



What's a College Botanic Garden Without Students?

Lonely! Since the pandemic hit with full force in March, students have finished the spring semester from home, summer internships were cancelled, the campus closed to the public, and all staff who could work remotely did so. President Johnson remarked that she noticed more birds and other animals active on campus in the absence of humans.

The pandemic also caught the WCBG at a time of staffing transition. We were very fortunate to have completed interviews for both the Botanical Collections Manager and Gardens Horticulturist positions before the March 17 college shut-down date, but start dates for our new hires were delayed until summer.

It's a good thing Senior Greenhouse Horticulturist Tony Antonucci got his regular early March vacation, because for the following months he was the essential anchor keeping Global Flora running and the plants alive as the greenhouse collection went through its first spring season. Retiring Botanical Collections



Senior Greenhouse Horticulturist Tony Antonucci kept Global Flora growing this summer.

Manager Rob Nicholson continued part-time, coming in once a week and otherwise working on collections curation from home. Botany Fellow Jenn Yang '12 and I were team-teaching the Environmental Horticulture class, which pivoted to "remote" at spring break, and we did our best to help out as needed. To minimize the risk of COVID transmission, only one person worked in Global Flora each day, mostly Tony.

For the outdoor gardens and occasional Global Flora shift, Post-Bac Fellow Katherine Brainard extended her year with us through early May (when she started a new job at the Rose Kennedy Greenway), and former Senior Gardens Horticulturist Tricia Diggins very graciously returned full-time from late May through mid-June, so the 22 acres of gardens received as much expert care as a single person at a time can provide. WCBG was so fortunate to get through this time of minimal staffing with such dedicated people. And thanks to stringent precautions

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NOTES from the Director

Greetings from Wellesley! With the pandemic on the front page, and our new and newly retired staff highlighted inside, I'll focus here on other notable elements of the WCBG's last few months.

Climate determines how we live and garden, and 2020 has followed climate scientists' predictions for New England: a warmer and wetter winter/spring followed by a hotter and drier summer/fall. I mentioned in the spring newsletter that we hadn't gotten any real snow yet, and that didn't bring on any late season blizzards although there were some damaging winds. Spring came early and the first half of the growing season was pretty benign, with ample rain and no huge outbreaks of hungry caterpillars, although the woolly adelgid continues to weaken hemlocks on campus. Mid-summer was plenty hot, and the rains became fewer and farther between. The occasional thunderstorm would bring a downpour, often to soils too dry to soak it in effectively. Several sloped areas had channels eroded where stormwater ran fast. September has had less than 50% of "normal" rainfall so far, and the stressed trees are turning colors early.

Capturing stormwater and enabling it to infiltrate into soils seems more and more critical to keeping even native trees and shrubs going while the weather is still warm enough for them to continue building their stores of resources for the following year. On a happier note, the 'Survivor' Camellia planted last fall in the courtyard next to Global Flora — our first attempt at growing a Camellia outdoors—came through its first winter and growing season in fine form, and has

lots of buds for a late fall bloom!

Wellesley student activists have been vocal about a range of issues from climate change to racism, and the intersections among them. Black students (Wellesley 4 Black Students) and the Native American Students Association (NASA) crafted petitions listing many demands towards



The 'Survivor' Camellia is about to put on a fall display.

making Wellesley a more equitable community and welcoming place for all students. Each petition was signed by hundreds of people and presented to the College administration and faculty department chairs. At a time when faculty are rushing to adapt their classes and curricula to the restrictions of the pandemic, and the value of being a residential college community is particularly clear, structural changes in

line with student demands seem especially possible. WCBG joins several Wellesley departments and programs in newly prioritizing antiracism. We also join other botanic gardens around the world in considering colonial origins and ongoing influences that run counter to our missions to connect people to plants. See the article on p. 5 for more on this work.

Like several colleagues in the Biology department, I examined my syllabus and materials for the Environmental Horticulture class through an antiracist lens. Changes included increasing the diversity of voices in the readings. For example, the "Asters and Goldenrods" chapter from Robin Wall Kimmerer's *Braiding Sweetgrass* makes for a fascinating comparison with an excerpt from Robert Pirsig's *Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance* about the "scientific method." Dr. Kimmerer's book provides her perspective as an indigenous woman taught to learn directly from plants as a child, then trained to "become a scientist" in college and graduate school, whereas Mr. Pirsig provides a philosophical description of a formal scientific approach to problem solving. Students learn directly from plants through careful observation in the course, and also practice designing formal experiments.

