallarta, Jalisco, Mexico

March 2018

Vol. 8, No. 3



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Cover: *Nepenthes* sp.
Photo: Bob Price

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www.vbgardens.org

Curator's Corner

Dear Friends of the Vallarta Botanical Garden,

Our world needs more good leaders! During the 2018 Directors of Large Gardens Conference that we just hosted here at the Vallarta Botanical Garden, several of our attending guests spoke about how their institutions are cultivating leaders at all levels through employee development programs, mentorship, and educational outreach. We at the Vallarta Botanical Garden get great satisfaction from the work that we do in inspiring, coaching, and preparing future leaders.

While we do this in many ways, personally, one of my greatest joys is through putting this into practice in projects with our horticultural team. Our gardeners often begin their employment here with practical experience to draw from through work in family gardens and ranches. While this is an excellent base to grow from, many are not brought up believing in horticulture as a career goal. Professionalizing our team in a pursuit of horticultural excellence here at the Garden has a remarkable way to bringing out the best in our staff, motivating them to learn new skills, innovate creative solutions to their problems, and lead others toward common goals. The stunning results of their work and budding leadership are to be seen throughout the Vallarta Botanical Garden... Let's hear it for our gardeners!

By the way, rave reviews and recommendations for the Vallarta Botanical Garden continue to pour in from all sides. The Delta Airlines' new 2018 Caribbean, Mexico and Latin America Guide lists the Vallarta Botanical Garden as its first recommended thing to see and do in the Puerto Vallarta region!

*With great hope for a fruitful and vibrant future,
Bob Price, Founder and Curator, VBG*



Let's hear it for our gardeners!

Photo: Bob Price

Colleagues from Afar Connect through Conservation and Public Horticulture

By Neil Gerlowski, Executive Director, VBG

Our 21st century world may be besought by a host of ever-increasing challenges, but it also has increasingly well-trained, experienced, sophisticated, and interconnected groups of professionals to face these challenges together. This past month we received a group of some of the most influential leaders in public horticulture when we hosted the 2018 Directors of Large Gardens Conference.

This conference was specifically themed with a focus on conservation and international collaboration and we had many wonderful opportunities to share stories of our programs and projects to inform and inspire attending garden directors from across North America. The gardens of several of these leaders are already actively involved in projects here in Mexico through the Vallarta Botanical Garden's Science Advisory Board (see next article on page 14 for more). With a new group of top professionals who have now experienced our garden firsthand, we are poised to continue establishing mutually beneficial partnerships with institutions whose missions and goals align with ours.

One of the conference sessions specifically focused on biocultural diversity and included participation by representatives of Jalisco's Wixárika indigenous community (Huicholes). Garden leaders were able to hear how local native people value, interpret, and interact with the natural world around them. Afterwards, insightful discussions ensued about what gardens are doing and can do to include more diverse audiences, participants, and cultural leaders to engage communities in conservation and public horticulture. The relationships developed and strengthened during this conference will undoubtedly help many gardens pursue projects together for powerful results for their respective communities. And we at the Vallarta Botanical Garden want to make sure our Puerto Vallarta community is included in such collaborative work!



Conservation and Leadership Discussions
Photo: Bob Price



Top:
DLG guests at the
Vallarta Botanical Garden
Photo: Juan Pablo Pacheco

Bottom:
Representatives of Jalisco's Wixárika
indigenous community (Huicholes)
engage guests at the 2018 Directors
of Large Gardens Conference
Photo: Neil Gerlowski

Next page:
DLG guest enjoy an evening in
Puerto Vallarta.
Photo: Jack Kelleher







Vallarta Botanical Garden Receives Donation of Rare Plants from the UNAM

One of the attending directors at the 2018 Directors of Large Gardens Conference brought some very special gifts with him to present to the Vallarta Botanical Garden. Dr. Jorge Nieto Sotelo, director of the botanical garden at the UNAM (Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México), the largest university system in Latin America, brought a donation of rare and threatened plants for the Vallarta Botanical Garden to care for and display for our visitors. Some of these plants are so rare that they are extinct in the wild. The UNAM propagates these plants and has an adoption program available not just for other institutions such as Vallarta Botanical Garden, but also for the general public.

These new accessions can be found in and around the Vallarta Botanical Garden's new Cactus and Succulent Plants House and include the following:

<i>Cephalocereus senilis</i>	(3)	<i>Echeveria shaviana</i>	(1)	<i>Mammillaria carnea</i>	(3)
<i>Coryphantha erecta</i>	(3)	<i>Furcraea macdougallii</i>	(6)	<i>Mammillaria duwei</i>	(3)
<i>Echeveria pulidonis</i>	(1)	<i>Graptopetalum superbum</i>	(1)	<i>Thelocactus rinconensis</i>	(3)

Please join us in thanking Dr. Jorge Nieto Sotelo and his staff at the UNAM's botanical garden for these treasured donations!



