

Garden **news**

QUEENS BOTANICAL GARDEN NEWSLETTER

SPRING 2011 / VOLUME 17 Issue 1



Queens
Botanical Garden

43-50 Main Street, Flushing, NY 11355
718.886.3800 www.queensbotanical.org



Photos by Shari Romar

Volunteers March for the Earth

On March 20 - the first day of spring - nearly 120 volunteers gathered to help spruce up the Garden for the new season. Groups participating were the Archon Honor Society for Community Service from Bayside High School, the daily QBG Tai Chi Group, Queens College Athletics Women's Tennis Team, St. John's University Team RV, Girl Scout Troop 4015 and Bank of America. Thanks to these eager volunteers, a great deal of work was accomplished around the Garden.

Bank of America spent much of their time in the greenhouse, Wedding Garden and Rose Garden, while the Girl Scouts worked to clean garden signs. Tai Chi members and students from Bayside High School, Queens College and St. John's University worked to pick up around the perimeter.

After refreshments the groups walked over the College Point Boulevard bridge into Flushing Meadows-Corona Park to gather at the Unisphere as an expression of peace and unity.

Another Volunteer Day is being planned for June 5. To join in contact Hannah Libraty at hlibraty@queensbotanical.org or 718-886-3800 ext. 216.

Thank you to all the wonderful volunteers for a successful and enjoyable day. Happy Spring!

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QBG mascot, Flora, riding the new pedicab at Flushing Meadows-Corona Park (above). The pedicab was made possible by a grant from the Port Authority of NY & NJ. It is available for rental at the Garden for weddings or special occasions. Contact Clare Del Monaco at cdelmonaco@queensbotanical.org.

dear flora

ANSWERS TO YOUR QUESTIONS



Queens
Botanical Garden

Where people, plants, and
cultures meet



Meet Flora!

QBG's new official mascot, Flora, greeted visitors at the HSBC Family Day Open House.

Photo by Nicholas Biondo

Dear Flora,

I live in an apartment but long for fresh vegetables this summer. Any suggestions?

Signed - Yardless in Apartment 6F

Dear Yardless,

Even apartment dwellers can be gardeners! Many plants are happy in containers located on bright windowsills and balconies that receive at least five hours of bright sun each day. **Mid-May** is a perfect time to start these mini gardens so you can enjoy the bounty throughout the summer.

When selecting a container, make sure it has **drainage holes** in the bottom and is **large enough** for the plant. Talk to your garden center and check plant labels for guidance.

Forgo soil from the neighbor's yard as it may have weed seeds and problematic critters. Instead, pick up a good quality **potting soil**. Plants benefit from a fertilizer, but too much will cause more harm than good. Your potting soil may have fertilizer included; otherwise talk with your garden center folks about a good organic option like fish emulsion.

Irrigation can lead to the demise of a container planting. Plants like to be moist but don't want to drown. Poke your finger into the soil up to the first knuckle. If the soil is dry, it's time to water.

Now that you know the basics, on to the fun part: choosing plants!

Herbs are good to try since a variety can fit into a modest-sized container. Good candidates include parsley, rosemary, thyme, and basil. With basil, once the plant is approximately 8" tall, pinch back the top part by about half to the leaf base. This will encourage a bush-like form. **Tomatoes** are always a summer favorite, and while the large ones can be difficult in a small space, there are wonderful cherry and grape varieties available. Round out your apartment farm with a selection of **leaf lettuce** varieties like a mesclun mix or even spinach.

As you develop your container green thumb, you'll find there are a number of other plants to try like beans, radishes and eggplants. Have fun and enjoy your new farm!

Queens Botanical Garden

43-50 Main Street, Flushing, NY 11355
www.queensbotanical.org

Garden Offices and Visitor Information

718.886.3800

Hours (April through October)

Tuesday through Sunday, 8 am to 6 pm

(November through March)

Tuesday through Sunday, 8 am to 4:30 pm

Closed Mondays year-round except
legal holidays

Admission

Adults \$4, Seniors \$3, Children (ages 3 to 12)
and Students with ID \$2. Free on Wednesday
afternoons from 3 to 6 pm and Sunday afternoons
from 4 to 6 pm. Free from November 1 through
March 31.

Parking

The Parking Garden entrance is on Crommelin
Street, at Blossom Avenue. Fees are charged.
Hours vary seasonally.