There are so many ways of gaining knowledge about plants and the natural world, and of approaching complex problems. By centering diverse voices in course materials, programs and interpretation in the WCBG, we continue our pursuit of Margaret Ferguson's vision to "build a center that shall be of interest to all."

Kristina

Kristina Niovi Jones, Director
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Anne Beckley in Her Own Words

Gardens Horticulturist Anne Beckley arrived on campus in June with a broad background in horticulture and ecology and a desire to dig into what she calls her “dream job.” In reply to our questions she gave us a generous glimpse of her interests and ambitions.



Here are some of her observations:

On coming to Wellesley: I’ve always wanted to be able to spend my career managing one park or garden that I can get to know intimately throughout the seasons and the years. I was very excited that the gardens here offered both more intensely managed

horticultural areas, like the Edible Ecosystem Teaching Garden, as well as more naturalistic gardens, like much of the arboretum and around Paramecium Pond.

On a typical work day: Planning my days out is kind of a fluid process based on what tasks urgently need to be done—maybe a tree came down that needs to be cleared out, or before snow comes, certain plants will all need to be cut back—balanced with longer term projects I am chipping away at such as mapping projects in the garden, or longer term renovation or pruning projects.

On plans for the gardens: I’d like to renovate Molly’s Garden, just a general cleaning up and defining of the garden, taking stock of what is still in there from the original planting, and adding some plants. I also see work on Azalea Hill as a long term renovation project.

On challenges: Horticulturally, my biggest challenge is probably invasive species. The garden is large, 22 acres, and getting a handle on invasive species is very time intensive. If you take a break for a year you will have lost progress so you have to be methodical. . . . My biggest challenge overall is prioritizing what to work on, and reminding myself that everything takes time and to be patient! A lot of gardening is playing a long game. You are planning not just for this week and next month, but also for a year and five years down the road.

In summary, Anne says, “I am loving the gardens themselves. There are so many different parts of the garden, they all have different ecological issues at play, different challenges and different things that make them beautiful and unique. I will never ever get bored at this job! There is so much to do and so much to learn.”

Our New Collections Manager Juggles Many Roles

On an ideal day, new Botanical Collections Manager Julianna Razryadov starts by wandering around the Global Flora conservatory scouting for pests, diseases and nutrition issues and thinking about where best to use the students coming in to work that day. There are days when she spends all her time in the conservatory doing tasks like pruning plants away from the mechanicals. But there are other days when she’s stuck in front of the computer and doesn’t get into Global Flora at all. Juggling work orders and student scheduling, helping to plan the new teaching and research greenhouse, and coming up to speed on the Argus greenhouse control system and the Iris collections management database can feel like a full-time job in itself.

Even though she just started this job in June, Julianna is no stranger to the Wellesley College Botanic Gardens. She met Jenn Yang, our Post-Doctoral Fellow, at Penn State where they were both in grad school, and has consulted with Kristina on our green roof. After earning her Ph.D. in horticulture, Julianna worked as the curator of horticulture at Phipps Conservatory in Pittsburgh, but she jumped at the opportunity to take on the managerial roles and big picture thinking that the Botanical Collections Manager position entails. She has faced the steep learning curve with energy and enthusiasm. Her first task—dealing with nutritional deficiencies and pests—was a big project that helped her learn about Global Flora as an integrated system. Her regular walks through Global Flora with Senior Greenhouse Horticulturist Tony Antonucci help enormously in framing the work to be done.

Julianna hopes to turn her attention to interpretation soon. “Interesting plants mean nothing if people don’t see them,” she says. She hopes to create a holistic interpretation environment where even the casual visitor can receive some information. She loves the work environment, the people, and the discussions she has. She also loves exploring the collection, playing with plants, and thinking about the plants and their education potential. She says with satisfaction, “It’s not just a job, it’s a life!”



The New Normal: Teaching Botanical Art via Zoom

When the pandemic lockdown started, my winter botanical art classes for the Friends of Wellesley College Botanic Gardens had just ended. A small group of my students and I decided to meet online, to keep going on the projects that we were working on. Great for me, because I had a very gentle entry to the wonderful world of Zoom.

