



**Spring 2020**

**Coronavirus Policy**

In compliance with state and University directives, we have closed the Arboretum office and restrooms in the Overlook Pavilion, and the University has suspended custodial services and enforcement of parking regulations. The grounds of the Arboretum are accessible, but visitors should observe physical-distancing guidelines, and we ask visitors to carry out any trash that they generate. Please check our [Facebook page](#) and [website](#) for updates.

**Unusual Plants in the Pollinator and Bird Garden**

Although construction of the new Pollinator and Bird Garden will remain on hold until May 1 due to Pennsylvania's coronavirus response, the Arboretum is continuing to work with over thirty different nurseries to source the wide array of plants that will be featured in the gardens. Many unusual plants are being grown specifically for this project—here are a couple we are particularly excited about!



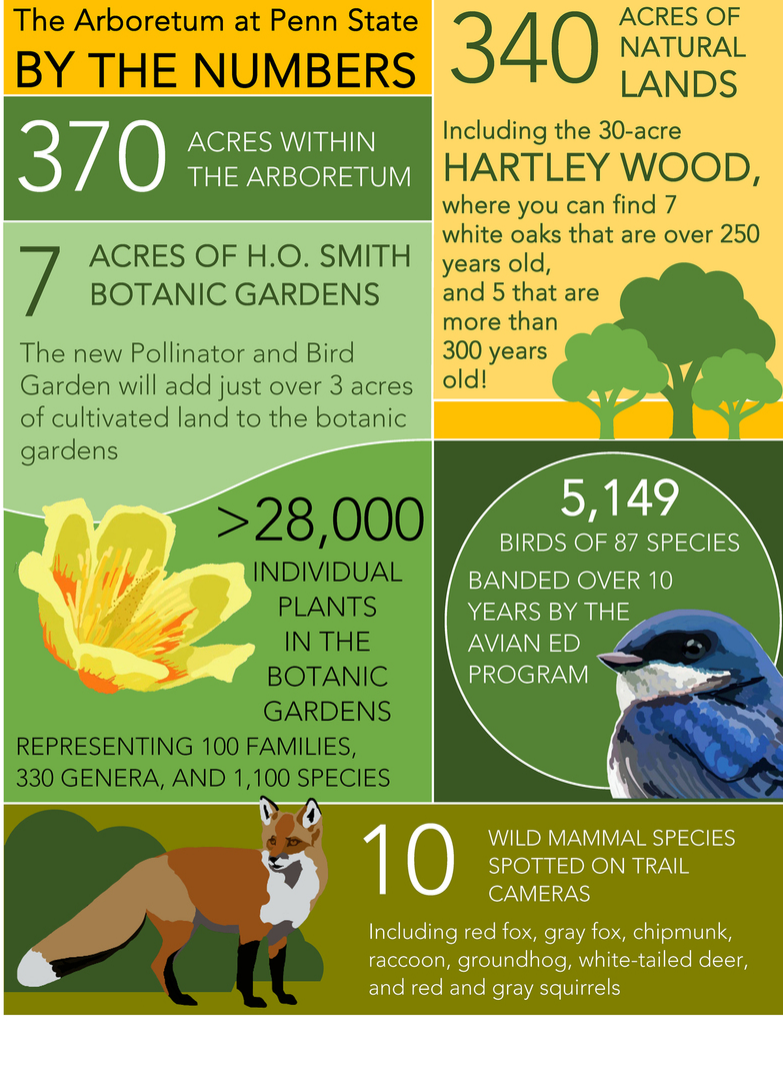
Purple milkweed (*Asclepias purpurascens*)

*Asclepias purpurascens*, or purple milkweed, is one of several species of milkweed native to the eastern United States and is an important food source for monarch butterfly larvae. Its vibrant, dark magenta flowers set it apart from the more widespread common milkweed (*Asclepias syriaca*), which it otherwise resembles. Unlike related species, purple milkweed is very difficult to grow in a nursery setting—so much so, in fact, that we were only able to find one brave supplier, Wild Ridge Plants in Alpha, NJ, willing to try it for us!