Plant Information

Tuesday, 9 am to 4 pm, ext. 200

Compost Information

718.539.LAWN(5296) or
compost@queensbotanical.org

Getting Here

QBG is easily accessible by car, train, or bus. For
complete travel directions and
further information, phone QBG or visit
us online.

The Queens Botanical Garden is located on property
owned in full by the City of New York, and its operation
is made possible in part by public funds provided through
the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs and
the New York City Council. The New York State Office
of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation provides
a portion of the Garden's general operating funds. The
Queens Borough President and Queens elected repre-
sentatives in the City Council and State Legislature pro-
vide leadership funding. Corporations, foundations and
individuals provide additional support.

Garden News

Annette Fanara - Editor

Contributors - Shari Romar, Regina Forlenza, Morgan
Potter, Sophia Warsh, Nicholas Biondo

Susan Lacerte - Executive Director



a letter from the Executive Director

Beyond Our Garden Gates

The warm yellow of witch hazel glows in the sun outside my window while cheery purple crocus bloom beneath a towering elm. To me, one symbolizes winter, the other spring. As I look at these plants here at home, I think of all we do at Queens Botanical Garden and beyond our garden gates.

Through the passionate interest in plants and children of board member Dr. J. Abularrage, we are planning to bring the healing power of plants into New York Hospital Queens. Education Manager Rebecca Wolf is working with hospital staff, and soon children in the hospital will learn about and pot up plants. QBG will also be the destination for children in a Diabetes Walk, showing young people how to have a more healthful lifestyle through physical activity and taking advantage of the Garden and many other cultural attractions in our borough.

Over in Rego Park, thanks to the advocacy of Councilmember Karen Koslowitz, the children from PS 174 will learn about trees—the September 16th tornado and storm hit the school hard, taking down many of the “green friends.” Principal Karin Kelly said the students, teachers, and school family were devastated by the loss. Thanks to City funding through CASA, healing here is underway: students are learning about and will be planting trees. While on the subject of trees, QBG is again participating in the Mayor’s MillionTreesNYC. Over 431,000 trees have already been planted. New Civic Corps member Chelsea Clarke and Gina Baldwin, who leads our NYC Compost Project, are teaching people how to be stewards of the trees that help improve our air and the beauty of our neighborhoods.

The Urban Advantage Program takes Marnie Rackmill, who leads this effort for QBG, and Chris Nowell all around Queens demystifying science for teachers and middle school students. This program, initiated by the American Museum of Natural History in conjunction with the Department of Education and the science-rich institutions of the City, makes science accessible to many. Fred Gerber, QBG Director of Education Emeritus, frequently teaches science topics, and Senior Museum Instructor, Gennadyi Gurman, has been called upon to help schools develop their “green curriculum.” Meanwhile, Deputy Director Patty Kleinberg wowed an audience of landscapers at a conference on organic landscape practices at Farmingdale State College in March. I am in my third year teaching Public Garden Management to undergraduates at Farmingdale, which has trained many in our field.

Gardener Evonne O’Dwyer uploaded our plant inventory to an international database of plants being coordinated by Botanic Gardens Congress International (BGCI). Because plants have many secrets and can be used for many purposes, a large database of who has what makes knowing where to go to find out the secrets more efficient. Who knows what food, medicine, fabric, or other problems we will need to solve next.



We have also gotten into print. New board member Pat Shanley’s *The Sustainable Rose Garden: A Reader in Rose Culture* made its debut in late 2010 and features an article, “The Birth of a Rose Garden,” by QBG gardener Karl Mckoy. This attractive book, edited by three very passionate rosarians, is gorgeous and full of articles and pictures that bring green to an area of horticulture that once seemed to defy sustainability.

The smiling faces of our greeters, showing the richness of Queens, were recently featured in *Public Garden* magazine in an article discussing the underlying basis of public institutions and talking about our transition “From Free to Fee.”

Finally, I am enormously proud to be one of 30 from around the country to write a chapter for the first-ever textbook for our field. *Public Garden Management*, edited by Don Rakow from Cornell and Sharon Lee, was published in late January by John Wiley & Sons. My chapter is “Public Gardens and Their Communities: The Value of Outreach.” Working with the people of Queens and their stories of how plants are used around the world is very close to my heart. I am pleased to share how gardens in the United States and Canada make plants and landscapes available to people beyond their garden gates.