As the year progressed, it became obvious that we wouldn't be going back to our normal classroom teaching anytime soon, so our next class was advertised on the Zoom video conferencing platform. It soon filled, as everyone was looking for things to do.

There are many quirks to teaching on Zoom, and teaching art online has additional challenges: seeing students' artwork, doing demonstrations, sharing art presentations and keeping remote students involved and empowered. It soon became obvious that sitting in front of a screen for hours was very tiring for everyone, and with the teacher being so engaged, there was no down time in class for me at all.

Class time needs to be very organized.

Students send in their week's work via email and I present a slideshow of their work at the beginning of each class. The discussion and feedback from the class help me see what I need to focus on. I try to demonstrate a lot, sharing my screen and live streaming my progress. My studio now looks a little like

a TV studio. I have two work tables, one with a camera set up and lots of daylight bulbs. There are chargers and wires going everywhere, and I also have my laptop set up so that I can see my class, and how my demo looks on the screen. It's so easy to drift out of the camera screen as you are painting so that no one can see all your amazing technique.

There are many positive points to this new normal: no more driving, so more time to paint; no snow delays, so no cancelled classes; no room charges or reservations; and you only need to look presentable from the waist up! We have been able to offer classes and host teachers from all over the world without their need to travel to Wellesley, thanks to the magic of modern technology.

On the downside, it's hard not being with other painters, and working so much alone. There are limitations to seeing artwork via the internet and we are at the mercy of our bandwidth. However, I'm so glad that we have been able to keep offering classes to our students and I am



Correcting work online

learning so much about the wonders and possibilities of Zooming!

by Sarah Roche
Education Director, Certificate in
Botanical Art & Illustration



Getting presentations ready



Image on Sarah's desk and on her Zoom screen

Let Our Gardens Grow: Reckoning with Antiracism and Decolonization

What does antiracism and decolonization mean to you, and how might it relate to your role at WCBG? We posed

this question to students interviewing for positions as we began our round of Fall hiring, and they shared a rich breadth of ideas, experiences, and questions of their own: What does it mean to decolonize a garden? How does racism connect with plants?

Especially since George Floyd’s death and the ongoing reckoning on race and racism, we all have been called to reexamine our place and history, as individuals and organizations, in perpetuating the legacies of institutional racism in America and the pervasive centering of white voices and culture. WCBG is no exception. Like many botanic gardens, all of our permanent staff members are white, contributing to a harmful myth that gardening, connection with plants and land, and botany are created by, and for, a certain crowd: older, white, wealthy. Not only is this myth inaccurate, it can discourage students of more diverse backgrounds and be a detriment to the world of horticulture, education, and connection to nature and land in America, which has benefited from generations of leadership, wisdom, and contributions of Black and Indigenous people, and People of Color. We speak often of the value of a diversity of plants, communities, and landscapes, yet too often overlook the parallel importance of a diversity of people in our organizations.

We have begun to regularly discuss these issues amongst staff and students, as they relate to WCBG specifically and to public gardens at large, and to take action to better address current inequities. Our staff and students are participating in Wellesley’s “21 Days Against Racism” program led by the Office of Intercultural Education, as well as a new collaborative Environmental Antiracism Working Group with the Frost Center for the Environment and the Paulson Ecology of Place Initiative. We are also participating in a nationwide re-evaluation of plant names and the signage about them, to address the clear legacy of colonization in plant names. We are rethinking the goals of Global Flora and the outdoor gardens as they relate to a number of issues, including our communications through signage and public programming, increasing accessibility to communities outside of Wellesley College and the town of

“The time is always right to do what is right.”

Martin Luther King, Jr.

Four days before his assassination in March 1968, over 50 years ago.



Wellesley who may not typically be served by public gardens, and how we can acknowledge and honor the Native American history of the land our gardens occupy. We welcome and appreciate ideas and feedback of any kind as we embark on this process, and will continue to listen, learn, and grow.

Public gardens such as WCBG play a key role in the narrative of America’s racist and colonial history, which has shaped land ownership, land usage, plant collecting and displays, and botanical nomenclature. They are part of the culture of assimilation with their emphasis on European gardens and their treatment of plants

as objects in a museum, ignoring the real and current cultural connections that people have with them. The overwhelmingly white staff and visitors, rules about not touching plants, and use of “othering” language implies that diverse people, personal stories, plant relationships, or different ways of being aren’t valued.