*Scutellaria serrata*, or showy skullcap, is another regionally native wildflower that, though rarely encountered in cultivation, will be on display in the new Pollinator and Bird Garden. A member of the mint family, this plant has blue-violet tubular flowers that are pollinated by long-tongued bees. There are fewer than five wild populations known in Pennsylvania, where the plant is listed as an endangered species. The plants being grown for our garden originate from seed collected legally in Virginia, where the plant is much more widespread.

We are looking forward to introducing these and scores of other unusual plant species to our visitors when the new Pollinator and Bird Garden opens to the public!

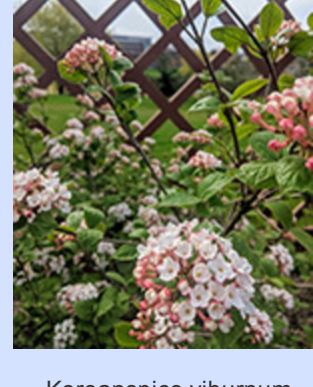
**Did you know?**



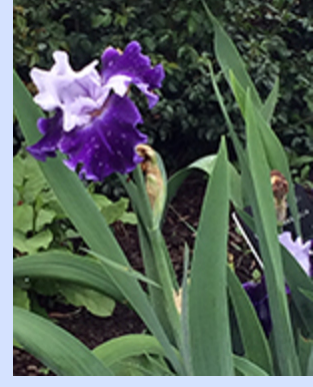
[arboretum.psu.edu](http://arboretum.psu.edu)



Showy skullcap (*Scutellaria serrata*) One of the unusual plants in the future Pollinator and Bird Garden



Koreanspice viburnum (*Viburnum carlesii*) in Rose and Fragrance Garden



Iris in the Oasis Garden



Photo by Melissa Studenroth Shultz 1st Place Winter 2020 Contest

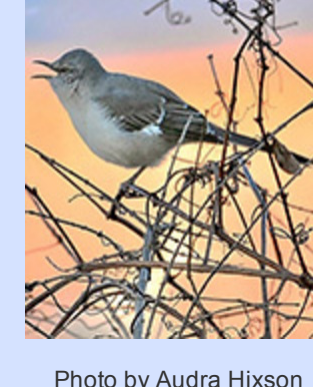


Photo by Audra Hixson 2nd Place Winter 2020 Contest

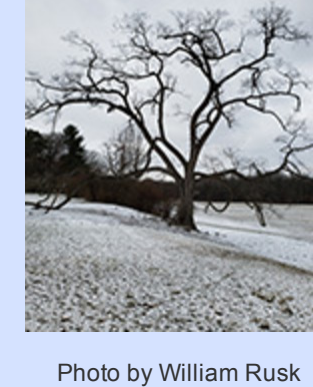
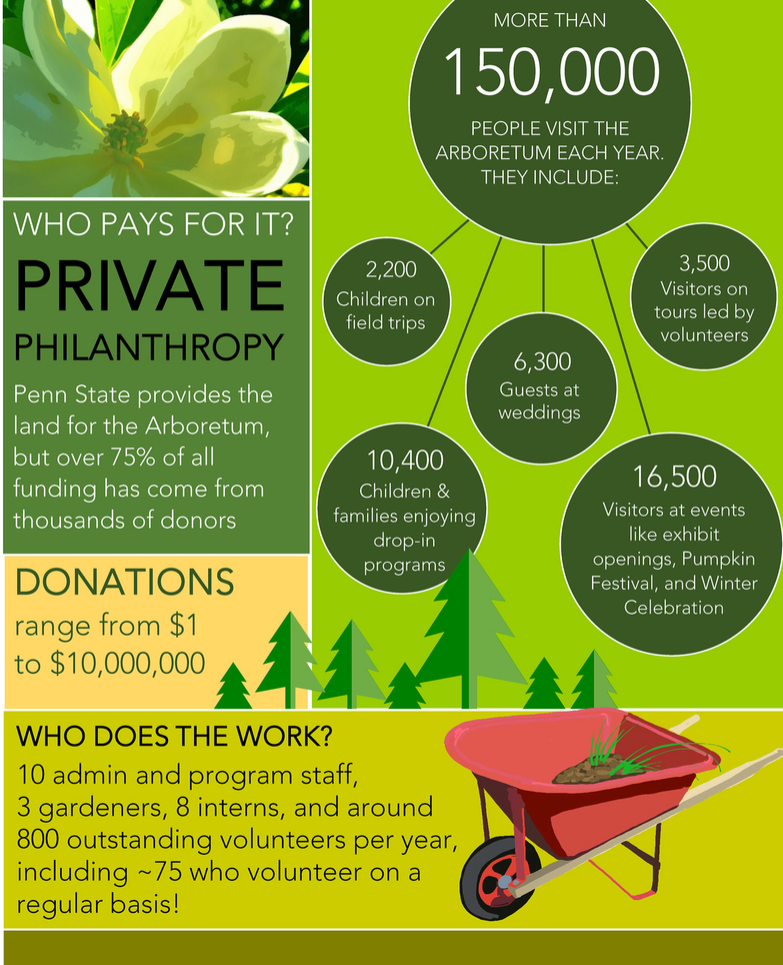