-Susan Lacerte

around the garden

QBG NEWS AND NOTES

Spring - and Love - Is in the Air

Not deterred by last September's tornado that ripped through the Wedding Garden, romance is back in the air at QBG. Although we miss our graceful willow trees, their loss presented an opportunity to change a negative into a positive by renovating this festive garden space that hosts over 100 weddings every year.

Thanks to generous support from the New York Community Bank Foundation and feedback from our brides and grooms, gardener Morgan Potter created a verdant plan providing several months of blooms.

"More sunlight meant that I needed to select completely different plants like asters, phlox and plenty of lilies. I also wanted the flowers to coordinate with popular bridal party color themes, so I picked blooms in white, pink and purple," Morgan said.

Remaining shady areas will be brightened with columbine, bleeding heart and primrose flowers. Plants with attractive foliage like heuchera, astilbe and the soft fronds of ferns round out the landscape, while new grass offers a lush green carpet.

Besides new plants, the Wedding Garden entrance and seating arrangement is completely new.

"I created a central axis leading from the entrance arbor over a decorative bridge and finishing at a ceremonial platform with seating on both sides giving guests a better view of the bridal party," explained Morgan. "I'm really looking forward to the first ceremonies of spring!"

Interested in having your wedding at QBG? For wedding ceremonies, photographs, or to host your entire celebration, contact Clare Del Monaco at 718-886-3800 ext. 201.

Photo by Shari Romar



Polytrichum (Hair Cap Moss)

Moss Mountain

As part of the backyard gardens renovation in 2010 we created an experimental moss garden. We chose a shady spot and collected logs and rocks with traces of moss already on them to construct a berm, complete with a hidden mist system to replicate their favorite environment and encourage growth. We also found a nursery nearby specializing in mosses and purchased 7 new species. An unintentional but exciting consequence of the new environment was a beautiful mushroom crop on one of the decaying logs. As spring arrives it will be fun to see which mosses thrive and what other surprises are in store.

Thuidium delicatulum (Fern Moss)



around the garden

QBG NEWS AND NOTES

Summer in the Children's Garden is

Just Around the Corner

From March through September, the HSBC Children's Garden is a fun and exciting place where children spend hands-on time planting, playing, observing, and learning in a nurturing environment. Our spring, summer, and fall sessions are filled with enthused kids ages 5 to 12 from all around the New York area.

During the spring, our young gardeners have been spending Saturday mornings preparing the garden by turning the soil, planting seeds, weeding, and of course, doing a lot of watering! We are then transplanting the seedlings outside into one of our raised vegetable beds in preparation for summer.

The summers are filled with adventure. Children take care of their flowers and vegetable crops in the morning, learning skills such as watering, cultivating, composting, deadheading, staking, and of course, harvesting. They also plant new vegetables and learn how to create their own viable compost. We spend the afternoon exploring the entire botanical garden by using bug boxes to collect invertebrates from our biotope, cooking in a solar oven, taking flower walks, digging for worms and other creatures, creating bird feeders to take home, and much more. Different guest instructors join us throughout the summer.

Fall gardeners, who meet on Saturdays in September, have a lot of harvesting to do! During autumn, they learn about healthy nutrition while eating all those vegetables nurtured during the summer. They raise some fast-growing veggies, explore the changing of the leaves, and help put the garden to sleep for the winter. This is a great chance for the children to see how well their crops grew.

We look forward to another year of gardening, another year of kids, and another year of beautiful flowers and yummy vegetables! The summer session begins July 6 and 7. Join us! Please contact Rebecca Wolf at 718-886-3800 ext. 230 or rwolf@queensbotanical.org for more information.



New York City Councilmember Jim Gennaro (above from left to right) with Darcy Hector, QBG Director of Development, and Martha Taylor, longtime friend and member of the Garden, in front of the Facilities van purchased through support from Councilmember Gennaro. Earlier that same evening in the Garden's auditorium, Councilmember Gennaro hosted a viewing of the Academy Award nominated film "Gasland" by Joshua Fox, followed by a question and answer session. The documentary focuses on the issue of "hydro-fracking" - one method used to extract natural gas from the earth - and the risks involved with the process.

Interns Making a Difference

Five students from the Queens College Urban Studies program are working 8 hours a week as Interns in the Visitor Services department. Their tasks range from assisting at the reception desk to bringing in community groups for volunteering and events to research and beyond.