This means that even as a small public garden, we have a great potential for positive change and impact. As Wellesley College’s botanic garden, by actively engaging in antiracism and supporting the plant passions and interests of all of our students, we are in a position to help change the face of botanical and environmental leadership.

Jointly written by Botanic Gardens staff



A Black Lives Matter sign sprouted one day in the yard of the Botanic Gardens’ fairy house.

Resources:

- Dreamspace Project Workbook for Public Gardens by Alyssa Machida, <https://www.publicgardens.org/resources/digging-institutional-change-creating-environments-where-diversity-equity-and-inclusion>
- Wellesley Racial Justice Initiative (<https://wrji.org/>), for Wellesley alumnae, by alumnae
- Black Botanists Week, Follow on Instagram: <https://blackbotanistsweek.weebly.com/>.

Restoring Wellesley's Antique Flower Models

Wellesley College owns a substantial collection of antique botanical models which were displayed for many years in cases in the hallway of Sage. The models represent 37 different plant species, and many consist of multiple components; for instance, male and female flowers, or a fruit and a seed. Many of the individual components can be taken apart to view the internal structures. The replicas are ten times actual size, and they are made of papier mâché, a lightweight yet strong material which stood up to their decades of use as teaching tools. The botanical models are beautiful as well as useful, a perfect marriage of science and art.

The collection was purchased for the college by founder Henry Durant in 1878 from the firm of Dr. Auzoux at the French Exposition in Paris. Since the College Hall fire of 1914 destroyed early records, there is a lack of documentation about these objects. A close look at the collection and a search of online resources led to questions and discoveries, the first being that while many of the models were made by Auzoux, not all of them were.

Dr. Louis Auzoux (1797-1880) was a French physician, naturalist, educator and entrepreneur who developed a process to create teaching models from papier mâché. His firm's botanical models comprised 23 plants, consisting of species commonly found in France, with type specimens representing a variety of plant families. Through clever marketing as well as the French reputation in scientific teaching tools, Auzoux's botanical models became the premier brand to buy. Durant purchased the complete collection of Auzoux flowers and fruits, consisting of 21 species with a total of 30 separate components, for the price

of 1000 francs, approximately \$500 in 1878 and about \$115,000 in today's dollars. By comparison, in 1879 senior professors at Wellesley made \$1,500 per year and instructors made between \$300 and \$800. The models represented a sizable investment in status, reputation and prestige for the newly-formed Wellesley College. The models were mentioned in the Wellesley College calendar for many years, and the fact that Wellesley still has all 30 components speaks to the importance placed on these objects that has continued to the present day.

After discovering that 21 of our models can be attributed to Auzoux, the question was, who made the remaining 16? The other prominent manufacturer of papier mâché models in this era was the firm of R. Brendel and Co., based in Grönwald, Germany.

Matches for nine of our species were found in online catalogs of Brendel models, and another four are also thought to be by Brendel, though no matches have as yet been found. The remaining three models—the iris, lily and pear—remained a mystery for quite some time, until a photo from a Christie's auction revealed a match for the pear, and a third manufacturer: Deyrolle of Paris. Although this firm is still in existence today, information about their botanical models is difficult to find. But similarities in construction among the pear, lily and iris have led to an attribution of Deyrolle for all three.

We took our first steps toward the restoration of the botanical models in 2012, when a conservator assessed the collection and wrote a condition report for each model. The iris was the first of the models to be restored for a 2013 Davis Museum exhibition, "The Art of Science." Conservator Nina Vinogradskaya did the work on the iris. Few conservators have experience with papier mâché and we are lucky that Nina is working with us to restore the remainder of the collection. In spring 2019, the models were removed from the cases in Sage and packed for storage, and the first bunch was delivered to Nina for restoration.

Nina worked on ten of the models over the course of the summer of 2019, removing decades worth of grime, stabilizing



Jon Litwin, Gail Kahn and Kristina Jones with



Professor Harriet Creighton with the models.

loose pieces, consolidating flaking paint, and undoing some of the amateurish repairs that had been made to them over the years.

A water-based varnish was applied that is UV protectant and dust resistant. The flowers were not restored to pristine, factory original condition—the inevitable wear and tear of 142 years as teaching tools is still apparent.