Photo by William Rusk 3rd Place Winter 2020 Contest



Tulips at peak bloom in children's garden



Entrance to Childhood's Gate Children's Garden

**Summer in Childhood's Gate Children's Garden**

Though summer is fast approaching, we are awaiting guidance on how to safely maintain a presence in the children's garden come June 19, the date after which Penn State currently plans to allow regular on-campus activities to resume. These uncertain times have forced us to alter many of our best-laid plans, but we know that families will be more eager than ever to get out of the house and into nature when we are permitted to greet the public again. We are looking for creative ways to welcome visitors into this space of exploration and discovery while also protecting everyone's health and well-being.

**New Staff Members**

We wish to publicly welcome two new staff members. Tim Gould joined us in February as manager of public programs. Tim is a Penn State graduate, with bachelor's and master's degrees in Geobiology and Ecology, respectively. His most recent position was program coordinator in the Eberly College of Science.



(L) Timothy W. Gould (R) Amanda ("Mandy") J. DiBella

Mandy DiBella joined us in late March as plant records and horticulture coordinator. She has a bachelor's degree from Cedar Crest College in biology and was most recently employed as plant records assistant at Willowood Arboretum in Chester Township, New Jersey. Mandy shares the Overlook Pavilion office with Shari Edelson, and Tim's office is in the Forest Resources Building.



**Prescribed Fire at Arboretum Prairie Site Successful**

The unseasonably warm weather this March created an opportunity for the Arboretum to execute a prescribed fire on our prairie site, a twelve-acre area northwest of the botanic gardens where we are recreating a limestone-meadow plant community. The burn, which was the fourth of its kind since work on the site began in 2012, was made possible by the support of The Nature Conservancy and the PA Game Commission, which helped us plan and staff the operation.

Periodic fire is typical in prairie environments and can be critical in promoting desirable plant species, reducing the impact of invasive plants, and creating rich habitat for many types of animals. Drone video footage of our burn will also serve an educational purpose. Jesse Kreye, assistant professor of fire and natural resources management at Penn State, plans to use it to create videos for Penn State Extension's new fire management program!

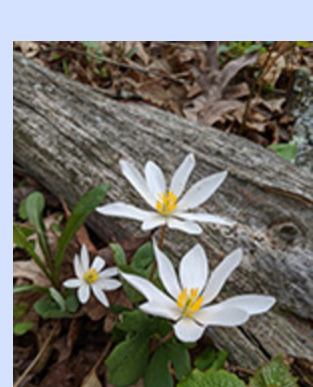
**This publication is available in alternative media on request.** Penn State is an equal opportunity, affirmative action employer, and is committed to providing employment opportunities to all qualified applicants without regard to race, color, religion, age, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, disability or protected veteran status. U.Ed. AGR 20-174



Flowering quince (*Chaenomeles x superba* 'Cameo') in the Strolling Garden



Narcissus 'Ice Follies'



Bloodroot (*Sanguinaria canadensis*) in Hartley Wood



Narcissus 'Le Torch' near Arboretum sign on Park Avenue