As Urban Studies students, a major part of their work is community outreach. For volunteer or internship opportunities, contact Grisela Quiles at gquiles@queensbotanical.org

(Left from left to right) Interns Brian Nemeth, Kimberly Viera (and her fiance, Tim), Justin DiCicco, Lais Payano and Kathryn Keneipp.
Photo by Regina Forlenza

seasonal pleasures

RECIPES AND MORE

Farfalle with Mushrooms, Arugula and Sun-Dried Tomatoes

1 lb. bowtie pasta (*farfalle*) (Serves 6)

Extra virgin olive oil

1 1/2 lb. crimini or portobello mushrooms, sliced

2 medium leeks, sliced and rinsed

2 large cloves of garlic, minced or sliced as you like

2 TBSP red wine

1 TBSP chopped sun-dried tomatoes

1/4 tsp chopped fresh rosemary

Pepper and salt to taste

1/2 tsp chopped fresh basil

1 bunch fresh arugula, roughly chopped

Grated cheese - romano or parmesan

Boil the pasta according to box directions.

Saute mushrooms in olive oil until lightly browned. Add leeks and garlic. Cook until soft and transparent.

Add red wine and loosen all browned bits from the bottom of the pan. Add tomatoes, rosemary, pepper & salt. Simmer for 5 minutes. Turn off the heat and toss in the basil and arugula.

Toss the sauce with the pasta. Top with grated cheese and enjoy!

There's Always Something Happening at QBG!

The daffodils are blooming, trees are budding and nests are being built. Spring has arrived at Queens Botanical Garden, and we are making plans for exciting events and activities all season long.

Beginning on weekends in April, visitors will find our new mascot Flora in attendance. Drop-in tables of stories and crafts or plantings for children will be available, with workshops and performances planned throughout the spring and summer. A Plant & Seed Sale will start on April 9 at the QBG Store and run through Mother's Day. Get some planting tips from QBG's own Fred Gerber on April 9.

You will want to be here for the Arbor Festival on May 1 for performances, fun activities, workshops, tours, and plenty of vendors.

The Summer Solstice Celebration on June 26 features the Quintet of the Americas, along with poetry readings and origami.

Celebrate Cultural Independence Day with us on July 3 with performances and fun-filled activities.

There is always something to do when you visit Queens Botanical Garden. Bring your family and friends!

QBG NEWS AND NOTES



Photo by Shari Romar

New to the Board

We are delighted to welcome Patricia Shanley and Rovena Schirling (*above from top to bottom*), who were elected to the Board of Trustees in January. Both are also serving on the Rose Gala Committee.

Dr. Joon Bang (*below*), past Board member, has agreed to serve on the Advisory Council. He is founder of the Korean-American Friends of QBG and has organized Cosmos Night for the past 9 years.



Photo by Pasquale Cuomo

What to see and do

HERE'S WHAT'S HAPPENING AND WHAT'S IN BLOOM AT QUEENS BOTANICAL GARDEN!

SPRING 2011

Calendar of Events Spring 2011

Registration is encouraged for all programs. For composting and lawn care workshops, register at compost@queensbotanical.org or call 718-886-3800 ext. 500. Check our website www.queensbotanical.org or call 718-886-3800 for more information on other workshops. The NYC Compost Project is funded and managed through the Department of Sanitation's Bureau of Waste Prevention, Reuse and Recycling.

8 Week Program Starts April 6 - Wednesdays 1 to 2pm

Tai Chi for People with Arthritis or Limited Mobility

Instructor: Elaine Fleischman

Fee: \$25 for all 8 Sessions

Join Arthritis Foundation Certified Tai Chi Instructor Elaine Fleischman as she leads an exciting new program at Queens Botanical Garden. This program focuses on applying this ancient art to help improve mobility, reduce stress and anxiety, improve balance, relieve aches and pains, increase energy, strength and flexibility as well as improve your cardiovascular system. All ages welcome. Advance registration is required: 718-886-3800 ext. 230 or rwolf@queensbotanical.org. Minimum of 20 students required.

Saturday, April 9, 10:30am to 12 noon

Tiny Tims and Thumbelinas

Fee: FREE with Garden Admission; or \$1 for take-home planting
Education Director Emeritus, Fred Gerber demonstrates how to start summer flowers and vegetables from seed. Pay \$1 and pot up a patio tomato plant seed and mini-zinnia seeds to take home. These seeds result in plants small enough to grow on a window sill or fire escape and are perfect for anyone.