Mount maker Jon Litwin created custom mounts and an armature for displaying the first batch of restored models. Inspired by an old image of a display of Auzoux models, we decided to display these dramatic floral forms in an arrangement that we called the Botanist's Bouquet. Jon loved the idea and worked hard on the intricate display, which he says ended up being the most difficult project he's ever done in his long career of making mounts for museums.

The Botanist's Bouquet was installed in the corridor connecting the Visitor Center and Global Flora in November 2019. The eye-catching display of the diversity of floral form at ten times actual size rewards close observation. One of the flowers has a petal removed to view the inner structures, and a couple of others are displayed partially

open. As soon as the pandemic is behind us and the college returns to more normal operation, we hope to continue our restoration of the models. Two more exhibits—on the models' use in pedagogy, and the development of fruit from flowers—are planned. Eventually all of the models will be restored and either displayed in cases in the corridor, or stored in the cases' drawers. These rare and beautiful objects will continue to serve a teaching purpose at Wellesley for years to come.

by Gail Kahn
Assistant Director, WCBG



the finished exhibit in Global Flora's link.



The Botanists's Bouquet is composed of nine antique flower models, each one painstakingly restored.



The disassembled sweet pea was a challenge to put together correctly. Note the brown overpainting on the stem and calyx.

Learn With Us

Due to health concerns imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic, the Friends of Botanic Gardens have switched to remote instruction for all of our botanical art classes using the Zoom videoconferencing app.

Students should have Zoom installed on their laptop or tablet (smart phone screens are too small to use effectively) and familiarize themselves with Zoom's features prior to the start of class. In addition, students should have the ability to email images to their instructor, either by scanning or photographing.

Email wcbgfriends@wellesley.edu if you plan to sign up for a course or if you have any questions. Please don't call the Friends office since Friends staff are now working remotely.

Drawing and Painting for the Petrified

Especially for beginners!

Sarah Roche encourages your observational skills to grow in this relaxed seminar with plenty of helpful demonstrations. Experiment with line drawings and the accurate representation of botanical forms. Leap into watercolor painting with a series of fun watercolor exercises. All experience levels welcome.

BAC 21 010

3 Mondays: Nov. 16, 23, 30

9:30 a.m.–12:30 p.m. EST

Online via Zoom

Members \$125 | Non-Members \$150

Celebrating the Season: Holiday Card Workshop

Taking your inspiration from the fruits and foliage of the holiday season, create a painting with pen, ink and watercolor that is suitable for holiday cards, gift tags and notepaper. Sarah Roche will lead you through the process and help you get your artwork ready for reproduction. Suitable for Techniques and experienced Foundations students.

BAC 21 075

2 days: Wed., Dec. 2 and Fri., Dec. 4

9:30 a.m.–12:30 p.m. EST

Online via Zoom

Members \$110 | Non-Members \$130

© Sarah Roche



The Wellesley College campus—including the Botanic Gardens—remains closed to the public through the Fall semester

Campus buildings and facilities are only open to students living on campus, faculty, and staff. All athletics facilities—indoor and outdoor, including the track, fields, and tennis courts—are closed. Only Wellesley College registered vehicles are permitted to park in campus parking lots.

The College and the Hunnewell family have also closed the privately owned walking path around Lake Waban to the public. Only faculty, staff, and students (no guests) are welcome to walk on Wellesley College's portion of the lake path, and around campus, while maintaining social distance.

Wellesley police are limiting parking along Route 135, Route 16, and Pond Road, and Campus Police will ask visitors they encounter on campus to leave immediately.

Additional course offerings appear on our website: www.wellesley.edu/wcbg/learn and are announced via email to our current art students. Email wcbgfriends@wellesley.edu to be added to our course announcement emails.

Winter courses will be announced in November.

Rob's Magic Touch

Rob Nicholson, WCBG's Botanical Collections Manager, retired last June. We always knew his tenure at the Botanic Gardens was going to be a short one, as he came out of retirement to work on our Global Flora project. Rob considered the creation of a brand new, innovative conservatory to be an elusive but much desired goal—the capstone for any botanist's career. The beauty of Global Flora is as much Rob's vision as that of its architects, who wrote this wonderful tribute in acknowledgement.

Words fall short in describing the energy, passion, and commitment that Rob brought to the Global Flora project. The journey was epic and would never have been possible without him. It's as if anything he touched that seemed impossible got done, that couldn't be afforded was acquired, and that even appeared dead was brought back to life. Whatever "touch" Rob has, it is no doubt magical. Where to begin?