Donated Plants from the UNAM
Photo: Neil Gerlowski



Furcraea macdougalli
Photo: Centeotl Aragón

Asparagaceae
Furcraea macdougalli
falso maguey grande
false big agave
México: endémico



Photo: Nancy Holland

2018 Vallarta Bird Festival, March 9 – 11

Article by Nancy Holland

Mark your calendars for the 2018 Vallarta Bird Festival, Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, March 9, 10, and 11, hosted by the beautiful Vallarta Botanical Garden.

The Vallarta Botanical Garden is situated on 64-acres at 1,300 ft above sea level in bird-rich Cabo Corrientes, just a short drive from Puerto Vallarta.

With excellent birding opportunities, guided birding tours in the Garden will be offered each morning along with guided tours every afternoon of the Garden's incredible array of native Mexican flora and exotic delights. Within the Garden alone over 200 different species of birds have been observed and documented by enthusiastic local residents and international visitors.



Bird photography workshops and educational seminars will be offered, along with exhibits, music, native dancers, and fun, all included with a daily general admission of 150 pesos or with a 3 day Happy Wren Pass (price to be determined).

For an additional cost, professional birding tours will venture from the coastal habitats to the upper elevation forest habitats in search of endemic specialties among the over 400 bird species found in this diverse region of Jalisco. There is no registration required for Garden activities but we would love to hear from you if you plan on coming. The professional birding tours do require advance registration.

The festival does not provide transportation but there are buses and taxis available in Puerto Vallarta that can take you directly to and from the Garden. The Hacienda de Oro Restaurant, on site, is open from 9am to 5pm serving breakfast and more, including oak-wood-fired brick-oven pizza and authentic Mexican cuisine.

Bring water, sunscreen, insect repellent, binoculars, and if you want to take a swim in the river, then bring a bathing suit and towel.

Contact us by email:

nancyholland@gmail.com

info@vbgardens.org

Facebook:

[Vallarta Birders](#)

[Vallarta Botanical Gardens AC](#)

Mexican Bird of the Month

Pitangus sulphuratus — Great Kiskadee — Everyone's Backyard Bird

Article and photos by Greg R. Homel www.birdinginpuertovallarta.com/birdingadventures@mac.com

To say the name Great Kiskadee is onomatopoeic is an understatement to say the least. It really is what it says, so to speak! And their characteristic, three-syllabled calls “kis-ka-deee” ring from rancho to barrio to luxury condo, so long as there is at least some natural vegetation around...

These cheerfully plumaged bundles of energy seem to be “everybody’s backyard bird” in the Vallarta Region, and that standing holds true in many parts of tropical Mexico, Central America and South America for that matter; though they regularly range north of the Tropic of Cancer, and even across the Rio Grande... er, Rio Bravo, to mix with more temperate bird species there—and a few other “Mexican specialties”, to use birder’s speak—in the so called Rio Grande Valley of South Texas.

As members of one of the largest families of purely “American” birds—the Tyrannidae or Tyrant Flycatchers—which is more than 400 species strong, they are characteristically bold, fiercely territorial, and very insectivorous, although they are not above indulging themselves on seasonal fruit, such as Gumbo Limbo (*Bursera* spp.), and other more atypical treats such as peanut butter, dog food and even fish, which they catch by diving into ponds “kingfisher style” (see inset).

Much to the surprise of some birders, many tyrant flycatchers exhibit a hidden coronal patch—which is a colorful tuft of feathers normally held flat against the head and covered by more somberly-pigmented contour feathering, up until the critical moment when the bird wants to impress a potential mate, defend its territory, or just display for the pure joy of it. The Great Kiskadee is no exception, though most birders have never seen their stunning but usually hidden yellow crest (see photo on the next page)!

These powerful and large flycatchers dazzle birders with their bright saffron underparts and bold, derby-headed look. It’s no wonder they are a favorite among birders and non-birders, alike. But don’t get too confident when identifying this bird.... There are two other “derby-headed” flycatchers in the Vallarta region—the Boat-billed and the Social, flycatchers—though the former has

a much heavier bill than a kiskadee, and the latter has a tiny bill by comparison; neither sports a rufescent cast to its primary and secondary flight feathers, like the kiskadee does.

So the next time you hear the familiar, onomatopoeic admonition of the Great Kiskadee, give it what it deserves: a second glance! And admire the grace, adept aerobatics, and impressive coloring of what is perhaps the most widespread tyrant flycatcher of the Western Hemisphere, which has been waiting just outside your window all along!





Become a Garden “GEM” by Giving Every Month

Dividing your contributions to the Vallarta Botanical Garden into monthly payments can help you better budget your annual giving while providing us with a dependable monthly income to carry the Garden through the slower times of the year. Learn more about this valuable opportunity by visiting the new Give Every Month “GEM” page on the Garden’s website, www.vbgardens.org and begin this kind of contribution today.

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 amount into payments over the course of three years results in a commitment of only \$194 or \$139 USD per month. These gifts, along with other honorary/memorial gifts such as individual tiles and permanent memorial stones in the Garden of Memories, qualify for tax-deductible contributions in Mexico, the US, and Canada. For more information, please visit our website or call 322 223 6182 and ask to speak to the Garden’s 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.