Saturday, April 9, 3:30 to 5:30pm

MillionTreesNYC Street Tree Care Workshop

Queens Library Broadway Branch

40-20 Broadway, Long Island City, NY 11103

Attend our FREE tree care workshop to learn how you can help water and care for one of the over 400,000 new trees that have been planted across NYC with MillionTreesNYC! Pledge to take care of a specific street tree and get a FREE watering kit and volunteer card. Please be able to tell us where your tree is located. Registration: email milliontreesnyc@queensbotanical.org or call 718-886-3800 ext. 236. ***Please note that this workshop is not being held at QBG***



Sunday, May 1, 11am to 4:30pm

Arbor Festival

Fee: Free with Garden Admission

It's a fun-filled day at QBG's Arbor Festival. Come enjoy a variety of activities for all ages. In-house garden and nature specialists, local artisans, organic foods and environmentally conscious vendors will be onsite tabling and selling their wares, offering workshops and demonstrations. Check out the many family-friendly demonstrations, tours and crafts, then sit back and enjoy musical performances from Bash The Trash and Charanams. The celebration continues all afternoon. Participating organizations include: QBG Craft Group, The National Children's Project, Queens Smoke-Free Partnership, Green Mountain Energy, Green City Challenge, DEC, Handcrafting Justice, Beyond Beads & Bags, NY City Compost Project, Surfside Sea Glass, Bebeloosh crafts, You Save Green, Me She Designs, d. s. lookkin, Shari Romar Nature Photography & Writing, Weight Watchers, MillionTreesNYC, Avon, Solar One, Queens County Farm Museum, Green Rainbow Shop and Deborah Julian Cards & Prints. To participate as a vendor contact Regina Forlenza at rforlenza@queensbotanical.org.

What to see and do

HERE'S MORE HAPPENING AT QBG!



Queens
Botanical Garden

43-50 Main Street, Flushing, NY 11355
718.886.3800 www.queensbotanical.org

Saturday, May 21, 2 to 4pm

MillionTreesNYC Street Tree Care Workshop

Central Library

89-11 Merrick Blvd., Jamaica, NY 11432

Attend our FREE tree care workshop to learn how you can help water and care for one of the over 400,000 new trees that have been planted across NYC with MillionTreesNYC! Pledge to take care of a specific street tree and get a FREE watering kit and volunteer card. Please be able to tell us where your tree is located. To register, please email milliontreesnyc@queensbotanical.org or call 718-886-3800 ext. 236. ****Please note that this workshop is not being held at QBG****

Sunday, June 5

Community Volunteer Day

Roll up your sleeves and join your neighbors in volunteering to keep QBG clean and green! Led by QBG staff, groups will participate in a variety of activities from seeding to weeding while learning the importance of green gardening and the value of community involvement. Finish the day at a thank-you celebration in the Parking Garden. Registration required. Email hlibraty@queensbotanical.org or call 718-886-3800 ext. 216.

Thursday, June 9, 6 to 9pm

16th Annual Rose Gala

Individual tickets: \$250

Join us as we celebrate this year's Honoree, Monte N. Redman, President and Chief Operating Officer of Astoria Financial Corporation and its subsidiary Astoria Federal Savings. The Adopt-A-Tree Award will be given to Joon J. Bang, M.D., founder of the Korean-American Friends of Queens Botanical Garden.

Proceeds from the event help support all our gardens and programs. For more information regarding sponsorship opportunities, journal ads or tickets, visit our website at www.queensbotanical.org or email Annette Fanara at afanara@queensbotanical.org.

Sunday, June 26

Summer Solstice Celebration

Fee: FREE with Garden Admission

Come for a day of music, poetry and crafts. The Quintet of the Americas will perform at 2:30pm. Space is limited: first come first served. There will be poetry readings and a drop-in origami table for children and adults. Check our website for more information.

WHAT'S IN BLOOM?

Where flowers bloom so does hope. - Lady Bird Johnson

Here's a sampling of what you'll find blooming at Queens Botanical Garden this Spring. (*Visit our website for a full month by month listing.*)

APRIL

Pansy
Daffodil
Tulip
Saucer Magnolia
Star Magnolia
Flowering Cherry
Buttercup Winterhazel
Hellebore
Daphne

MAY

Rhododendron
Crabapple
Dogwood
Pansy
Redbud
Dwarf Fothergilla
Lilac

JUNE

Rose
Foxglove
Lavender
Iris
Lily
Peony