- ◊ Out of nothing but felt, Rob made hundreds of square feet of walls for plants with names like *Ariocarpus fissuratus*, *Piper ornatum*, *Macleania pentaptera*, *Ceratostema silvicola*, and *Cavendishia grandiflora*—all of which he could actually pronounce.
- ◊ When all hope was lost in getting the right boulders, Rob roamed New England visiting shuttered stone quarries until he found the perfect brownstone and with the discipline of a maestro directed them to their final resting place in Global Flora's Dry Biome. If glaciers move mountains, Rob moves its boulders.
- ◊ What the hell is a Cactus Rustler? Just ask Rob.
- ◊ Remember the Japanese Cypress that used to be where the Durant Camellia Pavilion is today? Rob delivered its wood to KVA's shop for final milling and assembly, and today it rests in its rightful place back inside the pavilion in the form of a contemplative bench.
- ◊ Need plants for a wet biome? Rob drove in a rented truck from Florida to Massachusetts with Kristina—logging thousands of miles, picking up dozens of biodiverse species along the way—all of which are thriving in the Global Flora.
- ◊ Rob is landscape architect, surveyor, laborer, and Indiana Jones all wrapped into one.

Rob is from another time. His ability to make something out of nothing, his ability to find beauty in the banal, and his ability to barter his way out of any deal would have made him a legend along the Silk Road! Rob once referred to the Global Flora as a "Temple of Biodiversity." For every temple there is a magician and Wellesley has been blessed with its very own.

Thanks, Rob, and godspeed toward your next 10,000 days!

by Sheila Kennedy, Frano Violich and Ben Widger,
Kennedy & Violich Architecture



In addition to boulders, Rob Nicholson, here in a hard hat, moved smaller stones to further his vision for the conservatory.

Friends of
WCBG

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A Campus Without Students

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and a good dose of luck, nobody got sick.

Of course we are still in precarious times with respect to the pandemic, and it was a very strange summer without students here. Auspiciously, our two new staff members are fantastic, and have absolutely hit the ground running, bringing great energy and new expertise and perspectives. [See articles introducing them on page 3 of this newsletter.]

Botanical Collections Manager Julianna Razryadov started June 8, dedicating herself to getting to know every plant in Global Flora, learning the collections database and the greenhouse controls systems, sampling soils, managing pests (which were having a resurgence in the absence of the student Plant Health Team), and working with Tony to update plant care protocols accordingly.

Gardens Horticulturist Anne Beckley started June 22 and similarly jumped into getting to know the outdoor gardens and their needs while simultaneously getting them in shape. Anne already has developed partnerships with the college's Grounds department, especially the arborists. She managed the one-year-old seeded meadow on the Global Flora slope and brought the Edible Ecosystem Teaching Garden into good form—there hadn't been much harvesting of oregano and other aggressive plants this year! Plus she led a massive clean-out of our garage to make room for easy access to tools and essential storage that we've been lacking since we moved out of the old science building.

Throughout the summer, as the horticulture staff worked hard to get so much done, we eagerly anticipated the return of students to campus. Nobody knew how or whether this would happen in the fall, but Wellesley made a very careful plan and so far has pulled it off: for the fall, first-years and sophomores are on campus while juniors and seniors are taking classes remotely; then they'll switch for the spring. Students each have their own room, wear masks anytime they're outside of it, and attend classes outside or in physically distanced classrooms.

When it became clear by mid-August that students very likely would be coming to campus, we put out a call for work-study positions in the gardens and greenhouses and were overwhelmed by over 50 enthusiastic applicants. We had planned to hire 14, but so many were outstanding that Anne, Julianna and Jenn decided they could take on a few more and we now are working with 19 awesome students. While little feels normal—everyone is masked, Global Flora is locked to avoid crowding, and we can't come together over shared meals—engaging with the plants and landscapes and working to make them better is clearly a highlight of many students' challenging semester. And the piano on the Global Flora mezzanine is making music again, complete with hand sanitizer.