Asteraceae
Photo: Bob Price

Oncidium sp.
Photo: Bob Price



Bouquets to Banquets ... and many beautiful settings for your special day



Why not have your special day in one of the most beautiful places in the world?
There are many sites around the gardens where a wedding can be performed.
From a simple wedding with just a few friends, to a lavish event with all the trimmings.

Consult the Vallarta Botanical Gardens wedding planner for more ideas.
+52 (322) 223 6182 or (322) 223 6184 eventos@vbgardens.org

Scientists to Explore the VBG's Newly Acquired Conservation Preserve

Members of the Vallarta Botanical Garden's Science Advisory Board will be working this month to perform an initial plant survey of the VBG's recently acquired conservation preserve land (first announced in the [June 2017 edition of The Leaflet](#)). We have long known that the true treasure of the Sierra Madre is its diverse flora and fauna that populate our forests. Much is still yet to be discovered and much needs our protection to last in a changing world with so many threats to our natural resources.

Garden professionals from several United States institutions (Atlanta Botanical Garden, Chicago Botanic Garden, The Huntington Library, Art Collections, and Botanical Garden, Longwood Gardens, The Morton Arboretum, and the UC Davis Arboretum) will be teaming up with Vallarta Botanical Garden staff and collaborators from the *Instituto de Botánica* (botanical institute) of the *Universidad de Guadalajara*. Please join us in welcoming these researchers and wishing them success in their studies. We look forward to reporting back to you on their findings.



Botanical Treasures of the Sierra Madre
Photo: Chipper Wichman

Students from the Universidad
de la Vera-Cruz in Puerto Vallarta
Photo: Centeotl Aragón



Education and Volunteer Report

By Centeotl Aragón, Vallarta Botanical Garden

This month we received a group of Girls Scouts working towards their botany badges; we are sure they will succeed. This group of Girl Scouts was chaperoned by the community leader in charge of a group of female walkers, “Nefertiti” Andrea Yoalhi Sosa. We also received a group of interior design students from the University of the Vera-Cruz in Puerto Vallarta. They visited the garden as part of a class in landscape architecture. Just as we provided an excellent reference for these students, the beauty of the Garden is here for you to enjoy too. So come on out and visit, we’ll be waiting.

Monthly tally of visits, program participation, and volunteer service, February 2018:

Total member visits to the VBG:	312
Total non member visits to the VBG:	6407
Total complimentary entries:*	105
Total participation in special events, classes & workshops:	0
Total participation in 1 pm tours:**	324
Total volunteer service hours:	109

* The Vallarta Botanical Garden is pleased to provide complimentary entry for educational programs for school groups with advanced reservations. Currently, these are only offered on Wednesdays. Requests for reservations may be delivered by email to escolar@vbgardens.org and should be sent at least five days prior to the requested visit date. Requests for reservations are granted on a first-come, first-served basis and are subject to scheduling restrictions.

**1 pm tours are offered daily from December through March and otherwise only when volunteers are available.

Vallarta Botanical Garden's Calendar

DATE		EVENT	COST
		THE GARDEN IS CLOSED ON MONDAYS APRIL THROUGH DECEMBER	
9-11	Mar	Vallarta Bird Festival – (See page 9)	(See page 9.)
10	Mar	Plant Sale – Garden members receive 20% off	--
16	Mar	Orchid Repotting Demo (11 am)	Free for Garden Members
25	Mar	Palm Sunday Palm Walk	Included with entry
1	Apr	Easter – (Garden remains open for all of Holy Week)	--
2	Apr	Garden closed Mondays from April until December	--
6	Apr	Orchids of Mexico Lecture (11 am)	Free for Garden Members
8	Apr	Garden Volunteer and Staff Appreciation Day	--
19	Apr	Curator's Cocktail Social	Advanced purchase & registration required
22	Apr	Earth Day	--

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



Brassica oleracea
Photo: Bob Price

Garden Hours

9 am – 6 pm

Open 7 days/wk

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

Open 6 days/wk

Early "Bird" Opening

8 am every Thursday (Offered for the months of Dec., Jan., Feb., & March)

Daily Guided Tour

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



From the Membership Desk



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

What wonderful news that the Delta Airlines' new 2018 Caribbean, Mexico and Latin America Guide lists the Vallarta Botanical Garden as its first recommended thing to see and do in the Puerto Vallarta region! Yet as much fun as it is to see reviews of the Vallarta Botanical Garden in print, I much prefer to hear it in the delighted voices of our visitors in the Garden. One of the best ways to share your joy for the Garden with others is through your membership here which helps us sustain the beauty we have worked so hard to create and allows us to continue thriving into the future.

Members: Please always wear your membership card while 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 PATRONS?

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

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

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CHARLES H. STOUT FOUNDATION
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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).
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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,
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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



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Checks may be mailed to:

Friends of Vallarta Botanical Gardens, A.C.
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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

Donations of stocks and IRA distributions:

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