As we finally start to settle into something of a routine, we are trying to take this time of disruption as an opportunity for reflection and thoughtful evolution, with students as co-pilots. In what ways can we improve as a source of inspiration and

opportunity for students, helping make it possible for every Wellesley student to thrive? While the outside world is unable to join us on campus, we can better afford this internal focus. And then once we are able to open to the public, we will have a better understanding of what kinds of connections to prioritize, what audiences to cultivate, what stories to tell. There is no "business as usual" right now, so together we will shape our new normal, for the rest of the pandemic and beyond. Stay tuned!

by Kristina Niovi Jones
Botanic Gardens Director

MEMBERSHIP IN WCBG FRIENDS

For nearly 35 years, Friends of Wellesley College Botanic Gardens has been committed to sparking interest in horticulture, plant science, and the natural environment. WCBG Friends provides funds and staffing for student programs and internships, educational opportunities for volunteers, and the Friends' Certificate in Botanical Art and Illustration.

You will shortly be receiving the annual Friends appeal from Wellesley College. If your membership in WCBG Friends has lapsed, now would be a good time to renew. WCBG Friends considers your membership as current for a full year after your membership gift. Thank you!

Important Update on Our Participation in the Reciprocal Admissions Program

With the Wellesley College Botanic Gardens being closed to the public, we no longer meet the criteria for participation in the American Horticultural Society's Reciprocal Admissions Program. We will not be participating in this program for 2021, and will discontinue the practice of sending membership cards to our members who give a gift of \$50 or more. You can continue using your current membership card to visit participating gardens at free or reduced admission until its expiration date.

We apologize for the inconvenience and urge you to visit public gardens where you live and travel. At this stressful time for non-profit organizations, public gardens need your support more than ever.

A Habitat for All Seasons



Jan Boyd studied her neighbor's garden, a certified wildlife habitat in West Roxbury, MA.

In March 2019, eight botanical artists each selected a natural habitat and began a deep immersion in its plant communities and changes throughout the growing season. Their study was for “New England Flora,” a required course for the Friends’ Certificate in Botanical Art & Illustration, taught by Ellen Duarte and Pam Harrington.

Through close observation from early spring through fall, the artists learned to identify the flora in their habitat, followed selected plants through the seasons, and worked on improving their botanical art and illustration skills. They were required to keep a sketchbook of supporting documentation, taking notes in the form of sketches as well as words. Maps, plant ID information, and interesting observations about flora and fauna were all included.

The class met once a month from March through October 2019. In between meetings, each class member worked independently to create accurate illustrations of their habitat. Class meetings included a discussion and review of everyone’s habitats and a sharing of botanical artwork.

For their final project, students were asked to create three 8x10 inch pages combining artwork and text to represent different seasons of their chosen habitats, taking their inspiration from Joris Hoefnagel’s (1542-1600) illuminated manuscripts. The class decided to make a photo book from the assembled artwork—a beautiful keepsake from the course.



The New England Flora class gathered with fall bouquets at the College Club in September 2019. L-R: Lauren Meier, Ellen Duarte, Tara Connaughton, Cheryl McCaffrey, Jan Boyd, Judith Bloomgarden, Marie Brezinski

Friends of WCBG

WELLESLEY COLLEGE BOTANIC GARDENS

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A Love Letter to Global Flora

Created for the Fall 2019 class “ARTS 223: Alternative Print Methods,” my piece, titled *Love Letter*, is exactly that, a love letter to a space that meant so much to me while I was at Wellesley.

To create this piece, samples of soil were taken from sections of Global Flora and used to create textured surfaces to print off of. Each of the soils was printed and used to create a different frame, four in total. Choosing plants found in the areas that each soil sample was taken from, I used a variety of printmaking techniques to illustrate them. The print methods chosen for each plant were partially based on how “dry” the techniques were—the Dry Biome plants were printed using a woodcut, which is printed on dry paper, while etchings were made of the Wet Biome plants and printed on wet paper.

Structurally, *Love Letter* is similar to an accordion book, but instead of being able to open and close, I chose to use a stiffer material for the sides that would allow it to stand on its own. The material chosen for the sides is translucent, letting light into the work just like the light shines into Global Flora.

The original greenhouses, and the visit I made to them the first time I was on Wellesley’s campus, played an enormous role in helping me fall in love with the school. When I was able to work in the new greenhouses my senior year, I became deeply attached to certain sections and to specific plants and to the space itself. In the midst of a crazy year, I would walk into the greenhouse and feel calmer immediately, and I’ll forever be grateful for the time I spent there.

by Abby Conte '20

